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MELTING SNOW:  
THE CHANGING ROLES OF IQALUIT  
WOMEN IN FAMILY, WORK AND  
SOCIETY.

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Department of Anthropology  
January 2010

Thesis submitted to Durham University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

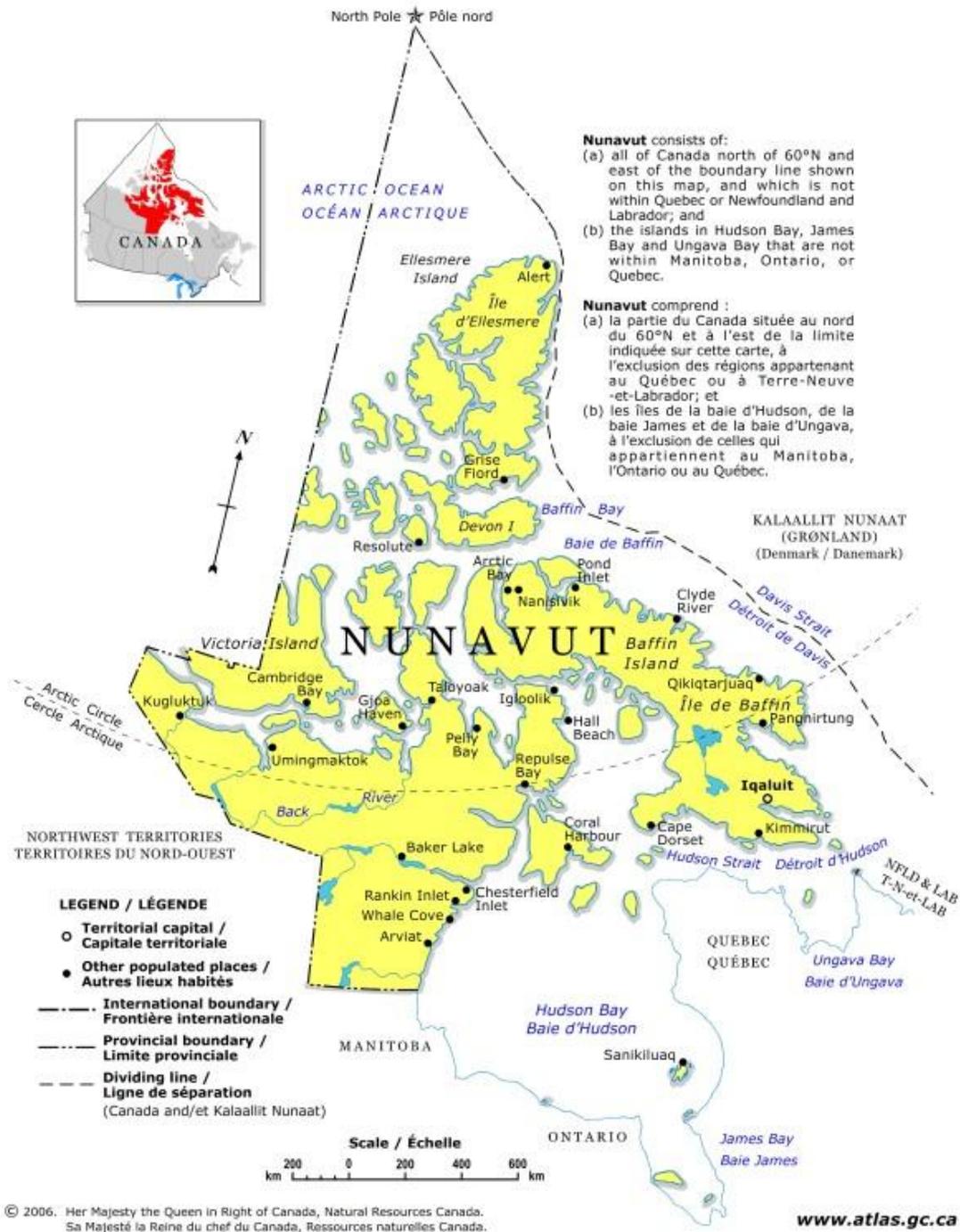


FIGURE 1: NUNAVUT

## ABSTRACT

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My thesis is a detailed anthropological study of the experiences of women as a result of their changing gender roles in Inuit families, in the labour market and in Inuit society more broadly. Although McElroy reported as early as 1975 that 'a higher percentage of the total population of women than of men are employed [in Frobisher Bay and Pangnirtung]' (McElroy 1975:679) the effects of this have never been systematically researched. This thesis is the first to use theoretical constructs from Bourdieu's toolkit, including the capitals (social, cultural, symbolic), the habitus and the cultural arbitrary as well as theories of empowerment, to analyse how women have constructed and negotiated meaning in their new roles as financial provider for their families. It draws on data collected during ten months of fieldwork in Iqaluit, Canada, using a mix of qualitative methods including in-depth interviews, group discussions and participant observation.

My findings show that different ideologies, values, ways of life and habitus shape and are shaped by life experiences of women in contemporary Iqaluit. These differences find their basis in women's upbringing, ranging from traditional, to transitional, to contemporary; women's experiences with education; and their interactions with incoming institutions with different cultural origins. Social negotiations characterise the process in which women create roles and identities for themselves, combining these different influences. Women's access to financial and cultural capital in some cases impacts on and is a consequence of women's empowerment, and their ability to challenge the cultural arbitrary. However, whilst empowerment is generally seen as a positive development, it can upset the balance between partners or other family members, who may struggle to appropriate economic, cultural and social change to the same extent. For that reason, it is important that the people of Nunavut, both men and women, work together to create for themselves a place in their family, community and society in which they can provide a meaningful contribution.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

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My thesis is a detailed anthropological study of the experiences of women as a result of their changing gender roles in Inuit families, in the labour market and in Inuit society more broadly. It is based on data collected during ten months of fieldwork in Iqaluit, Canada, using a mix of qualitative methods including in-depth interviews, group discussions and participant observation. Iqaluit is a very suitable place to study these changes, as it is a modern place, it 'continues to grow more cosmopolitan every year' (Searles 2001:123) and, as it is used as a base for many institutions, it has many employment and educational opportunities on offer. 'Iqaluit is a cultural and ethnic crossroads, it is an excellent place to study how 'cultural difference' is experienced daily' (ibid). It is a place where the tension between modern and tradition is strongest; where tensions between home and work are negotiated; where people struggle to give meaning to the tension between Inuit-ness and Canadian-ness; between aboriginality and economic development and cultural and economic survival and where people make difficult decisions about whether survival in the modern world must necessarily mean loss of traditional aspects of life.

From Jenness' visit in the 1920s, the Inuit were already adapting to money and wage labour (Jenness 1961 [1928]:vi), which created dependencies on outsiders for (hunting) implements and other products (Freeman, Bogoslovskaya et al. 1998:72). This steadily continued with men entering wage employment, mostly construction, between 1940 and 1970 and women taking up employment more regularly from the 1970s onwards (Bodenhorn 1990:61; Minor 2002:65; Sprott 2002:92). Access to wages has been argued to decrease interdependence of family members (Chance 1990:110; Condon and Stern 1993:395) and, reportedly, wages were not shared in the same way as subsistence resources were (Mitchell 1996:131; Briggs 2000:115). In the 1970s McElroy observed in Frobisher Bay (which was to change its name back to Iqaluit in 1987) and Pangnirtung, that male and female children were channelled 'into somewhat separate directions', with the emphasis for boys on learning hunting skills, and for the girls of wage employment, further education and upward mobility (McElroy 1975:682). In contemporary times this trend has been internalised to such an extent that young women at the age of 20 are seen as 'turn[ing] their time and energies to the responsibilities of work and child-care' in Holman (Condon 1995:59); in Alaska 'women are more apt to pursue wage work for which formal education is important' (Kleinfeld

and Andrews 2006:113); and – again in Alaska, but this is also the opinion of some of the women I spoke with – office bound, desk jobs are not seen as suitable for Inupiat masculine roles (Wexler 2006:2943).

Inuit men have a strong desire to maintain (at least partly) a subsistence life-style (McElroy 1975:683; Myers and Forrest 2001:140; Chabot 2003:30; Boulton 2006:28); however, the cost of purchase and maintenance of hunting equipment is prohibitive (Condon, Collings et al. 1995:32; Hicks and White 2000:23; Searles 2001:127). As a result, gender and family roles have been reassessed, with families pooling resources from both wage and subsistence economies (see Bodenhorn 1993 in Alaska:192; and Hovelsrud-Broda 2000 in Greenland:193; Wenzel 2000 in Nunavut:70). In some cases, however, waged family members are obliged to share more than they can afford, thus putting them at a disadvantage, and in most cases reported this concerns younger female family members (Wenzel 2000:70).

In this thesis I will explore the effects of these changes using a number of theoretical constructs from Bourdieu's analytical 'toolkit'. I will draw on the concept of the different capitals, including cultural capital, or certain kinds of knowledge seen as being legitimate by the dominant in a society; social capital which enables access to resources through a durable network of relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition which also create obligations; and symbolic capital which 'is nothing other than economic or cultural capital when it is known and recognised' (Bourdieu 1989: 21, see also Bourdieu 1986:49; Webb, Schirato et al. 2002:97; Bourdieu 2002 [1972]:36; Jenkins 2003:107). The second concept I will use is the habitus, which is a largely unconscious set of rules, values and dispositions which is constituted by and therefore adjusted to particular conditions. The habitus is acquired through socialisation and personal development and is considered natural and self-evident to the individuals sharing it and it enables the individual to act appropriately in certain circumstances (Bourdieu 2002 [1972]:78). Finally, the reproduction of the cultural arbitrary, emphasises the arbitrariness of any political, social, economic or power system in any society, whilst most people in any given society take these systems as natural and logical. Because certain kinds of cultural capital are valued by the dominant, and the dominant socialise their children in such a way that they will possess the necessary cultural capital and the necessary habitus to succeed in reaching dominant positions in society, the arbitrary reality which determines that certain people should dominate others is reproduced. At the same time, people who are dominated, do not have the means to accumulate the cultural capital necessary to be successful in powerful positions. They are not raised in

the habitus that would enable them to move naturally into a position of power and they therefore not only fail to change the cultural arbitrary, in fact they perceive the world order as natural and inevitable just as the dominating, and see themselves as unfit for powerful positions in society. They thus consider as natural the cultural arbitrary, without questioning its legitimacy (Bourdieu, Wacquant et al. 1994:8; Bourdieu 2002 [1972]:89). These concepts have great explanatory power in analysing people's actions and reasons for actions.

However, since gender and change are central in this thesis, and since Bourdieu's concepts fall short of enabling full analysis of social change and gender (McCall 1992; Joppke 2000; Moi 2000; Throop and Murphy 2002; Jenkins 2003), I will also use empowerment theory to analyse how women have constructed and negotiated meaning in their new role as financial provider for their families. Empowerment theory is pertinent and relevant in the context of Nunavut, as its creation is an attempt of the Inuit of the eastern Arctic to determine their own lives and future, it also enables analysis of unequal power relations and resistance against dominant ideologies.

The women I spoke with are both influenced by different ideologies, values and ways of life, and in turn they themselves also influence them. Women's outlook on life has been shaped in part by their experiences in childhood and the way and context of their upbringing. The women I spoke with have also had varied experiences with schooling and the education system as well as with other institutions, whether traditional or contemporary; this has had a differential impact on their lives and on how they create a role for themselves in their families or in society. Some women have been able to create a strong role and identity for themselves, some in so doing have challenged traditional expectations, which in turn has enabled others to do likewise. Others have used knowledge gained to challenge the cultural arbitrary in more systematic ways, in an attempt to create a more culturally sensitive Nunavut society. At the same time, this process of individual enrichment can cause tension in the home, when a woman is not supported by other members of her family to do so. It is therefore important for Inuit women to create a balance between the different influences, ideologies and ways of life. It is also clear that Inuit women will need the help and support of Inuit men, so that men and women together can establish this balanced society.

The experiences of Inuit women in contemporary Nunavut society will be presented by introducing the researcher, the project and the methods in the next chapter. After this, I will set out the theoretical framework in more detail in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 takes a critical and detailed look at the historical context and the anthropological history of

the Arctic, which provide the context within which to study contemporary lives and processes in the Arctic. This is followed by four ethnographical chapters. Here I will present my data on growing up, socialisation and parenting in Inuit families, exploring the question of how ideas about socialisation and parenting have changed and how this has influenced the lives of different women and the decisions they make (Chapter 5). I will discuss family dynamics, ideologies and social change in contemporary Inuit society and in so doing I investigate to what extent relationships influence the positions Inuit women can occupy and the decisions Inuit women can make as well as the expectations household members, kin and society have from Inuit women in general and working Inuit women in particular (Chapter 6). The next chapter (Chapter 7) deals with ideologies and meanings attached to working and learning for the different genders, examining how the changes in Inuit society are experienced by the different genders. Finally, in the last chapter I look into empowering processes, and contemporary conflict regarding education and authority (Chapter 8) in order to establish to what extent Inuit women have been able to empower themselves, how this has changed their self-image and what role Inuit women today play in creating a new, meaningful Inuit society.

## 2. INTRODUCING THE RESEARCHER AND THE PROJECT

---

Every vision of reality that you 'portray' or 'paint' is just that, just a portrait, just a painting. There is no sort of eternal truth anywhere to be reported (Briggs 2005:13).

My interest in the peoples of the Arctic was sparked a long time ago, during the second year of my bachelor in Anthropology, by an article about the kinship structure of Greenlandic Inuit. The article spoke about the inclusive nature of Inuit kinship, where people in hunting partnerships, people who share their name and people who have meat sharing obligations to each other, are considered kin (Nuttall 2000). It seemed that the cold and unwelcoming territory was offset by very warm and welcoming customs.

From here, I started reading more about the Arctic and the more I read the more interested I became in visiting this special and remote part of the world. I had the good fortune that Cor Remie - who shared my interest in the North and had extensive experience with research in the Canadian Arctic - at the time was a member of staff at Nijmegen University in the Netherlands, the University where I was a student. He was happy to see a student with the ambition to go there, but cautious about the real possibilities for me to visit the north. He warned me about the many obstacles I would have to negotiate: the cost; the difficulty of finding accommodation; the bureaucratic systems in place for obtaining research permits; and not least the cold that I would have to prepare for. He told me to think these things through carefully and asked me to come up with a detailed research plan before he would help me any further.

I read all I could find related to the Arctic in the library of my University and finally came up with a plan. I wanted to study how youths interpreted, understood and used oral histories in modern society. I remember quite vividly how I enthusiastically made my way up to my supervisor-to-be's office to inform him of my break through. I knocked on his door and when he answered I said: 'I have a plan!!'

That initial plan changed quite considerably over the months that followed (the emphasis moved away from oral histories to future expectations), but I did get to go. I managed to traverse all the obstacles: I obtained a research permit, I was able to stay in the student accommodation in Iqaluit, I managed to get some funding both from Nijmegen University and from the Canadian Studies Association in the Netherlands, and I bought some thermal underwear and borrowed ski-suits from friends and family. I was ready to go. My destination was Nunavut, a new territory in the north of Canada, the result of a land claim of the Inuit, that make up the majority of the inhabitants.

During this first short visit, I got a taste of the complexities of this new territory:

- at the political level; the new government, problems of funding and questions of dependency and control for the people in the territory to determine the path of their own lives;
- at the cultural level; questions about the importance and relevance of language and culture in the new territory, and if it was clear that it was very important for the vast majority of Nunavut's inhabitants, then how should it be implemented into government policy and every day life;
- at the social level; the influence previous Canadian policy had had on Inuit society and the resulting social problems such as suicide, family violence, juvenile delinquency, substance abuse, criminality and psychological distress, that the new government of Nunavut now had to try and solve.

During this first visit, I focused on the expectations Inuit youths have for their futures, which they largely based on the pictures of southern Canadian youths' lives that make their way to the north through the media. Because my master's research was in no way able to address these issues in depth – I only stayed in Iqaluit for three months during this first visit – I decided, when I left, that I would come back again and offer my help in whatever way I could to improve the situation. After I had finished my master's I started thinking about a future project. I met informally with Cor Remie and a friend of his, Jarich Oosten, who also has extensive experience in the Arctic and drafted a new plan. After looking at the seemingly unrealistic expectations of Inuit youths, I wanted to look at the realities of Inuit career women.

The context of Nunavut provides a unique location for anthropological fieldwork as it is in a phase of reconnection with and reappropriation of traditional knowledge, land activities, cultural values and language. As such, the issue of empowerment is an issue that is certainly grounded in the reality of everyday life in Nunavut, hence the centrality of this issue in my thesis. I further found in newspaper articles that female employment is growing at a much greater rate than male employment. Iqaluit, as the capital of Nunavut, provides individuals many opportunities for education and employment, and is for that reason a magnet for ambitious people. These people come from a variety of backgrounds, which means Iqaluit is at the heart of cultural change and innovation. And since Iqaluit is the seat of the territorial government these changes and innovations are fed back to the smaller communities, which means Iqaluit to some extent directs change

in the rest of the territory. Thus, Iqaluit provides a good field for research focusing on employment and change.

Research in the North is controlled by the requirement of obtaining a formal research permit from the Nunavut Research Institute. This requirement reflects the right of the population of Nunavut to control who does what kind of research in their territory, and their right to benefit from the research that is conducted. Korsmo and Graburn (2002:321) write that the Inuit have the right to prioritise issues on a research agenda and to influence how research gets done. The application process therefore focuses, among other things, on the benefits of the research for the communities of Nunavut and on possible employment opportunities for people in the local community. Obtaining permission also means you are eligible for a room in the student accommodation of Arctic College, known simply as 'The Residence' (or the Rez for short), one of the very few affordable places to stay for visitors to Iqaluit, the capital of Nunavut.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of September, 2006 the time had come for me to board the plane and head to Canada. Iqaluit is only linked to other places by air; there are no roads between Iqaluit and any other communities, and the only airlinks are within Canada, except for a sporadic link with Nuuk in Greenland. At the airport I first had to navigate the hurdles of not having a visa (I had applied, but my application was misunderstood and all I had was a letter from the High Commission in London saying that I probably did not need a visa) and not having a return flight (to allow myself the flexibility to leave when I was satisfied with the data collected, rather than when it was time to go). Because of these issues, the check-in staff at the airport almost did not let me board the plane, saying there was no point in trying, because I would only be sent straight back to England on arrival. In the end they let me go, only after having warned me, that if I were sent straight back again, it would be my own responsibility and at my own expense. I promised them that I understood, and that I would not hold them accountable for my problems. The final hurdle was my heavy bag. I had only brought the very essentials, but the warmest and thickest of the very essentials, and their weight was undeniable. A considerable fine had to be paid for my bag to be allowed on the plane.

I worried about my visa, or rather the absence of my visa during the whole flight. When we approached Toronto we had to fill out our landing cards, which made me even more nervous. I wanted to stay in Iqaluit, for research purposes, for roughly 300 days my landing card read. The first customs officer at Toronto airport circled the amount of days I expected to stay with a red marker and sent me on to the next queue. There I

waited in apprehension, reading the faces of the officials behind the counters and hoping 'mine' would be lenient.

She was. She asked me next to no questions, gave me permission to stay in the country until the end of September 2008 - thus more than a year! - stamped my passport and printed off a document detailing the dates and purpose of my visit. And with that I was off.

I had mixed feelings as I was reunited with my far too heavy bag at the baggage carousel. I managed to get it onto a bus, down some stairs and onto the subway, then up the stairs again and down a couple of blocks to the accommodation I had booked for the night. After a sleepless night, I decided 5 o'clock was not too early to get up. That morning I booked myself a bus to Ottawa, from where I would get on a flight to Iqaluit the next day. Just after midday on the 13<sup>th</sup> of September I finally arrived in Iqaluit, just in time for a little lunch at the Rez. I had arrived; no more travelling with a very heavy bag would be required for a long time to come.

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## 2.1. MAKING CONTACTS

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Over the next few days I reacquainted myself with Iqaluit, which now counts 7,250 inhabitants (City of Iqaluit accessed 11/12/09), of which just under 60% is Inuit (Statistics Canada Released March 13, 2007). The Residence - where I was staying for most of my visit - was at the end of the long and exposed Federal road, on one side it looked out over the landing strip of Iqaluit airport, on the other side it was neighboured by the prison and the young offenders institution. Behind those buildings was a road leading up a steep hill, with a small number of orange buildings on the top and what remained of a Distant Early Warning site. Federal road had relatively large amounts of heavy traffic, as the scrap yard, as well as a stone quarry and a small number of businesses were located along it, it was also one of the few places where speed limits exceeded 30 kilometers per hour. This, coupled with the road being very exposed and perceived as very long, prevented most people from walking along it, opting instead to take the college bus or a taxi into town. It might also have been one of the reasons why so many people driving past stopped to give me a ride, whether by car, truck or skidoo, which, depending on my mood and the weather I either gratefully accepted, or politely refused. At the end of Federal road was the 'four way stop', a cross-roads getting busy enough during morning, lunch and afternoon peak times to prevent people from getting

into work on time (Iqaluit counts hundreds of cars, as well as snowmobiles and ATVs). At the time I was in Iqaluit, a new hotel was being built just off the 'four way stop', adding a fifth restaurant to the list, an exciting prospect to some Iqalummiut. Here, a right turn would take you towards the airport, a left to the college main campus and the high school and straight on would take you to North Mart and Arctic Ventures – the local supermarkets. The centre of town was circled by a road, looping past the shops, the primary school, the hospital, the college and a number of office buildings. Within this loop were located the Brown Building, which housed the swimming pool, a restaurant and the cinema, the nightclub 'the storehouse', and the 'eight storey', housing some offices as well as a large number of small apartments, the highest building in town. Since last time I visited the Road to Nowhere, north of the town centre had been transformed from a true 'road to nowhere' into a residential neighbourhood with apartment blocks and newly built residences. East of the town centre a new 'lego city' had been built, with lots of colourful rows of family housing. Further along, on the road towards Apex more and more houses were built too, all the way up to the Arctic Winter Games complex, which on my first visit had been at the end of a long and lonely walk out of town. In summer the roads were dusty and dry, in winter a layer of snow was tightly packed down and covered with dirt regularly to increase grip. Winter also brought the possibility for many more 'roads'; with skidoos creating tracks behind houses, along the beach and out on the tundra, across rivers and on the sea ice.

Before entering the field, I had sent an e-mail to a journalist working for the local newspaper, who had written several articles on female employment. I asked her if she knew anyone who might be interested in participating in or helping me with my research. She had given me several names, whom I had contacted at the time and two of whom had got back to me. On entering the field, I contacted them again, and asked if they would like to meet for a coffee. Both of them were very helpful and friendly and provided me with a list of people - with a number of characteristics for each - who might possibly be interested in participating in my study.

I settled into the residence, accommodation for the students taking classes at the Arctic College. During the day, apart from an hour during lunch, the students were in class and there was no-one there to talk to. I contacted the contacts I had been given, and set up appointments with the ones that replied and were willing to participate. During those first few weeks luckily I received some work from home, which I ended up doing during the day, when there was no-one else around, and I did not have any

appointments. This helped me during the first few weeks to keep busy, whilst taking the time in the evenings to get to know people and socialise.

My idea had been that a few focus groups at the start would kick-start my research and reveal the most pressing issues that I should focus on during my stay. Further, I wanted to find some people to collaborate with on a regular basis, recognising their valuable inside knowledge of the community, and making the research at the same time more locally meaningful and applicable as well as thorough and grounded. However, it soon became clear to me that the women on the lists with which I had been supplied were busy women. Trying to find a time at which all of them could make it was an impossible task and so I had to abandon these ideas. Instead, I had some very interesting individual interviews with a (small) number of women that were on the list. Some of these women suggested other people to interview and there was some slow, but steady progress.

But the large majority of my e-mails went unanswered, and as I had set myself the goal of doing a set number of interviews each week, I soon grew impatient waiting for contacts to reply. In addition, I was aware that the snowball technique limited the range of different people I could talk to. Therefore, I decided to take matters into my own hands and send out e-mails to all government employees at all levels in all departments. This was not ideal, because I did not want to limit myself to interviewing people who had a steady job and regular income, but it was somewhere to start, and again these people might be able to suggest other participants. Besides, the lists of staff did not just include the people at the top of the bureaucracy; they also included staff in entry-level positions and labourers employed by the government. But there was one problem: a lot of staff at the Government of Nunavut are from southern Canada or elsewhere outside of Nunavut, and although names sometimes give a strong clue about someone's background, at other times you could be in for a surprise. I decided to make sure I did not accidentally rule out possible research participants just on the basis of their name and thus contacted everyone.

I set myself a target of sending 50 personalised e-mails per day. The first day I got immediate replies from a number of people (a lot more than the 2% success rate that I expected). I did this for a bit over a week, until I realised that I had received no replies at all after the first day. Since quite a number of the replies I received were automated out of office replies, this would have meant that even if no-one was interested in participating and thus no-one replied, I would still have received replies of those who were out of office. Because this was not the case, I realised that after that first day my e-

mails were no longer reaching their destination. Also in that week the four meetings I had planned were all either cancelled or forgotten.

I became seriously discouraged and was ready to get on a plane home. Time and again I was told researchers were not trusted -let alone liked- in the North, and I had to be very careful asking people to participate in my research, lest I would scare them off. This made me overly self-conscious. I was so worried about scaring people off that I did not have the courage to ask anyone to participate. As a result, November and December passed without so much as one single interview. Home seemed a most wonderful, but indescribably distant place. I willed myself to stay and try harder.

At the start of my stay in Iqaluit I was tipped off about a 'friendship centre' called Tukisigiavik, run by a number of local councillors and elders with government funding. Not only does this place provide a daytime shelter for the homeless and a counselling service for anyone in need of a listening ear, it also provides traditional skills workshops with the underlying belief that there is a strong healing power in performing traditional skills (Personal communication Rosie October 24th, 2006). When I first heard this, I smiled at the simplicity of this assumption, but even though they were not my traditional skills I now know how they kept me from giving up and possibly getting seriously depressed.



FIGURE 1: SEALSKIN

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November, I attended my first class. The first project was seal skin mittens. When I walked into the centre a strong smell of dried fish hit me. It took me a few seconds to realise that it was the seal skins that smelled like that. Two elders helped us with the professional advice of people who have made mitts since their teens. The skins were distributed by tying little strings to each skin, and letting each participant choose one string; the attached skin at the other end of the string was for that participant. We all had to soften the skins by 'marching' on them for two to three hours, then we had to wash them, to get rid of some of the smell (though that was not very successful, at least in my case) and dry them again.



FIGURE 2: PATTERN

We had to make sure not to over dry them, because they would get hard again. Once the skins were dry, they had to be kept in the fridge or freezer to stop them from drying out.

When I went to the workshop the second time the instructors looked at my skin, looked at me and said: 'you put your skin in the fridge when it wasn't properly dry yet.' I felt very guilty and had to

confess that indeed I could see that the skin was still dark in the middle and that that meant that the skin had not been properly dry when I put it in the freezer. I had been more worried about the skin drying out too much, which would have meant starting the process of marching and washing from the beginning again and had therefore put the skin in the freezer before it had dried properly. Backed by the experience and knowledge of the women at the centre I was confident to hang my skin on the line at the centre to dry it further and started on the inside liner.



FIGURE 3: SEWING THE LINER

I doubled up the material at the back and the thumb for extra warmth, but kept it single on the palm for extra flexibility, as per the instructions. Then I started sewing the thumb and then on to the outside of the hand. The closer I got to the top the more worried I became about the difference in size between the back and the inside of the hand, I decided to leave the bit I wasn't sure about for last and move on to the other side. My worries became worse as the inside of the hand was much smaller than the inside of



FIGURE 4: THE FINISHED LINER

my hand and the outside was much bigger. But I knew that the material had to be gathered at the top and so, I plucked up the courage and decided to just try and see what it would look like. The result was amazing. It looked like a perfectly shaped boxing glove when I finished it.

This was not just my opinion; the instructors also could not believe their eyes. They repeatedly picked it up to look at and try on my liners with the exclamation of admiring noises and noises of disbelief. The Qallunaat (white person), who did not even understand the difference between a dry and a wet skin, seemed to be able to sew.

Their encouraging smiles at me, while muttering at each other and touching and feeling my liner, made me smile proudly at my accomplishment. I was hooked. The skins were cut to shape using an ulu (crescent shaped women's knife) and with a special needle (much sharper and stronger) and thread (sinew, again much stronger than ordinary thread), but were sewn in



FIGURE 5: PATTERN TRANSFERRED TO THE SKIN

the same way as the liner. I had been very worried about sewing the skins, as I expected it to be very tough, but again, I was quite capable. The gathering at the top remained a headache for me though, as it is very hard to distribute the gathering evenly. The skins had to be chewed to make this process a little easier and the skins easier to handle. Some of the 'students' had a little cup of water by their side for this purpose, but I decided I had to immerse myself in the culture, and so I hesitantly put the skin to my mouth and chewed the fishy material. It worked wonders, the skins became soft and bendable and my mitts ended up looking quite professional.

The last day of sewing before Christmas all I had left to do was to finish off the bottom, with a piece of rabbit fur, which one of the other students had given to me. I had already started wearing the mitts as they were, proud of my creation, and so that evening I set out to Tukisigiavik. I had not expected this process of beautification to take very long, so when I had not finished at the end of the night, I had to walk home with one finished mitt and the rabbit fur on the other -half attached- stuffed into my sleeve, to the amusement of the others present. That night I sewed at home until after midnight to finish them off.

Following this first success story, I still had a lot of skin left, and since -out of respect for the animal- no part of the seal is to be wasted, I made another little pair of mitts, and various purses. In following courses, I also made a spring parka, and a pair of kamiik (boots), which were by far the biggest challenge.

These traditional skills programmes were very valuable for me in research terms as well as personally. They made it possible for me to meet a large number of women of varied ages, in a context unrelated to my research, so that they could get to know me for the person I am, not as a researcher, although everyone knew I was a researcher. This

enabled me to build a relationship of trust with a number of the women, and common ground to talk about in chance encounters. A recent renewed interest in sewing and crafts around the world has also been recognised by social scientists. For example, Minahan and Cox (2007:5) discuss the emergence of the Stitch 'n Bitch movement, noting remedial, progressive, resistance, nostalgic and ironic motivations for picking up the crafts of the 'old days'. I and others at the centre have certainly felt the remedial quality of coming together with a group of women while sewing and talking about work and life. For the Inuit women there was the added value of communicating in the first language<sup>1</sup>, which also has important remedial qualities, nostalgia was probably also a motive for coming to the classes for them (cf Meade 1990:230; Oakes and Riewe 1996:20, 97).

But most of all it just felt good to be able to make something that would be useful to yourself or your family, a sense of accomplishment and pride, possibly not found in other areas of life. That is what made me venture outside on windy cold nights, even after having spent my day in oppressing solitude, locked in the house, unable to come to terms with being a researcher. Plus of course the fact that once I could sew mitts, I was ready to get married! Quite literally, my skills as a sewer hugely improved my relationships in the field. Often, when I met fellow sewers on the street they would tell their companions about my sewing achievements. When I had finished making a small purse one woman remarked in amazement: 'Are you trying to out-Inuk us?' thus emphasising the central position this skill holds in Inuit identity and personhood.

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## 2.2. APPROACHING RESPONDENTS

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During my fieldwork, I realised more than ever that I am very sensitive to inconveniencing others (through my wishes, my actions, my stupidity). In every day life this manifests itself in small and completely innocent things like making sure I don't make any unnecessary noise at any time or place, or stepping out of people's way a little more often than most people might – things that are hardly noticeable to myself or others – during my fieldwork it meant that I did not want to inconvenience people by asking them to spare some time to answer my questions, when I knew they were busy.

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<sup>1</sup> I was able to learn some Inuktitut during these classes, and also followed a course in the beginning of 2007, but unfortunately never learnt to hold conversations in Inuktitut.

In the literature that I had ploughed through before I left for my fieldwork I had found countless references to the sensitivity of Inuit to researchers and questions (e.g. Briggs 1970; Stern and Stevenson 2006:4). Even though I did not necessarily see this realised in the behaviour of many Inuit I met during my stay, it did make me even more conscious about being an inconvenience to people. I became overly aware of my role as a researcher and was constantly battling the idea that formed in my head that asking a question or making a comment that was related to my research in a social setting, would be a breach of the trust that people had in me, and would therefore inevitably result in me being ostracised by the people with whom I was in regular contact (cf Briggs, 1970).

I must re-emphasise that this was a personal fear that had no reference to the reality that was all around me. I was welcomed very warmly by many people during my stay in Iqaluit. I was often invited to visit any time and have some tea and bannock, or to enjoy a family meal. Upon my entering the Embrace Life office (see page 27), Tukisigiavik, Nakasuk school (one of the two primary schools in Iqaluit) and many other places I was met by smiles. And despite the fact that Iqaluit was considered an unfriendly place by many people when compared to the smaller communities, I persisted in smiling at anyone I met on the street, as is customary in the smaller communities (Kulchyski 2006:165), and very rarely did I not receive a smile in return.

In retrospect, it would be hard to determine whether I would have done better had I been more comfortable asking questions at any time, to anyone, in any situation. One of my research participants said to me that she was the opposite of me, and always just went straight for what she wanted. But she said that my approach was probably better. Though the quantity of my data might be smaller than it could have been, the quality of the data I do have certainly makes up for this, and I like to believe is largely a result of my attitude during my fieldwork.

### 2.3. SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS AND GROUP DISCUSSIONS

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My main method was semi-structured interviews. Interview time ranged from 17 minutes through to 3 hours, with most interviews lasting around 45-60 minutes. I interviewed a total of 34 women in this way between November 2006 and July 2007 (see interview schedules in Appendix II). All but two of these interviews were taped using a digital voice recorder with the permission of the research participants. It was my own decision not to record the other two interviews, because it did not seem appropriate in the locational context in which the interviews took place. No-one

objected to the interviews being recorded. In the literature (e.g. Bernard 1995:228) it is often said that recording interviews might negatively influence the quality of the interview because the research participant might not feel comfortable or at ease. In my experience everyone spoke openly and no-one seemed nervous because of the recorder. A lot of the participants commented on how nice my recorder was and smiled when I put it on some cushioning to 'make it more comfortable' in order to enhance the quality of the recording.

All participants were asked to sign an informed consent form before partaking in the research. The informed consent form explained the objectives of the study, the methods used and the rights of the participant (see Appendix III). I also had an Inuktitut translation of this form to ensure full understanding. Two of the Inuktitut versions were signed; all the other signed forms are the English equivalent. Some of the participants did show an interest in the Inuktitut version, and read through it before or after signing the English version. In addition, I gave everyone a short description of the research, which I asked them to read while I got organised for the interview; again I had English and Inuktitut versions of this sheet, which I let research participants keep.

However, I was fully aware that the signing of a consent form by the participant is not sufficient in itself. Participant consent needs to be seen as a process which involves establishing trust between community and researcher, before, during and after the research (Barata, Gucciardi et al. 2006:287). I thus did not regard the signed form as a free card to record any information provided by the research participant at any given time, but kept negotiating the rights and the protection of the individual carefully every step of the way.

The age of the women I spoke with ranged from 20 to 60 years old. Some of these women had grown up in communities, others 'on the land',<sup>2</sup> some women had lived in the Iqaluit region all their lives, some had grown up many miles from there and some had travelled extensively through the Arctic and beyond during their childhood years. Thus, a great range of different experiences is represented. The interviews were all conducted by me, either in the research participant's office or place of work, or at the home of the research participant. All interviews were conducted in English, without an interpreter. Just as I was about to ask one of the students at the language and culture programme at the Arctic College whether she would like to work for me as an

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<sup>2</sup> The phrase 'on the land' refers to any place in Nunavut outside the communities. Thus going out 'on the land' could refer to a hunting trip, a camping trip, or a hike. Since there is no infrastructure outside the communities, you are out 'on the land' as soon as you have left the community behind you.

interpreter, she was expelled from the Residence for alcohol related incidents and was forced to move back to her home community and leave her course. I was aware that this not only limited me in the number of people I could interview, but it also might have influenced the quality of the interviews, as some of the research participants spoke in their second language (Bernard 1995:225). However, all of my research participants were fluent in English and accustomed to speaking English every day in many different situations. I therefore feel that the quality of the interviews was not seriously diminished as a result of my use of the English language.

I joined an Inuktitut-as-second-language course at Nakasuk School, which met weekly from January through to March 2007. Unfortunately the class was cancelled several times as a result of blizzard conditions, once because of a teacher training day which meant none of the students could make it, and once because the teacher had an important meeting to go to. The Inuktitut language skills that I acquired were thus limited, although on the day I left I felt very proud of my ability to have a very basic conversation with a uni-lingual Inuit elder at Tukisigiavik.

In addition to the interviews, I held three group discussions, one with three female students, one with four women working in government advisory positions and one with five women working for the Federal Government, none of the women who participated in group discussions were interviewed individually. Again, the group discussions were conducted by me alone. The discussions were taped using a digital voice recorder with the permission of the participants. During these discussions I asked the questions, took notes and observed interactions between the participants at the same time. Ideally, in group discussions, there would be one person to facilitate the discussion, and another to observe and take notes on interactions and behaviours during the discussion (Kreuger 1998). However, I did not have the luxury of having a research assistant, thus the quality of the data collected might have been somewhat jeopardised. However, possibly because of the small numbers of participants, possibly because of respect for individuals in Inuit society, all group discussions proceeded in a very orderly fashion, everyone was given the opportunity to voice their opinion, and no-one talked over anyone else on any occasion (cf. Kreuger 1998:24).

The women I spoke with had varied backgrounds, family compositions and employment status; the following tables show their different characteristics on a number of different levels. Table 1 shows the cultural background and employment status of the women I spoke with. As can be seen the women I spoke with include women from different cultural backgrounds, and ranged quite considerably in

employment status. Table 2 shows the marital status and employment status of the women I spoke with; again the table shows considerable variation in the position of the women I spoke with, including both Inuit and Qallunaat women, Qallunaat women with Inuit partners and Inuit women with Qallunaat partners: both Inuit women and Qallunaat women who had lost their partners through divorce, or bereavement and both Inuit and Qallunaat women who had never been married are included. Table 3 shows the parental status, separated by cultural background and marital status of the women I spoke with. As can be seen, the women I spoke with are represented in many of the different 'categories'. Finally table 4 shows the participant's cultural background, marital status and age, which shows the women I spoke with represented women from many different ages and with many different life experiences.

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Owner business</b>	<b>Senior government official</b>	<b>Government advisory position</b>	<b>Professional level employment</b>	<b>Student</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Inuk (both parents Inuk)	3	6	6	8	3	1	<b>27</b>
Inuk (one parent Inuk, the other Qallunaaq)		6	1	1			<b>8</b>
Qallunaaq	1		9	1			<b>11</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>46</b>

TABLE 1: PARTICIPANTS' CULTURAL BACKGROUND AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS

<b>Participant</b>		<b>Owner business</b>	<b>Senior government official</b>	<b>Government advisory position</b>	<b>Professional level employment</b>	<b>Student</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Totals</b>
Married/ in relationship	Inuk with Qallunaaq partner	1	4	3	3			<b>11</b>
	Qallunaaq with Inuk partner			3				<b>3</b>
	Partner with same cultural background	1	4	4	2			<b>11</b>
Divorced/separated/widowed	Inuk	2	3	2	4	2	1	<b>14</b>
	Qallunaaq			1				<b>1</b>
Never married	Inuk		1			1		<b>2</b>
	Qallunaaq			3	1			<b>4</b>
<b>Totals</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>46</b>

TABLE 2: PARTICIPANTS' CULTURAL BACKGROUND, EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND MARITAL STATUS

Participant	Inuit				Qallunaat			
	Married/ in relationship	Divorced/separated/widowed	Never married	Totals	Married/ in relationship	Divorced/separated /widowed	Never married	Totals
Mother dependent children	15	7	3	<b>25</b>	5	1	1	<b>7</b>
Mother adult children	4	5		<b>9</b>				
No children			1	<b>1</b>	1		3	<b>4</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>

TABLE 3: PARTICIPANTS' CULTURAL BACKGROUND, MARITAL STATUS AND PARENTAL STATUS

Participant	Inuit				Qallunaat			
	Married/ in relationship	Divorced/separated /widowed	Never married	Totals	Married/ in relationship	Divorced/separated /widowed	Never married	Totals
Age between 20-29	3	2	1	<b>6</b>			1	<b>1</b>
Age between 30-39	3	2		<b>5</b>			2	<b>2</b>
Age between 40-49	5	3	1	<b>9</b>	2	1	1	<b>4</b>
Age 50 or over	8	6	1	<b>15</b>	4			<b>4</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>

TABLE 4: PARTICIPANTS' CULTURAL BACKGROUND, MARITAL STATUS AND AGE

All interviews and group discussions were transcribed soon after the interviews had taken place, and participants were asked to comment on transcripts of interviews and analyses of raw data, so as to reflect their personal right to access, amend and obliterate any (parts of) the materials offered. Some of the research participants took the opportunity to make additions or changes, but most were happy with the result as it was. In the chapters that follow, I will present the voices of many women; each quotation will be followed by the pseudonym, age and employment status of the woman who spoke, as well as the date of interview. A few of the characteristics of the women I spoke with have also been altered in order to preserve anonymity.

## 2.4. PARTICIPATING IN COMMUNITY LIFE

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In addition to these interviews and discussions, I participated in community life in several other ways. I volunteered for Qullit Status of Women in the organising committee of the March for Violence against Women held on the 19<sup>th</sup> of October, when a group of Iqalumiut walked through town with posters and candles to raise awareness of domestic violence and remember those who lost their lives as a result of violence against women. After the march, there was music and talks by different people. One woman, accompanied by her young son told of her life experiences; of leaving her abusive husband, seeking refuge at the women's shelter, and leaving the shelter to move into a place of her own. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of December, a candlelight service was held in light of the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women marking the anniversary of the murders in 1989 of 14 young women at l'École Polytechnique de Montréal. In addition to remembering the women who were killed then, women who died a violent death in Nunavut were also remembered. One girl especially, who was aged 13 when she was brutally murdered in 2001, was remembered through poems written and read by her friends. Both events were very moving and clearly meaningful to all present.

I also did some voluntary work for the Embrace Life Council, a council aiming to raise awareness for suicide and support suicide prevention activities organised in the Territory. They had a large collection of articles, information booklets and fact sheets, which were available to the public, but which were not organised in a catalogue. I attempted to set up a catalogue for them; however, the volume of their literature proved to be too much for me to be able to finish.

I volunteered extensively for Nakasuk Elementary school, one of the two elementary schools based in Iqaluit. A teacher at the other elementary school reflected on the fact

that, as far as he knew, there were only children with at least one Qallunaat parent at his school. If this is true, than all children with two Inuit parents would have been at Nakasuk, although here too, there were quite a number of children of mixed relationships. The school had two grade one, two grade two and two grade three classes, one class in each grade doing all the teaching in Inuktitut and one doing all the teaching in English.

Initially, I worked with a boy in grade one with hearing and speech problems. I helped him by explaining the activities of the children when he could not hear the teacher's instructions and gave him some one-on-one instruction in a separate room where we practiced his speech and understanding through various games and activities. When this was taken over by a new permanent member of staff, I moved to being a class assistant in grade two. Here, I provided general back up for the teacher, whilst giving special attention to a small number of children with behavioural or learning problems.

Throughout the year several big community events were organised such as Toonik Tyme, the annual return of the sun festival, which is held in April and Alianait, a big arts festival held in June, for which I also volunteered some of my time. Both of these events were fantastic displays of culture, tradition and arts originating from the Inuit. Whilst Toonik Tyme was a local event, with each community organising its own activities, Alianait was a festival on a much bigger scale, organised for the whole territory in the capital of Iqaluit, with performers from different parts of the world participating in different ways.

Toonik Tyme in Iqaluit featured an ice sculpture contest, an *iglu* building contest, a tea and bannock making contest, which was obviously followed by tasting the goods. There was the opportunity to participate in dog team races, skidoo races, a seal hunt, which was followed by a seal-skinning contest and again the tasting and distribution of the seals amongst all present. And there were plenty of games for young and old at different locations throughout the day, as well as band performances and a big craft sale.

During Alianait there were numerous workshops from painting to carving, from felting to circus acts, from drum dancing to throat singing. There were high quality performances throughout the day, every day, in various indoor as well as outdoor locations, such as storytelling, circus performances, theatre, Colombian music, Finnish yoik music, drum dancing and throat singing and singing and dancing. In addition to this there were also various art exhibits including an exhibit from the Arctic College Jewellery programme, a photography and art exhibit, a community print collection and a big Nunavut-wide art exhibit, where artists who had come from all over Nunavut sold their art and were working on location.

In addition I became very involved in the sewing classes at Tukisigiavik, as mentioned earlier. All these activities gave me the opportunity to observe and participate in community life, meet new people, talk to people and give something back to the community that hosted my visit. They also helped me to build rapport with some members of the community, an important means of improving the quality of the data collected during the research, since mutual trust between researcher and research participant is needed for personal, sensitive issues to be discussed seriously and honestly (cf: Spradley 1980:50).

In the spring (in April and May 2007) I also did an evaluation for the Akitsiraq Law School society. This was to evaluate the student experience of the law school held in Iqaluit from 2001 – 2005. Through a collaboration with the University of Victoria in British Columbia, the students at the Akitsiraq Law School could be granted a bachelor in Law degree after completing the course. The opportunities for obtaining a Bachelor degree in the territory are normally limited to the Education and Nursing programmes run by the Arctic College in collaboration with McGill and Dalhousie Universities respectively. The report that this evaluation resulted in was both a funding requirement, as well as a possible starting point for the organisation of another four-year law school programme. As part of this evaluation, I held a group discussion with three students and I individually interviewed 11 students. The data are the property of the Akitsiraq Law Society, however, the published report provides interesting insights for this thesis.

Data collected through observations, interviews and group discussions were analysed using grounded theory (Glaser 1967). Rather than trying to apply and or verify a grand theory by the data collected in the field, in grounded theory the data forms the basis for theoretical discussion. Grounded theory was developed to avoid the danger of missing what is really going on when blinded by 'grand theory'. Often researchers go out to the field in order to expand on existing theories; in other words, they have already accepted the basics of that theory. As a result they might 'suppress and ignore much rich data that could *transcend* the theory' (ibid:255). Thus, the intention of this thesis is to provide lengthy, detailed descriptions, which provide a clear, rich picture of the experiences of Inuit women in Iqaluit in an effort to 'get the story straight' (ibid:15). In line with what Morrow (1990:152) presents as a culturally sensitive stance towards research with the Yup'ik in Alaska. She asserts 'it is taken for granted that one's experience may differ from that of others, and variable accounts are not particularly disturbing' (see also: Meade 1990:230; Walton 1993:379; Briggs 1998:2). She continues by saying 'it is preferable to present multiple accounts rather than to try to reduce them to common elements [as] analysis disrupts the dynamic tension which holds the world in balance.'

This method thus provides more accurate theories that are meaningful to the research participants (cf Therrien 2008:136), rather than obscuring the view of the researcher with preconceived ideas. The data were coded, and the themes and patterns that emerged informed the flow of this thesis.

Occasionally throughout the text Inuktitut words will be used. These have been italicised and their meaning can be found in the Glossary in Appendix I.

### 3.THEORETICAL CONCEPTS AND APPROACH AND THEIR APPLICATION TO THE CURRENT SITUATION IN NUNAVUT

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As we will see in the chapters that follow, Iqaluit is a community in which many women with very different views and opinions, experiences and strategies live side by side. The large variety of stories on which this thesis is based do not fit neatly into an overarching theory: there are too many actors, each finding their own way, each making their own decisions and each making sense of their own situation differently. As indicated in the introduction, I will therefore follow a grounded theory approach using women's stories to structure this thesis. This will provide a more accurate picture of life for women in Nunavut that is meaningful to the research participants rather than imposing preconceived notions to make it fit with grand theories. As most anthropologists, I have struggled with the tension between theory and ethnography, objectivity and subjectivity. In an attempt to minimise the weaknesses of each of these extremes, I will straddle the gap between them by using the ethnography to explore issues arising out of my data, rather than trying to find answers to questions posed at the start.

I will take useful aspects of many different anthropological theories and works, and in that respect the thesis takes a post-modernist approach. The objectification of objectification that Bourdieu calls for (Bourdieu 2002 [1972]), and that is commonly known as reflexivity in post-modern and feminist writing, is also an important aspect of this thesis. The worldview of the researcher, the relationship of the researcher to the researched, the relationship of the researcher to certain institutions and organisations within and outside the field, the experiences of the researcher during fieldwork and the education and theoretical paradigms (even when not specifically applied), to name just a few, all impact on the way in which research is undertaken, the questions the researcher asks, the techniques used to answer these questions and the answers the researcher finds. For this reason all these issues should be reported on in the presentation of research and research results.

I will be using some of Bourdieu's concepts, including the various types of capital, habitus, and the reproduction of the cultural arbitrary as tools in this thesis. Bourdieu began his career studying Algerian society, and used this early fieldwork to support many of his later 'theories of practice', but otherwise most of his work was based in France. Despite that, he claimed his theories could be usefully applied to social phenomena anywhere in the world, because they take practice as a starting point. While

I will offer a critique of Bourdieu's work later in the thesis, what follows is a concise and largely 'neutral' presentation of these key concepts.

The first analytical tool I borrow from Bourdieu is his notion of the different capitals that circulate in society. The first is cultural capital, or certain kinds of knowledge seen as legitimate by the dominant in society. These kinds of knowledge are sought after and valued by the dominant and include cultural taste and consumption patterns. The teaching of these tastes and patterns of consumption is in the hands of the dominant and for that reason access to cultural capital is restricted to certain groups of people and particular social classes (Bourdieu 1986; Bourdieu 1989; Bourdieu, Wacquant et al. 1994; Webb, Schirato et al. 2002; Bourdieu 2002 [1972]; Jenkins 2003). Secondly, symbolic capital is 'a capital of honour and prestige.' Which enables those who possess it 'to impose on other minds a vision of social divisions' (Bourdieu 1989:23). In other words it is the ability to create a 'reality' and to impose this 'reality' on others. Thirdly, social capital 'is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition, which can secure material or symbolic profits for each of its members' (Bourdieu 1986:51). However, this social capital has a downside in that 'the recognised spokesmen' are authorised to 'shield the group as a whole from discredit by expelling or excommunicating embarrassing individuals' (ibid.:53). This clearly shows that the advantages are relative to one's social position within the social network and the power invested in this position. Furthermore, 'economic capital is at the root of all the other types of capital' (Bourdieu 1986:54), thus reproducing the distinction between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'.

The second of Bourdieu's concepts used is the habitus, a term which I understand to mean a largely unconscious set of rules, values and dispositions which is constituted by and therefore adjusted to particular conditions. The habitus exists in the individual and in the actions and interactions of this individual, as such it enables the individual to act appropriately in certain circumstances. It is also shared within groups of individuals, a precondition for the idea of 'appropriate' behaviour. The habitus is socially acquired through one's position in the social structure. It is considered natural and self-evident to the individuals sharing it, and it is therefore not fully conscious. This is what makes the habitus particularly powerful. Habitus both allows us to act in situations and in the world and limits our options for action (Bourdieu 2002 [1972]:72-87). It gives us a sense of our place and a sense of the place of others. Our actions are shaped by the habitus and its dispositions and the constraints, demands and opportunities of the social field (Jenkins 2003:81).

Reproduction of the cultural arbitrary, finally, is the necessary outcome of the interaction of the two previous concepts. The 'cultural arbitrary' is so-called to emphasise the arbitrariness of any political, social, economic or power system in any society, whilst most people in any given society perceive these systems as natural and logical. Because certain kinds of cultural capital are valued by the dominant, and the dominant socialise their children in such a way that they will possess the necessary cultural capital and the necessary habitus to succeed in reaching dominant positions in society, the arbitrary reality which determines that certain people should dominate others is reproduced (Bourdieu 1988:783; Bourdieu 2002 [1972]). At the same time, people who are dominated do not have the means to accumulate the cultural capital necessary to be successful in powerful positions. They are not raised in the habitus that would enable them to move naturally into a position of power and they therefore not only fail to change the cultural arbitrary, in fact they perceive the world order as natural and inevitable just as the dominating, and see themselves as unfit for powerful positions in society. They thus consider as natural the cultural arbitrary, without questioning its legitimacy (ibid.).

The reproduction of the cultural arbitrary then, is closely linked to the existence of ideologies (cf. 'cultural common sense' Geertz 1975). These determine how social interaction and inherent power relations lead to the production and perpetuation of social representations of phenomena or experience. They produce ideas, beliefs, values and a worldview (Eagleton 2007:222). The ideologies are maintained and promoted by a dominant social power, to legitimise its interests in the face of opposing interests and to maintain the status quo.

The concepts outlined above provide powerful explanatory potential for analysing people's actions and reasons for actions. But, when applying them to the situation in Iqaluit, it becomes clear that Bourdieu's concepts fall short of explaining people's actions and motivations in a situation of change. In Iqaluit, people are inevitably forced to reflect on their own behaviour as a result of exposure to difference. Bourdieu has been criticised for his limited acknowledgement of gender relations and the way in which men and women have different experiences of the status quo (McCall 1992; Moi 2000; Jenkins 2003); as well as for his limited acknowledgement of the role of agency: according to Bourdieu people are limited by the habitus to such an extent that they rarely question orthodoxy, let alone challenge it (Jenkins 2003). However, my research in Iqaluit suggests otherwise and therefore I will depart from Bourdieu's concepts when

dealing with people's agency and the influence of gender on experiences of social and cultural change.<sup>3</sup>

My research engages with theories of power as formulated by Bourdieu (1989) and Foucault (1980) which have the structure/agency tension at their core. According to Bourdieu, as a result of existing power relations, individuals can only operate their agency within the existing structural boundaries. I am inclined to agree that a completely free and independent kind of agency, which enables the individual to act in any way he or she wishes is hard to sustain: 'one doesn't do just anything with impunity' (Lamaison and Bourdieu 1986:113), as this would most likely lead to these individuals being classed as outcasts or social misfits. It seems most likely that in practice, social interaction is a mixture of freedom and constraints; however, as we shall see, even within this framework, there are still many unexpected opportunities for some people.

Some women in Iqaluit manage to succeed in education, or in securing employment. In doing so, they might gain understanding and awareness of their situation, and the possibilities of change, a process which Freire (1998) called conscientisation, referring to a collective effort to change an oppressive social order. Freire coined his idea of conscientisation in relation to the struggle against the oppression of the lower classes and oppression by colonisers (Freire and Macedo 1998; Freire 1998). Freire's ideal was a world in which 'exploitation and the verticalisation of power do not exist', a world in which no-one is excluded from opportunities to learn, ask questions and express him- or herself (Freire and Macedo 1998: 9). In order to reach this goal, people need to discover themselves, discover their situation and the reason for their situation, so that they can transform and reinvent their societies, rather than accept them as an unalterable fate (ibid 1998: 37). Freire wanted to encourage people to participate in and become engaged in their society, to: 'discover that the world is also theirs' (ibid 1998: 106), as a means of enabling and directing change (ibid 1998: 18). It was thus Freire's goal to challenge the habitus and the status quo, to help people see the arbitrariness of the cultural arbitrary and to encourage them to envisage alternative possibilities.

Freire's ideas were subsequently developed into the idea of empowerment, which is pertinent and relevant in the context of Nunavut – the creation of which is an attempt of the Inuit of the eastern Arctic to determine their own future and make their own decisions. Although empowerment hasn't been widely used to explain social change among Inuit, as the ethnography presented in this thesis shows, this concept has strong

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<sup>3</sup> I recognise that this is a critique of Bourdieu that is widely held, see especially e.g. McCall, 1992; Moi, 2000; Joppke 2000; Frow 2000; Jenkins 2003; Throop and Murphy 2002.

explanatory power. Individual as well as collective empowerment theories can increase understanding of current issues in the territory of Nunavut. In a society where a common reaction to difficult social situations is physical withdrawal (Lantis 1960:167; Briggs 2000), the use of two radical and highly politicized theorists, like Freire and Bourdieu, might seem somewhat out of place. However, they are useful in exposing unequal power relations and resistance against dominant ideologies. Further, revolutions can come in many forms; some are overt and violent, whilst others are long processes of quiet negotiation, the type of revolution more akin to the land claims process in Arctic Canada.

An understanding of the idea of empowerment presupposes an understanding of the concept of power. Thus, I will start with a brief outline of some literature on the meaning of power. According to Foucault, power is present in every aspect of social life, it is multidirectional, and has the ability to produce things or reality (Foucault 1980). For example, ideologies of gender roles and differential power relations are created by the more powerful in society. People's responsibilities, obligations and expectations are interrelated with power relations; as a result, the more powerful are generally more likely to benefit from social networks, whereas the subordinate will be more likely to feel the negative influence of being a member of a certain network. However, individuals are members of several different networks at the same time occupying more or less powerful positions and providing them with more or less agency in each. They thus 'carry a number of social identities which influence what it is possible for them to be and do' (Jackson 2002:501).

A distinction can be made between *power within*, relating to self-confidence and self-worth, a belief in the value of one's own achievements; *power to*, relating to knowledge and understanding of choices and opportunities, constraints and how to overcome them; *power with*, the knowledge that collaboration can achieve larger goals; and *power over*, the ability to affect others with your actions (e.g.: Rowlands 1995:102; Mayoux 2003:11; Wong 2003:311). Townsend and Porter et al (2004:883) add a subtle difference in *power to do*, relating to action and new skills in every day practicalities. To empower individuals, the first step is to find the power within, a belief in ability and understanding that one has the right to do something. When this is present one can find the power to make choices and understand the constraints and how to overcome them. At this stage, individuals could collectivise and find their power with, in order to tackle larger, societal, constraints. According to Rowlands the concept of power over is not part of empowerment, as someone who asserts power over, necessarily infringes on the rights of other individuals, possibly leading to oppression.

In the analysis of oppression, Rowlands' idea of 'internalised oppression' is useful. This is the idea that 'people who are systematically denied power and influence internalise the messages they receive and come to believe them to be true: 'internalised oppression' is a survival mechanism that becomes so well ingrained that its effects are mistaken for truth' (Rowlands 1995:102). Similarly, the third dimension of power according to Lukes (1974) suggests that the less powerful adopt the ideologies of the more powerful. Thus, in the ideology of the powerful, the less powerful are in their situation because they are inferior and less worthy than the powerful (cf. Bourdieu's cultural arbitrary). When the less powerful adopt this ideology, they will be humble and respectful to the more powerful, they will not rebel against their situation and their oppressors and thus overt means of 'power over' are no longer necessary. This mirrors Freire's idea: 'By internalising the opinion of the oppressors, the oppressed depreciate themselves and become convinced of their own unfitness' (Freire and Macedo 1998:61).

Many of my participants in Iqaluit spoke of the early Canadian government policies regarding the North as 'colonisation'. Thomas (1994) calls for a critical representation of localised colonial regimes, avoiding unhelpful stereotypes about violent, racist colonialist regimes with negative and deleterious effects on the colonized. Colonialism, according to him is not merely 'a political or economic relationship legitimised or justified through ideologies of racism or progress, but equally importantly and deeply, it is a cultural process.' Further, the colonizers often have strategic interests; a genuine concern for the well-being of the colonized leading to civilizing missions; an urge to define new lands as vacant spaces for European achievement and an interest in defining, collecting and mapping the cultures which already inhabited them. Importantly, according to Thomas (1994:15) colonialism is not purely a one-way transformation, because colonial histories are also shaped by indigenous resistance and accommodation towards new ideologies, economies and technologies (cf. Kulchyski 1997:614). Canada's motives in the North were strategic: to claim ownership over certain contested Arctic territories; economic: to exploit mineral and other resources; political: the state felt it had an obligation to 'look after' the aboriginal population in the north; and 'ethical': there was a concern about the well-being of the inhabitants of the Arctic because the decline in the fur-trade had effectively excluded Inuit from the cash economy after their initial incorporation by trading companies (Hicks and White 2000:21.). As such, I think it is justified to describe the involvement of the Canadian Government in the Arctic as colonisation.

To civilise the North, the Canadian Government designed policies to absorb the residents of the North into the Canadian mainstream. The Canadian Government wanted

the Inuit to live in permanent settlements, just like them; learn the same curriculum as them, abide by the same laws as them, in other words, their policies were meant to 'de-Inuitise' (cf. 'de-Africanisation', Freire and Macedo 1998:118) the inhabitants of the North. Freire (ibid) comments: 'The inherited colonial education [...] reproduce[d] in children and youth the profile that colonial ideology itself had created for them, namely, that of inferior beings, lacking in all ability.' In Nunavut, children were educated by strangers in a strange language, many miles away from their families, often without any means of contacting them. According to a report by Pauktuutit (Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada 2007) all Inuit have been affected in one way or another – directly or indirectly - by residential schools operating between 1860 and 1980, taking in 3,997 Inuit children, or about 75% of all 6-15 year olds in the Northwest Territories in 1964. As a result, community, family and kinship ties were disrupted, students experienced fear and loneliness, erosion of their language skills and loss of pride as they were taught western (English or French) values and religion. In some cases the schools provided inadequate food, inadequate living space and poor health care, and resorted to physical punishment, shaming and harsh treatment, leading to a high student death rate.

Not only the students who went through the experience of the residential schools, but also the parents and other family members, as well as children and grandchildren of these students were affected. The schools created a 'distance from families and communities that they could not bridge' (ibid.:11), in terms of language, culture, values and ways of life. The students did not experience living full-time in their own culture, learning traditional ways of life and the meaning of the family structure and they did not experience the traditional upbringing. Some parents believed that getting an education was important and thus sent their children away, whilst others tried to resist, but now feel they were coerced into sending their children away, or had their children forcibly removed from the family. This resulted in the parents feeling angry and guilty. At the same time, the students might also have felt guilty for not being there to help out the family, as this student recalls: 'I found out later that my sisters and brothers went through hardship while I was away at school. My dad died and my younger sisters missed me. I did not help out my siblings. They suffered more because I was away. I do not have nurturing skills now' (quoted in Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada 2007:11).

The values, language and knowledge of the coloniser were internalised by these Inuit children, who learnt that their heritage was inferior to the Canadian heritage. The children were given the impression that everything they had learned and done outside of school had been wrong. The children internalised these myths and felt ashamed of who they were and where they had come from (Freire and Macedo 1998:184). This is a

clear example of internalised oppression, a negative fatalistic view of oneself which is hard to undo. The way in which this can be countered is through the process of empowerment, through resisting the status quo, demanding change, and shifting power relations. According to Foucault (1980), there can be no power relations without resistance. And Bourdieu offers on this point: 'question[ing] the 'possible' [and] bringing back into view the conflicts and confrontations of the early beginnings and therefore all the discarded possibles, retrieves the possibility that things could have been (and still could be) otherwise' (Bourdieu, Wacquant et al. 1994:4).

Batliwala (2007:560) proposes that 'empowerment is a process and the results of a process, of transforming the relations of power between individuals and groups, between men and women, within and across social categories of various kinds.' This includes a shift in social power by challenging the ideologies that maintain social inequalities, by altering patterns of access to and control over resources and finally by changing the institutions and structures that reinforce and maintain the existing power structures. In this definition, she remains very close to Freire's idea of a collective struggle against oppression, against societal perceptions of who should have access to certain resources and who should not, and against the structures that reinforce these perceptions in order to remain in power. Mayoux's (2003:3) definition starts from individual development, it moves on to processes that require collective action. It recognises that a change in society cannot take place until the dominant ideology that oppresses individuals has been demystified and people start to see themselves as able and worthy individuals. For her, empowerment is: 'individuals acquiring the power to think and act freely, exercise choice and to fulfil their potential as full and equal members of society', through gaining knowledge and understanding of social relations and the potential to change these; development of self-worth, a belief in one's ability and a right to control one's own life; and gaining the ability to influence change and create a more just society (Mayoux 2003:3).

Rowlands' (1995:103) definition originates in a counselling context and centres on the awareness of the abilities, identity and situation of either individuals or groups and the awareness of larger constructs that influence these. This awareness then would stand at the beginning of 'apprehen[ding] that situation as an historical reality susceptible of transformation' (Freire and Macedo 1998:78). Another aspect of this definition is that it truly defines empowerment as a process in that it proposes that the empowered work at empowering others around them.

The main thrust of this thesis is the power relations and constructed realities that are at the core of post-modern theories. However, the undeniable force of the environment in Arctic environs, lends itself to further analysis of my material using environmental determinist approaches. As the world and each society is made up of internal social constructs as well as external realities, I will use the data presented in this thesis to establish where post-modern and environmental determinist theories could meet and be usefully merged in an attempt to resolve their opposition and identifying the useful concepts of each of these two paradigms. In this quest I am with Bourdieu, who is of the opinion that both objectivist and subjectivist approaches obscure important aspects of the lived reality. Each has their own weakness in that 'subjectivism inclines one to reduce structures to visible interactions' whilst 'objectivism tends to deduce actions and interactions from the structure' (Bourdieu 1989:17).

The central themes of environmental determinism are adaptation to the environment through customs, belief systems and ritual; and cultural evolution as a response to population growth and the resulting intensification of resource extraction (Peoples and Bailey 2006:71-72). This paradigm focuses on the interaction between environment and society and tends to view society as an amorphous whole made up of a homogenous population, without recognising the different experiences of different groups of people within society (poor vs. rich, powerful vs. powerless, children vs. adults, men vs. women etc.). Post-modernism maintains that all knowledge reflects the cultural traditions of the society in which it is cultivated and is embedded in the power relations within that society (Ibid.). Thus according to post-modernists - as well as Bourdieu and Foucault, who might be more appropriately termed post-structuralists - power and power relations shape all behaviour, beliefs and knowledge in a society. This seems to deny the physical realities of the climate, ecological systems and environment in which a particular society carves out a living. In short, whilst post-modernism has traditionally focused on such topics as power relations, interactions between individuals in society and the political discourse, it has largely ignored the external reality, which is the central theme of environmental determinism and which inherently limits societies in many critical ways. This thesis will attempt to bring the two together by looking both at internal power structures and political processes as well as external limits and the interaction between society and the environment, the individual and the environment, the place of the environment in society and individual and vice versa.

We have seen in the previous chapter that in recent years arctic ethnography has become strongly politically engaged, similar to the approach used by Bourdieu and Freire, who certainly weren't just passive observers in the societies they studied.

Therefore - and because of my concerns with reflexivity, in line with post-modernist approaches - my opinion on politics and political development in the North cannot be ignored in a contextualisation of my work in the works of so many others that have gone before me. I view the history of the north as a story of oppression and colonisation of a native people by the Canadian government, despite the good intentions of the latter. I believe very strongly that the Inuit, like aboriginal people elsewhere in the world have special rights to land and resources as the original inhabitants of countries later appropriated by Europeans.<sup>4</sup> The beliefs and knowledge of Aboriginal people are valuable and useful for understanding the world in which we live and for understanding human-nature relations, and therefore deserve mention alongside and on equal footing with scientific approaches and worldviews. The Aboriginal people have the right to self-government, and the right to create a form of governance that is meaningful in the light of their beliefs, history and cosmology. In line with this, this account of change in Iqaluit is not an attempt at advising the Inuit on the right way to development. I know there are many strong and respected individuals amongst the people of Nunavut, who are in a much better position than I am to advise on future developments in the territory. My aim is simply to report on the lives of some of these individuals, on their views and their hopes for their territory, in order to broaden understanding of the processes and issues they are dealing with and the ways in which they attempt to do so. My views, as much as I might have tried to keep them in the background, have inevitably shaped this thesis; however, the central argument has been shaped by the stories and experiences of my research participants.

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<sup>4</sup> In this view I have been influenced by Freire's (1998) 'Pedagogy of Freedom' and Memmi's (1965) 'The colonizer and the colonized'

## 4. A POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE ARCTIC IN RELATION TO ANTHROPOLOGICAL WRITINGS

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I will make clear in this chapter the extent to which the Arctic regions have throughout history been profoundly influenced by developments elsewhere. Similarly, Arctic Anthropology has been influenced by academic developments and the development of anthropological thought in the rest of the world. The romantic vision of the Arctic as an isolated, pristine wilderness is largely unrealistic. The Arctic has seen visitors from the 1500s onwards, however, these visitors were, especially in the early days, few in number. Our version of the early history of the Arctic is seen through the lens with which these early visitors viewed this unknown land. Only in recent years have the views of the people who have inhabited these regions for thousands of years - and whose histories therefore extend much further back - been added to this picture of the history of the Arctic.

This chapter aims to provide a brief chronological overview of the history of Arctic anthropology and how it reflects the history of the Arctic. The globalisation theory suggests that history in one part of the world cannot be seen in isolation from developments in other parts of the world. Thus this chapter will place Arctic anthropology in the context of the development of anthropological thought in general, and political developments in the Arctic and elsewhere in the world. This history of the Arctic, of Arctic Anthropology and anthropological thought provides a context for the rest of the thesis, and the topics of central interest to it.

### 4.1. BEFORE THE 1800S: FIRST CONTACTS

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From about the 1500s onwards, there were occasional non-Inuit visitors in the Arctic waters of Davis Strait, Hudson Strait and Hudson Bay. They were few in number and their visits were typically short and geographically dispersed. Between Martin Frobisher's visit in 1576 and 1848 - when the Franklin expedition mysteriously disappeared<sup>5</sup> - about 22 explorers entered the Arctic waters (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami 2004:10). They were mostly British explorers who sailed north in search of the North

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<sup>5</sup> The Franklin Expedition set sail from Greenhithe, England, on the morning of 19 May 1845, with a crew of 24 officers and 110 men. A combination of bad weather, years locked in ice, disease including scurvy, poisoned food, botulism and starvation killed everyone in the Franklin party.

West passage, hoping to find a trading route connecting to China. They also traded with the Inuit they met on the way, though contacts were often hostile (Barrow 1818:86-87; van der Voort 1996:1050). However, in the process, as expressed in a paper on Inuit history prepared by the Inuit Tapariit Kanatami: 'with each trip, the map of the Arctic became more European and then our land itself started to be claimed by outsiders' (2004:10).

Since the Arctic was less accessible and had fewer resources to offer than, for example, the Yukon and the Mackenzie Valley (to the West and South-West of what is now known as Nunavut), outside influences in the Eastern Arctic came later and were less extensive than in those areas (Hicks and White 2000:19). A very influential outside force however, was the Hudson's Bay Company which acquired trading monopoly of much of what is now known as Nunavut in 1670 (Hicks and White 2000:73). In comparison with Greenland - where ethnographers had thoroughly studied the Inuit well before the 19<sup>th</sup> century - very few reliable ethnographic accounts were produced in the Eastern Arctic until the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (van der Voort 1996:1055), possibly on account of its inaccessible nature.

#### 4.2. 1800 – 1915: BOAS AND THE BIRTH OF ETHNOGRAPHY

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The whaling industry, another outside influence in the Arctic regions, began in the early 1700s<sup>6</sup>, peaking from about 1800 until 1915. At the beginning of this period, European and American whalers would come only for the period during which the waters were accessible (Jackson 2003); the only whalers staying for the winter being those that got their ships stuck in the ice. From 1850 onwards the whaling industry started to create permanent whaling stations resulting in increased impact on the seasonal land use of the local people living in the vicinity and especially on their health, with the Inuit population suffering a significant decline in numbers through the introduction of diseases (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami 2004:11-12). The whalers occasionally took an extra ship mate on board in exchange for food, tobacco and rifles; invited the Inuit for church services and other Christian celebrations and were the first to introduce Western medicine in the Arctic (Eber 1996:35). In those regions frequented by the whalers, the

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<sup>6</sup> However, Scoresby (1820:6) - relating the history of whale fishery - recounts the voyage of Ohthere, a native of Halgoland in the year 890, during which whales were taken and also suggests that at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century 'Icelanders, [...] uniting their energies with those of the Biscayans conducted the whale fishery on so extensive a scale that [...] the number of vessels annually employed [...] amounted to a fleet of 50 or 60 sail.' (ibid.:17-18)

Inuit soon came to depend on the whalers for their supply of rifles and ammunition (Busch 1987; Freeman, Bogoslovskaya et al. 1998:72), but most Inuit were not immediately affected (Hicks and White 2000:19). The end of the whaling industry around 1915 was a result of depleted resources (Nansen 1925:228-229), a change in fashion, and the use of petroleum products as a cheaper alternative to whale oil (Mastny January/February 2000:27). Thus the whalers left the Arctic, leaving the local population alone to deal with the dangerously depleted whale and walrus populations on which they depended for survival (Busch 1987:148).

From the late 1800s the influence of the missionaries on the eastern and other parts of the Arctic was intensified<sup>7</sup> and in the early 1900s the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) started establishing their posts in the Eastern Arctic as well (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami 2004:13), thus adding their voice to the confusing cacophony of change in the Arctic. During the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the first ethnographers, such as Hall (1865), Boas (1964 [1888]) and Murdoch (1892) started producing reports on the Arctic, listing all the customs, practices, tools, stories and songs they found on their voyages in a fairly uninvolved, distant manner, without an attempt at theorising. These works are of great value in their descriptions of material, ceremonial and economic culture at a time when these were only marginally influenced by the New World, but the presence of these writers in the Arctic did also influence life, as this account by Murdoch exemplifies:

The purchase of this specimen [of labret] apparently started the manufacture of bone labrets at Utkiavwin, where no bone labrets, old or new, had previously been seen. For several days after we bought the specimen from Sidarn the natives continued to bring over bone labrets, but all so newly and clumsily made that we declined to purchase any more than four specimens. About the same time they began to make oblong labrets out of soapstone (a material which we never saw used for genuine labrets). The purchase of three specimens of these started a wholesale manufacture of them and we stopped purchasing (Murdoch 1892:147).

The theoretical framework that most ethnographers of that time subscribed to was social evolutionism, believing that all societies develop through the same three stages of primitiveness, barbarism and eventually civilisation. Other cultures were studied from the point of view of the outsider, the terms of his culture were imposed on descriptions of the culture studied. However, Boas always opposed this paradigm and instead developed the theoretical approach of cultural relativism, which argues a contextual approach to the study of culture. He also, together with Malinowski, developed the

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<sup>7</sup> the first missionary post in Baffin Island was established by rev. E.J. Peck in 1894 (Blaisel, X., F. Laugrand, et al. 1999:372)

participant-observation method of fieldwork, which was to increase the 'facts' about any given culture, and reduce the amount of speculation that was done in the discipline at that time (Peoples and Bailey 2006:89).

Rasmussen - another famous Arctic ethnographer, working in the early 1900s - visited and studied different regions across the circumpolar Arctic. His evolutionary thinking becomes clear from different passages in his books. For example in his description of the welcome he receives from the group of Polar Eskimos on his arrival in their homeland he describes them as a 'swarm' creating 'an extraordinarily barbaric first impression'. However, he goes on to say that 'at the moment it was difficult to believe that these 'savages' were ever likely to become one's good, warm friends' (Rasmussen 1908:9-10), suggesting that his opinions of his hosts did change quite drastically during his stay.

#### 4.3. 1915-1929: HISTORICAL PARTICULARISM AND PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

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During the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Boas' research interests shifted from the Arctic peoples to Pacific peoples, but his ideas of cultural relativism and the theoretical paradigm of historical particularism - which aims to study cultures on their own terms - gathered momentum. The maelstrom of new, competing ideas which are a feature of this era are reflected in Stefánsson's work visiting the Canadian Arctic in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He embraced the method of participant observation: 'You can never live in your own house as a neighbour to people of a strange race and expect to get an intimate view of their lives through visiting no matter how frequently' (Stefánsson 1922:63). He thus accepts his fate and 'learn[s] to live as an Eskimo - on a diet of fish without salt' (Ibid.1922:64). However, he dismisses Inuit beliefs about increasing hunting success as 'charming but ... pure superstition'. And provides an account not of Inuit sealing practices, but of 'how I do it and how the other white men do it' (Ibid.1922:263), thereby demonstrating the limits of cultural relativism in his own thinking.

The accounts produced at this time, rather than detached descriptions of unfamiliar customs and ways of distant people, provided engaging stories of the experiences of the ethnographers and explorers while they lived in the Arctic regions (see for example: Peary 1910; Stefánsson 1918; Rasmussen 1927; Birket-Smith 1936 [1927]; Jenness 1961 [1928]), these accounts provide not only a description of a people trying to accommodate a growing number of foreigners in their homelands, but also the

personality and mindset of the ethnographers. The works therefore have to be read keeping in mind the worldview of these early Arctic visitors, all of whom were male and, despite the inroads made by Boas and the emergent discipline of cultural anthropology, were still quite strongly influenced by the evolutionary perspectives of earlier times. Whilst they clearly presented great respect for the Eskimo in their writings, e.g. '[the Eskimo are] subject to the severest test to which [man] has ever been put' (Birket-Smith 1936 [1927]:ix), and 'in a difficult struggle for existence under hard natural conditions they have acquired the ability to live together in peace and good will' (Stefánsson 1918: 2-3), at the same time all these writers write in a manner which is, at times, quite condescending to the Eskimo. For example, Birket-Smith writes: 'the fact is that even the Eskimos' best friends cannot hide the fact that cleanliness is not one of their great qualities' (1936 [1927]:122). Peary (1910:58) agrees on this point and adds: 'The Eskimos of this region have not, as a rule, applied themselves to the study of English, for they were clever enough to see that we could learn their language more easily than they could learn ours. On the whole, these people are much like children, and should be treated as such', whilst Jenness is clearly exasperated when he states: '...these natives were astonishingly primitive...' (1961 [1928]:46).

At this time, the Inuit way of life and livelihood was slowly transformed from hunting for subsistence to trapping for the fur economy initiated by the establishment of Hudson Bay Company (HBC) trading posts (Eber and Ashoona 2003:105). This resulted in a diffusion of family groups over large areas and a reduction in the potential for cooperative hunting and sharing of food, skills and social responsibilities. Because often profitable trapping areas were not in the proximity of preferred hunting areas, families started to struggle in providing for themselves. The traders were powerful agents at this time, as they made the decisions on issuing credit and were charged with collecting debts (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami 2004:12).

In reaction to these changes another concern of Arctic anthropologists at the time was the search for the 'pure culture'. Although some ethnographers celebrated the geographical isolation of the region which had kept contacts to a minimum, the rate of change and acculturation for the Inuit in the Canadian Arctic steadily increased and really gained force during the Second World War. Ethnographers therefore started working to find the pure and uncontaminated culture which they considered to be in need of preserving. Rasmussen aims to find the 'unaltered primitive character' of the Eskimos:

These natural obstacles, which have kept others away, were all to our advantage, because they have kept the tribes of Eskimos I intended to visit uncontaminated by

white civilisation, imprisoned within their swampy tundras, unaltered in all their primitive character. (Rasmussen 1927:19)

...and expresses his frustration when he finds 'much of their original character has been lost' in his account 'Across Arctic America' published in 1927:

We saw no reason to spend any time among the people in the neighbourhood of Baker Lake, as these, the Aernermiut, had for a long time past had dealings with the whalers, and much of their original character had been lost. We therefore transferred our attention without delay to the unknown interior (Ibid. :54).

I had expected to find these people living in quite a primitive state, and in this respect, was disappointed beyond measure. What we did find was the worst kind of tinpot store and canned provision culture; a product of trading expeditions to the distant Hudson's Bay Company's stations. And when a powerful gramophone struck up, and Caruso's mighty voice rang out from Igjugarjuk's tent, I felt that we had missed our market, as far as the study of these people was concerned (Ibid. :63).

The emphasis on pure cultures meant it wasn't considered useful in any way to study people who had already been influenced by European visitors. This concern is related to the fear that these people and their cultures won't survive much longer:

And, just as Mr Rasmussen was the first man to make thorough and efficient research into the folk-lore treasures of the Polar Eskimos, their traditional history and their religion, he will probably of necessity be the last. When others come, if they do come, they will be too late. The Polar Eskimos are very few in number. They are not a fertile race, and year by year, ravaged often by mysterious and perhaps imported sicknesses and waging a perpetual war with Nature in her harshest mood, they are growing steadily fewer. Soon there may be none of them left (Rasmussen 1908:viii).

In fact, this search for the pure culture has never really left anthropological ideology. Despite the development of urban and cosmopolitan anthropological enquiry, many anthropologists still feel more at home with 'exotic, pure cultures' in 'pristine' and 'untouched' environments even today.

Analogous with the ethnographer's search for the pure Eskimo culture, the Northern policy of the Canadian government up until the 1930s was solely geared towards 'keeping the native native.' (McLean 1995:184; see also Damas 2002). Jenness, who had witnessed the Southern Canadian influences in the Arctic already, proposed educational reforms as early as 1925, and again in 1934 because 'the condition of the Canadian Eskimos was a disgrace to a civilized country'. Jenness further argued that the Inuit were Canada's strongest claim to ownership of the Arctic, and therefore had to be protected from extinction. However, the Government was 'convinced that the Inuit were destined to remain hunters and trappers. The natives are not yet sufficiently advanced for the white man's education. State organised schooling is therefore at best an unnecessary expenditure and at worst a threat to Inuit self-sufficiency' (ibid.: 183). The government maintained this position up until about 1945.

As mentioned earlier the RCMP started creating posts in the Arctic region from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century onwards, their mandate was bringing 'law and order' to

the north and protecting biological resources. Ruth, one of Tularialik and Pelly's informants, can remember this vividly:

The RCMP were always watching for people going out hunting. They said the hunters should not kill any more caribou because it was the spring. When I saw the policeman I thought: we will not have any caribou to eat after all. I would have nothing to eat but more biscuits' (Tularialik and Pelly 1986).

The RCMP also were of strategic importance, as they controlled access to the Arctic lands and waters. The role of the RCMP is described in the house of commons in 1924:

it is necessary to protect our rights against foreigners; to protect our fisheries, and to take care of our property generally. I think it is wise for us to exercise some oversight over the Canadian tribes, because...if you do not protect them, the traders who are not particularly anxious about the welfare of the native Eskimo, get in amongst them and debauch them, carry in liquor and exercise an evil influence among the tribes, and then the responsibility is ours. The Eskimo problem is beginning to be a rather serious one for us to handle, and we are establishing police posts at various points along the coast to protect the Eskimo and preserve their game (Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami 2004:14).

Thus the RCMP was to protect Canadian sovereignty, to protect wildlife resources from over harvesting by Inuit and to protect the Inuit innocence from traders' 'debauchery'.

#### 4.4. 1930S-1949: DIFFUSIONISM AND WARS

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The Great Depression of the 1930s profoundly influenced life in the Arctic. After adapting to a life centred around trapping fox and selling furs, fur prices dropped dramatically. Many Inuit no longer led the traditional subsistence way of life and were no longer able to, and in addition there was a severe decline in the caribou population. As a result, many Inuit families died from starvation. At this same time, the Roman Catholic and the Anglican Church started taking children away to boarding schools. Inuit language, traditional belief systems, and cultural and social customs were actively discouraged by the missionaries, who derived a lot of their power from the educational and health services they provided to the Inuit. In 1945 these services were taken over by the state (van der Voort 1996:1058).

During the Second World War and the Cold War following that, the Arctic featured heavily as a strategic middle-ground in between the US and Europe and the US and the USSR. Both Canada and the USA started investing heavily in infrastructure and built weather stations, signal stations, air defence posts, air force bases and radio bases. All these were staffed with American and Canadian personnel and were visited regularly by supply ships, they also provided wage labour opportunities for Inuit in the surrounding areas (Ibid.). Scientific studies written at this time were directly related to war efforts.

For example Weyer's (1943) paper, constructs a complex figure which can be used to establish the time of the sunrise and sunset around the world. It is clearly concerned only with the well-being of the Southern visitors in the Arctic, and doesn't question how their presence affected life of the original inhabitants (cf Williamson 1986:70). The importance of the figure is explained in purely military strategic terms in that construction is hampered by the early darkness and the midnight sun 'is one of the hazards of the supply route to Murmansk' (Weyer 1943:475).

Anthropological thought at this time further developed from the historical particularism pioneered by Boas, to diffusionism, which aimed to identify one or more centres around the world from where (cultural) innovations spread. Arctic ethnographers tried to establish the paths of migration of the Eskimo people, by determining the primitiveness of certain cultural traits. The most primitive ones were considered to be the most original, thus areas with the most primitive traits were considered to be areas of earlier occupation, and therefore areas of origin for the Eskimos living elsewhere in the Arctic (Jenness 1925 concerned himself with this early see also; Mathiasen 1930; Robinson 1944; Lantis 1947).

Giffen's (1975 [1930]:3) study of the interrelations of the gender division of labour and other aspects of Inuit culture differs from many ethnographies of that time, since it was written by a female and based on secondary data. Her approach to the study of gender is holistic, and her view of culture is one of mutually interrelated parts, and as such it resonates with the functionalist approach that was developed in Britain at this time. But Giffen's account, just like the first-hand accounts of male ethnographers on which it is based, clearly shows her perspective on gender relations in her own society, while it provides an account of the Eskimo situation. Giffen accepts the male ethnographer's preconceived ideas about the nature of gender relations in the North and denies the evidence against hunting being a purely male pursuit. When women hunt she calls this behaviour 'no doubt exceptional', even though the works she has studied all mention these 'exceptions.' Further, when describing women's hunting activities, she seems to typify them as recreational, rather than economic, women are merely 'amusing themselves', whilst for men hunting is a serious practice. This clearly denies the importance of these women's activities, even when they are engaged in seal hunting, the single most important economic activity in the Arctic. Furthermore, Giffen suggests the animals hunted by women are less valuable and important than the animals hunted by men. She also points out that these 'animals of little esteem' are resorted to in times of famine, which indicates to me that their contribution to the diet is quite literally of vital importance. Giffen concludes her study with the view that the harshness of the

environment means cooperation between men and women is the key to survival and that therefore both men and women will perform the duties normally assigned to the opposite sex when necessary.

Sixteen years later, Lantis provided an account of what she termed 'the social culture' of the inhabitants of Nunivak Island (1946), in which she describes all material and non-material cultural aspects of Nunivak islanders. Her comments about the gender division of labour are in many respects very similar to Giffen's. For example, she relates Old Loxtusiga's stories of a woman 'he had heard about who could throw a spear farther than any man competing against her. And in a tug of war a man could not pull her' and dismisses the story by concluding: 'Such an Amazon probably is mythical.' The gender division of labour will be further investigated in the last section of this chapter.

#### 4.5. 1950S-1969: NEO-EVOLUTIONISM, ENVIRONMENT AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MANCHESTER SCHOOL

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As mentioned above, the government took over the responsibility for education and health services in the north from the missionaries in 1945. Their attitude toward Northern education policy during the 1940s was ambivalent, on the one hand they acknowledged that the changes that had taken place in the Arctic had changed life in the North considerably, making it harder to maintain the traditional lifestyle. On the other hand, they noted that the education provided 'should not make him [the Eskimo] discontented', and 'his morale must be sustained and the development of any race inferiority complex avoided' (McLean 1995:186), in line with the perceived governmental obligation of protecting the Inuit.

In the early 1950s the government started to see education as a 'legitimate means [for assisting] Inuit to adjust to social change and modernity' (Ibid.). Their attitude shifted from protecting the Inuit against the influences of modernisation, to attempting to facilitate their modernisation. By the mid-1950s the government became convinced the Inuit would benefit most from assimilation into mainstream Canadian civilisation. They saw education as a way to prepare Inuit for wage employment (Ibid.) and provided Inuit children with education at boarding schools in the South, where children were taken and taught in English, according to an English curriculum (see for example: van der Voort 1996:1058; Hicks and White 2000:22). 'My grandparents, they were abused [hit, scolded] if they spoke their own language. I mean like, by a minister from a long time ago.' (Elisa, quoted in Matthijsse 2003). Children were separated from their parents, families and communities and forbidden to speak their language and were thus

prevented from learning important survival skills necessary for every day life in the North. This caused miscommunication and misunderstanding between parents and their children and upon return the children were not equipped for life in the Arctic (Matthiasson 1992). Public health services and social welfare were also introduced and the Government of Canada started creating permanent settlements (Hicks and White 2000:20). In 1953, the RCMP was ordered by the Canadian Government to move a number of families from Northern Quebec hundreds of kilometres further north to Ellesmere Island to bolster claims to Canadian sovereignty (Brody 1975; Hicks and White 2000; Stern and Stevenson 2006; Alia 2007; McGrath 2007).

The attitude of the Canadian government towards the Inuit was very paternalistic; the Inuit were not asked their opinions and were not considered capable of making their own decisions (cf. Duffy 1988:197). The Inuit, in trying to avoid conflict, complied with the southerners' wishes, even if this meant a loss of their culture and independence:

The Inuit were really scared to say no when, in the beginning, the *Qallunaat* would ask them to do something. They sort of felt they had to. My personal feeling is that the Inuit were really afraid of these very bossy childlike people who would come from down south (Ukallianuk 2005:187-188, see also Brody 1976).

The 1950s also saw the establishment of a Hudson Bay Company trading post in Frobisher Bay (currently called Iqaluit) and the construction of the Distant Early Warning Line (DEW line) right across the Arctic (Williamson 1986:71). Interestingly, as the Canadian government intensified its influence in the Arctic regions, anti-colonial and independence movements were gathering strength in other parts of the world (e.g. the struggle for independence from the Dutch in Indonesia (1945-1949); the Algerian war against the French (1954-1962); and the Mau Mau Uprising in Kenya against the British (1952-1960))

One strong trend in anthropological thought in the 1950s relevant to Arctic anthropology has been termed neo-evolutionism, however its main focus is on the effect of the environment on cultural characteristics. Neo-evolutionists aimed to construct an objective definition of technological progress, without presupposing superiority of one society over another, as their predecessors had. Whilst White (1969 [1949]) argued that technology determined all aspects of culture, Steward (1973 [1955]) believed technology and environment were in a relationship of mutual impact and together determined cultural characteristics.

An example of this strand of thought in Arctic anthropological works is Jenness' (1957) comment in the conclusion of his book 'Dawn in Arctic Alaska':

During [five thousand years] they had experienced numerous vicissitudes, and undergone many changes, in adapting themselves to the seasonal and secular rhythms of their wilderness home. But nature had been too niggardly to permit their

technological advancement so long as they remained cut off from the rest of mankind; and inevitably they fell behind in the search for knowledge and in the control of earth's infinite resources and forces. (Jenness 1957:214)

Another significant event in the 1960s was the Man the Hunter conference, in which Hunter Gatherer societies were for the first time presented as the original affluent societies. Contributors to this conference also applied and critiqued the neo-evolutionist ideas. The proceedings were published in a volume edited by Lee and DeVore in 1968. Contributions by Arctic anthropologists included Damas (1968) who found a correlation between ecological factors and social structure, but did not see this as a 'total explanation of regional variations', because he found very different patterns of community organisation in different areas in the Arctic with very similar ecology.

Similarly, Laughlin (1968) argued that population density cannot be explained by natural resources available alone, but rather by the way in which different segments of society (for example the old and infirm, the children, the adult women, the adult men etc.) -each with their own tools (or technological development)- occupied and used different kinds of habitats in the surrounding area. Eggan (1968) contributes to the discussion by looking at differences in sharing practices for different food groups, different animals and different Arctic regions, arguing that these rules are flexible depending on the specific social context, thus again critiquing environmental determinism.

In the conclusion of the volume, Levi-Strauss (1968:349) calls on anthropologists to help preserve 'pure cultures'. He also questions the notion of scientific 'truth' and concludes that 'the only presentation to truth that we may have will be limited to a set of complementary points of view which leave room for fundamental uncertainties, incapable of final resolution. A fact which must forever remain unknown will be more and more closely surrounded by different perspectives, but these will be perspectives in a thing which in itself will remain unattainable' (Ibid. :351), a notion closely resembling the later developed post-modernist critique of science.

In 1950 Mauss' study 'seasonal variation of the Eskimo', which was originally published in 1908, was translated into English. Mauss - working in the French tradition - uses a structural functionalist analysis of Inuit seasonal movements. According to him Inuit culture was based on the dichotomy of summer and winter. In summer Inuit life was characterised by small family camps, fairly isolated with limited social interaction and limited ceremonialism, with informal sharing between family members. In contrast, in winter, life is characterised by much bigger camps, where there is much more social interaction and visiting, much more ceremonialism and rigorous food sharing practices

ensure social harmony. Balikci (1967) largely agrees with the description of seasonality in Inuit society described by Mauss, but suggests the Inuit apply the models flexibly using many alternatives in addition in order to adapt to varying conditions. In another study (Balikci 1968:82) he applies the ideas of environmental determinism to practices of infanticide amongst the Inuit. He concludes: 'Ecological adaptation is the effect of the most striking features of environment on human life, as evidenced in subsistence techniques, economic organisation and settlement patterns.' He suggests a work/leisure time ratio could be used as an objective criterion to measure ecological pressure not just on the Inuit, but on any given society. The interest in the relationship between people and their environments subsequently formed the basis of the environmental determinism school in the 1980s.

Another influential school that developed in this period was the Manchester school, with Max Gluckman as the forerunner, which focused on the study of social interaction to uncover rules and thought-systems prevalent in societies primarily in Africa. The main method of investigation that was promoted in this school was the use of case-studies (Layton 1997:34). Gluckman's work was strongly influenced by his political views – he was anti-colonialist – and his work focussed on oppression and inequality. He thus contributed to a politicisation of anthropology, with a focus on social and cultural change.

Although not deriving directly from the Manchester school, a similar approach is recognisable in the Arctic anthropology of the time. Berreman (1955) conducted a case study of Nikolski – a community on the Aleutian Islands, southwest of mainland Alaska, where the incoming culture with its new ideas and desirable goals was seen as having led to community disintegration. However, Chance's (1960) study of the community of Kaktovik, located on the north-eastern coast of Alaska, argues against the automatic assumption that rapid social and cultural change leads to community disarray. The unique developments in Kaktovik show that in this community, rapid change was not accompanied by disintegration and disorganisation. Chance identifies six factors that contributed to a relatively easy transition, namely the community had traditionally placed greater value on adaptability than on conformity, thus helping its members adapt to change; the changes in the community were mainly voluntary; the new goals were attainable within the community, as employment opportunities had increased with the construction of the DEW-line just outside Kaktovik; new opportunities were available to everyone; the cultural balance of laws and regulations was maintained as they all changed at the same time; and the people in the community maintained authority over their own internal affairs (Ibid.:1041). However, this study did not record long-term

effects, and can be criticised for only focussing on the male adult population of the community. Honigmann (1957) and Honigmann and Honigmann (1965) studied the relations between white state representatives and Indians in a Northern Canadian community and the role different ideologies played in this relationship and institutionalisation and organisation and a 'relatively total picture of Eskimo town life' in Iqaluit respectively. Graburn (1969), writing about economy and ecology in Sugluk, Northern Quebec, states the Inuit have eagerly seized new opportunities brought by southern visitors, but at the same time also experienced social problems such as heavy drinking, promiscuity and hard-to-control children. According to Vallee, Schwartz and Darknell (1957) communities undergo both assimilation and differentiation at the same time at different levels, thus arguing against a move towards a more culturally homogenous world. Finally, Hughes (1960) studied cultural and social change in Sivokak, a community on St. Lawrence Island, just off the west coast of Alaska.

Other Arctic studies in the 50s and 60s include a number of detailed studies on specific aspects of Inuit society, such as Carpenter, Varley and Faherty's (1959) study on the development of Inuit art; Guemple's (1965) study on naming practices in Inuit society; and van den Steenhoven's (1968) study on traditional Inuit legal practices. At the time, Damas (1968:105) argued these studies were important, because in order to fully understand social and cultural change - 'a concern which is rapidly becoming the chief focus of anthropological studies in the American Arctic' - a clear picture of pre-contact society is needed. They also indicate a growing confidence in anthropology that it can move beyond holistic, totalising studies to research that focuses on particular topics.

#### 4.6. 1970s: INUIT ORGANISATION AND POLITICAL ACTIVIST ANTHROPOLOGY

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By the beginning of the 1970s almost all Inuit had moved into settled communities year-round. Against the backdrop of worldwide anti-colonialist movements after World War II, and through increased contact with other Eskimo groups, political awareness of the domination of the Qallunaat grew amongst Inuit and they started to organise themselves in Inuit organisations to voice their own opinions and take back control of their own land and lives (e.g. Marecic 1999:282). One of those organisations, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC, founded in 1971), initiated a study on Inuit land use in 1973, which was to be the base for establishing Inuit land rights and aboriginal title. Three years later, they

proposed not only a comprehensive settlement of Inuit land claims but also the creation of a new territory called Nunavut (e.g. Crowe 1991; van der Voort 1996:1059; Wachowich 1999:272; Hicks and White 2000; Damas 2002:200; Alia 2007:123).

The politicisation of academic works gained further support as exemplified by the development of critical theory in the 1970s which critiques domination and has an emancipatory interest. According to Marshall (1988:217) critical theory focuses on the dialectical nature of social reality; the interrelationship between macro and micro levels of reality; freeing people from economical, psychological, sexual and aesthetic structures; a rejection of deterministic theories; and the relevance of everyday life as a theoretical and political sphere of investigation. This resonates very closely with Bourdieu's work, of which the most well-known is perhaps his 'Outline of a theory of practice', originally published in 1972 in which he argues that we should do away with grand theory, because it mystifies what is actually happening, and instead centralise practice. Bourdieu gained in popularity in the social sciences from the 1970s onwards, and is still considered one of the main theorists of recent times. Similar to critical theory, feminism was revived in academic works in the 1970s, aiming to raise women's issues and study them from the perspective of individuality and diversity. Feminist scholars studied women's positions in society as a social rather than a biological or natural construct; gender identity; and relationships within and between genders. They aimed to analyse 'women's oppression as part of an historically situated totality subject to transformation' (Marshall 1988:222).

Brody, an influential Arctic scholar, was one such politically active social scientist. His 'The people's land: Eskimos and whites in the eastern Arctic' (Brody 1975) is an early example of a book reporting an Inuit perspective on their own culture and history and documenting that the Canadian northern colonialism, however well-meaning, was also very paternalistic and controlling. Robert Paine (1971), in contrast to the critical theorists, but maintaining a political theme, applies the grand theory of patronage (admittedly revised to better fit the Arctic context) to explain the grass roots level of political process. In so doing he provides interesting insights into the influence of particular individuals on the development of certain regions of the Arctic. Another influential book that appeared in the 1970s is Nooter's (1976) account of outside influences and the resulting changing leadership patterns in an East Greenland community. In this part of the Arctic the contact period and subsequent political development was ahead of the Eastern Arctic in Canada and as such political development differed from the Canadian Arctic. Perhaps one of the best known Arctic ethnographies of all time is Briggs' 'Never in Anger', first published in 1970. It is the

gripping story of her life with a family belonging to the Utkuhikhalingmiut (Utku) and an insightful study of how emotions are expressed, controlled, classified and taught to children in this society. Briggs considers the Inuit as placing great importance on controlling negative emotion. As a piece of psychological anthropology the circumstances of the ethnography made possible a very close and detailed description of life amongst the Utku and also necessitated a strongly reflexive attitude to fieldwork, research and truth more generally. Briggs has maintained this critical reflexive perspective throughout her career as an Arctic researcher to this day.

#### 4.7. 1980S-1999: CRITICAL REFLEXIVE ANTHROPOLOGY

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One of the greatest influences impacting on the economy of the Arctic in the 1980s was the worldwide condemnation of the seal hunt, with Brigitte Bardot – the French film-actress - a high-profile opponent. She and other animal rights activists succeeded in getting a Europe-wide ban on the import of any sealskin products in 1983. These bans had devastating economic and social impacts on Nunavut communities, as the sale of seal products was the only income available to Inuit (Hicks and White 2000:20-21).

Despite the severe economic downturn caused by the ban on seal product imports, the Inuit continued their struggle to maintain and strengthen their identity through the preservation (and reinvention) of language and culture. This resulted in the recognition of all aboriginal languages as official languages by the North West Territories' Legislative Assembly through the 1984 Language Act (van der Voort 1996:1058). This period is marked by attempts to resist the dominant incoming culture 'in small but meaningful ways, attempting to recapture past practices: living off the land, reclaiming old campsites; reverting to Inuit names; setting up museums; recording elders' memories; attempting to repatriate artefacts; reviving dog teams and other pre-contact practices' (Mitchell 1996:131). On the other hand the ongoing acculturation towards a southern Canadian lifestyle resulted in social pathologies such as addiction and suicide (van der Voort 1996:1058).

During a meeting of the ITC in 1980 a resolution for the creation of the Territory of Nunavut was passed. In 1982 the Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut (TFN) was established to represent the Inuit in what was to become the Nunavut territory, which took over the negotiation of land claim settlements from ITC. TFN, the federal government and the government of the Northwest Territories finally signed the Nunavut land claims agreement in principle ten years later, in April 1990. Then, in 1992,

three milestones in the process towards the creation of Nunavut were passed: in May the people of Nunavut voted on the boundaries for the Territory; in October the Political Accord was signed, which set the date for creation of Nunavut for April 1<sup>st</sup> 1999; and in November the Inuit of Nunavut ratified the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA). May of the next year saw the signing of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and in November of that year the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Act and Nunavut Act were adopted by Parliament. Finally, in 1995, Iqaluit was chosen as the capital for the new Territory after winning 60% of the votes of Nunavut Inuit (Hicks and White 2000:95).

The dominant perspective in anthropological circles during this time was that of post-modernism. It raised the awareness that all human knowledge originates in and is therefore shaped by a particular social, economic, and political context. As a result science has no more claim to truth than do the ideas and beliefs of other peoples, because all knowledge is valid (only) on its own terms. The people in power in any given community have the power to determine which beliefs and ideas are adopted in this community, they thus shape prevalent cultural discourse. Postmodernists were very aware of the limits of rationality and science.

Arctic anthropology of the 1980s and 1990s reflects this postmodern awareness of the limitations of all knowledge with the production of a large number of publications of different perspectives on many different topics. The growing interest in family and childhood studies (Briggs 1987; Blackman 1989; Crnkovich and Canadian Arctic Resources Committee 1990; Blackman 1991; Briggs 1991; Crago, Annahatak et al. 1993; Briggs 1998; Park 1998) reflects the foci of feminist studies. A continuing interest in change and modernisation can also be observed (Condon 1988; Chance 1990; Matthiasson 1992; Condon and Stern 1993; Rasing 1993; Rasing 1994; Condon 1995; Condon, Collings et al. 1995; Wenzel 1995; Collings, Wenzel et al. 1998; Visart de Bocarmé 2005). There are frequent contributions to studies of identity and rights (Billson 1991; Jull 1991; Purich 1992; Stairs 1992; Dybbroe 1996; Freeman, Bogoslovskaya et al. 1998; Jull paper presented May 27, 1998), as well as a continued interest in environmental determinism (Layton, Foley et al. 1991; McGhee 1994). Among the postmodern features identifiable in these works are reflexivity, the presentation of different views as equally valid and a focus on power relations and interactions and political realities.

Examples of studies with a focus on childhood and family relations in the feminist tradition are Blackman's (1989; 1991) life history of an Alaskan woman, a collaboration between the researcher and the research subject, to enable the research subject to share with future generations an individual history, a telling of history from an indigenous

Alaskan perspective; and the researcher's reflections on the process of collecting life histories. Postmodernist influences in Blackman's work are exemplified by her acknowledgement that no-one can tell 'the whole story', but that each telling of the story reflects the time and context in which it is told and the relationship between the story teller and his or her audience.

Briggs has extensively studied emotional child development in Inuit society. Her works in these two decades include a study on emotional meaning (1987) in which she sets out the characteristics of a 'good person' and the characteristics an adult should have, a study on the rationale of Inuit child raising practices in the context of Inuit lifestyle (1991) in which she contends that the fear of aggression is the foundation of social control (Ibid.:284), and a book on the importance and meaning of play in Inuit upbringing (1998) in which she proposes that Inuit accept differences in accounts of the same event as personal truths, and all personal truths are equally valid in the context of personal experience, a view with interesting parallels to academic postmodernism.

'Gossip, a spoken history of women in the North', an edited volume by Mary Crnkovich (1990) is another example of a feminist work published at this time, with contributions from a variety of different northern cultures focusing on the differences of experiences of women in these different cultures as they cope with or instigate change within their communities. Thomas (1990) is one of the contributors, writing about how her family balances different cultures and traditions in her mixed marriage. A similar work, edited by Klein and Ackerman (1995), focuses on gender and power and reports on the role of colonial contact in notions of gender, gender balance and the interaction between gender and kinship systems. One of the contributors is Guemple (1995), who argues that men and women in Inuit society enjoy relative equality in status, power and prestige, which is both influenced by and influences the independent social roles assigned to them through the division of labour and the gender-neutral cultural formulation of personness. Finally, Reimer's (1996) article focuses on the development of female consciousness in the traditional and contemporary context. She believes the 'female consciousness is the recognition of what a particular class, culture and historical period expect from women. It refers to women's recognition and acceptance of the culturally defined gender role they are expected to fulfil and the culturally specific ways in which this role is performed and valued' (ibid.:79).

Park's (1998) multidisciplinary study of childhood and play is not necessarily part of the feminist approach, but shares the childhood theme with the above mentioned works. His study is based on ethnographic accounts and archaeological artefacts. He concludes that children in Inuit society could be seen as 'miniature adults' who 'enjoyed carrying

out, in miniature, the tasks they would have to perform when they grew up' (Ibid.:280). Crago, Annahatak et al (1993) studied parenting in two communities in Nunavik and found that 'modern living has altered the time, space and manner in which Inuit do their parenting, obliterating certain traditional practices. Some Inuit mothers are shaping some of their interaction to encompass the melding of their traditional culture with modern day realities. In this process they are redefining what they think is important for their children to learn' (Ibid.:220).

This final study focuses both on childrearing and on cultural change. This latter topic is the central interest of a large number of works published at this time. Riches (1990) suggests that many Arctic anthropologists focus their research on the past, but are led by the Inuit, who use the research done as a portal for creating a history to help them successfully negotiate land claims and other indigenous rights. Riches criticises these studies for taking an uncritical approach to history, but in my view this focus has nevertheless resulted in a great number of interesting works. One well-known Arctic anthropologist is Condon, who, both on his own and in various collaborations, has studied changes in such topics as food sharing (Condon, Collings et al. 1995; Collings, Wenzel et al. 1998), youth and upbringing (Condon 1988; Condon and Stern 1993) and youth and recreation and leisure (Condon 1995). In a similar vein Wenzel (1995) examines the distribution of harvesting and other products which maintain community well-being in Clyde River, a community on Baffin Island.

Finally, in the early 1990s a number of books were published which focused on change in different parts of the Arctic, such as Matthiasson's (1992) study on change among the Inuit in Pond Inlet, a community in the north of Baffin Island and Chance's (1990) study on social conditions, economic development and government relations in the communities of Kaktovik, Barrow and Wainwright in Alaska. Rasing's (1994) legal anthropological study of traditional and contemporary legal restorative practices in Igloodik is insightful: in his earlier article (Rasing 1993) he set out three social rules for life in Inuit society, namely firstly 'each able person is to contribute to survival'; 'no one can monopolize natural resources' and finally, to give others 'maximum freedom to do what seems best in circumstances in which they or their families find themselves', without imposition or interference from others (Ibid.: 96-97).

As suggested above, many Arctic anthropologists have taken on the role of advocate for the rights of the Inuit. The following works focus on Inuit identity on which to base an indigenous form of self-government with policies that are sensitive to and consistent with indigenous values. For example, Billson (1991) considers the interrelationships between gender, ethnicity and power in the Canadian Arctic, thus pointing out the

double struggle for Inuit women to have their voices heard. Stairs (1992:116) argues that Inuit identity is intimately linked with 'the full ecological, social and cognitive-linguistic processes of living the North', which suggests that a loss of land, relationships or language could lead to identity crises amongst the Inuit. In fact he concludes: 'without the cycling lived and symbolised by hunting, an Inuk ceases to be an Inuk' (ibid:125) A study by Freeman, Bogoslovskaya et al. (1998) present similar findings related to the whale hunt and consumption of whale (and other country food) products 'as necessary health-promoting and identity maintaining' practices (ibid:22, see also Wein, Freeman et al. 1996). Dybbroe (1996:50) contends that Inuit identity is threatened by the loss of self-determination, resulting in 'a struggle for the right to a modern, 'authentic' (meaning self defined) cultural identity'. Chabot and Duhaime (1998) write about the limited options for participation for Inuit concerning housing policies in Nunavik. Duffy (1988), Dickerson (1992), Jull (1991), Purich (1992), and Jull (paper presented May 27, 1998) all focus on the process towards self-determination and the creation of Nunavut the Inuit were negotiating at this time.

A beautiful book published as a collaboration between the artist Annaqtuusi and writer Pelly (Tulurialik and Pelly 1986) presents the work of the artist with explanations of the artwork next to it. Many of the drawings are scenes of life on the land, because Annaqtuusi wanted 'people down south - and my own children- to understand the scenes from our old ways.' This is an early example of a text presented at the initiative of a member of Inuit society and presents history and contact with outsiders from the Inuit perspective. Berlo (1989) published an article a few years later on the importance of art as a way of presenting history from the Inuit perspective, but also - thanks to the worldwide popularity of Inuit art - as an alternative to welfare dependence.

A very different, but equally interesting book is the very readable 'Minik, the New York Eskimo', written by the well-known Arctic historian Harper (1986). This account focuses on one small aspect of history, fatal for most of the group and hugely traumatic for the one surviving individual, namely the taking of a family of Inuit from the Disco Bay area in Greenland in 1897 for the purposes of displaying them in the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

A final strand of anthropological research in the Arctic was influenced by cultural materialism. According to this paradigm cultural difference should be explained in terms of the environment, including the organisms and other human groups surrounding them. Humans are believed to rely on technology in order to live in and with this environment and this technology in turn strongly affects other cultural aspects, including family life,

political organisation, values and even worldviews. Technology, environment and culture have feedback relationships to each other. Customs and beliefs of a particular culture help the people adapt to their environments and population growth and intensification are the main factors that drive cultural evolution. McGhee (1994) is an Arctic anthropologist who has applied and critiqued this anthropological theorem when he studied disease and population decline in Inuit communities. He concludes that prolonged environmental uncertainty has caused distress to Inuit hunting groups but that contact with Europeans and the diseases that they introduced were equally important causes leading to population decline. Layton and Foley et al (1991) apply a human ecology framework to the transition from hunter and gatherer societies the world over, to herding and or cultivating societies and conclude that 'hunting and gathering, herding and cultivation are alternative strategies which are, singly or in combination, appropriate to particular social or natural environments.' They consider a move away from the hunting and gathering mode of subsistence to be caused by 'changes in availability of certain foods brought about by social or natural modification of the hunter-gatherer's environment.'

#### 4.8. 1999 AND AFTER: INUIT WRITING IN A CHANGING CLIMATE

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1999 saw the culmination of many years' negotiation in the creation of the new territory of Nunavut, a territory which spans more than a fifth of all of Canada's landmass, yet only housed (at the time of creation) 27000 inhabitants, of which 85% were Inuit. The first election for members of the Legislative Assembly was held in February and in March Paul Okalik was elected as Nunavut's first Premier. On April 1<sup>st</sup> the Nunavut territory and the Government of Nunavut were inaugurated. The creation of this new territory was proof of the growing confidence amongst Inuit in their ability to direct their own future. They have since made valuable contributions to history, science and other academic disciplines through a long list of publications from this era authored or co-authored by knowledgeable and respected Inuit (Wenzel 1999). Many Inuit elders have shared their wisdom and knowledge, both to provide a personal Inuit perspective on Inuit history and to help contemporary Inuit youths understand their roots and help them find a suitable place in society in the future (Angmarlik 1999; Uyarasuk 1999; Ekho, Ottokie et al. 2000; Irniq 2005; Ukallianuk 2005). A more detached historical account, still from an Inuit perspective – albeit not a personal one - is provided by Boulton (2006).

A number of publications deal directly with societal concerns such as family violence and abuse (Tagornak 2003; Mikijuk 2005; Qamanirq and Kinnon 2006; Pauktutit Inuit women of Canada 2007); gender relations in traditional and contemporary Inuit society (Rojas 2000; Williamson 2006; Williamson 2006; Williamson 2006); and government policy and government development and efficacy (Arnakak 2005; Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated 2007; Tapardjuk 2007). Topics which all resonate with the experiences of the women I spoke with in Iqaluit.

Apart from works authored by Inuit, a growing number of publications have resulted from collaborations between academics and Inuit. This is a reflection of the growing awareness amongst the Inuit of their need to manipulate authority and power, which otherwise would undermine cultural practices and Inuit rights of self-determination. A number of academics have critiqued the attitude of some western researchers who have done research in what is seen as an exploitative manner, without any consideration for community needs or even sharing the information with them (Korsmo and Graham 2002; Thomas and Shirley 2005; Stern and Stevenson 2006). Some collaborations have resulted from a desire on the part of the Inuit to have a written record of the history of the Arctic seen through the eyes of the Inuit, to be used as resources in schools in the Arctic and indeed elsewhere in Canada (Kulchyski, McCaskill et al. 1999; Oosten and Laugrand 1999; Oosten, Laugrand et al. 1999; Wachowich 1999; McComber 2005). On the other hand, Beavon, Voyageur et al. (2005) recognise that Aboriginal people have also had an influence on the creation of the Canadian state, Canadian identity, and have thus directed Canadian history, which is not often recognised sufficiently by the majority of Canadian citizens.

The Arctic environment is an undeniable source of life and death in the Arctic and environmental concerns continue to be central to a lot of research both in the past and in the present. Recent works with an environmental concern have included research into the idea of gaining knowledge through experiencing the environment and through participating in every day activities, in this way individuals gain TEK (Traditional Ecological Knowledge) (for an interesting theoretical perspective from the Nayaka in South India see: Bird-David 1999; for Arctic examples: Anderson 2004; Duerden 2004; Ellis 2005; Tyrrell 2005). The experiential accumulation of knowledge is countered by the relational accumulation as proposed by Ingold (2004; his approach is applied by Ouellette 2005) and Nuttall (2000)). A growing body of literature is also being published on the importance of TEK on the political agenda (see e.g. Therrien 2008). However, Thorpe (2004) rightly cautions that in order to use TEK in this way, it needs to be written down and once it has been written down its meaning changes drastically. These

are issues that the Government of Nunavut, and many Nunavummiut - amongst which the women I spoke with - deal with on a daily basis. Whereas Western ideas about environmental preservation traditionally meant removing people from the environment (see Gilbert 2006), the land is seen by many aboriginal people as culturally, socially, economically and spiritually vital to their existence (Rae 2006). For that reason, ecological knowledge and environmental knowledge held by Aboriginal people has been used as a way of legitimising and regaining control over their own lands (Nuttall and Callaghan 2000; Trudel 2003; Sejersen 2004; Sejersen 2005; Mastny January/February 2000). In the same vein there has been a push to the recognition of Traditional Ecological Knowledge in scientific endeavours, especially when related to animal mobility and animal population health (Anderson and Nuttall 2004; Nichols, Berkes et al. 2004), in order for these perspectives to be used in policy regarding their preservation. This is reflected in the research permit process designed by the Nunavut Research Institute, which I went through in order to be able to do research in Iqaluit.

Another recent concern of academics in the north has been climate change. Robards and Alessa (2004) and Berman, Nicolson et al (2004) point out that the Inuit have always adapted to the environment, and that they will continue to do so in this new era of environmental change. Indeed, this seems to be the view of many older Inuit presented in Griffiths (April 7th 2008) who 'weren't overly concerned', as 'change is normal' (ibid.:7). However, Newton, Fast et al (2002) and Riedlinger (2001) present a different picture. The former express the concern that climate change could stand in the way of sustainable development in the north. The latter reports that the earlier and faster snow melt-down and breakup of ice on the rivers, the softer snow, the poorer quality of ice and the unpredictability of the weather seriously impede travel. Movement is the central concern of Chambers' (2006) paper, which argues through movement the land was known and relationships were created and maintained and Aporta (2009) argues travel through a territory gives meaning to that territory and creates identities for those travelling. Thus, the concern of impeded travel through climate change is a concern for changing relationships and disappearing knowledge of the land, and a changing meaning of the territory, with a corresponding change in identity (see also Ford, Gough et al. 2009; Pearce, Ford et al. 2009), again, a concern which we shall see is reflected in the stories of the women I spoke with. The use of the land for resource extraction is a key issue in Hodgkins' (2008) paper which labels resource extraction as a form of 'internal colonialism', since profits are shipped south, whilst the north is left to live with the resulting environmental degradation (for a Siberian perspective see Shadian April 2009). Pars and Bjerregaard's (2001) paper deals with renewable

resource extraction in Greenland and expresses concerns that Inuit youths consume decreasing amounts of traditional foods and that the presence of contaminants in these foods contribute to this trend.

The growing concern of Inuit to collect and preserve traditional knowledge and cultural heritage is a topic of much debate. Whilst Collings (2000) argues there is a great deal of cultural continuity on an ideological level, he seems to be alone in this. A large number of studies instead argue that a reconnection with history or a recreation of history has benefits for the well-being of Inuit communities and society in general<sup>8</sup> (Fienup-Riordan 2000; Harvald and the late Jens Peder Hart Hansen 2000; Trondhjem 2005; Wexler 2006; Bartlett, Iwasaki et al. 2007; Haggarty, Cernovsky et al. 2008; Crnkovich no date). The loss of cultural continuity seems to be assumed a-priori in these works. Considering this process of constructing a history and cultural memory, both Bégin (2005) and Salabelle (2005) comment on the selectivity of what will and will not be included as part of this new 'history'. Visart de Bocarmé (2005) considers art as one way in which the value of the past can be communicated and transmitted intergenerationally.

The effects of modernisation and acculturation were studied as early as the 1950s and 1960s, but the problems that can be traced back to acculturation stress are still prevalent in the communities today. Therefore, culture change and resulting social disruption are still topics for research and debate in the Arctic. For example, Richmond and Ross (2008) comment on negative health behaviour perpetuated by certain social networks, whilst Morin (2005) comments on social problems and social integration. Collings (2005) and Usher, Duhaime et al (2003) studied housing policies and living conditions in the Arctic, and Stern (2005) argues that housing and employment policies have encouraged Inuit to reorganise their social organisation into an independent nuclear family. A large number of studies focus on the conflict between traditional and modern economic pursuits (e.g.: Myers and Forrest 2001; Sprott 2002; Gombay 2005; Rigby and Bainbridge 2005; Gombay 2006; Gombay 2009). Others compare and contrast modern and traditional education and acculturation (e.g.: Stern 1999; Nuttall 2000; Glendenning and Cowan 2005; Wright 2005). Chamberlain and Barclay (2000) specifically studied the impacts of transferring Inuit women to hospitals outside their home community for the birth of their children, rather than giving them the choice to give birth with the help of the traditional midwife whilst Hicks and Bjerregaard (March

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<sup>8</sup> This view was shared by Tukisigiavik staff, the friendship centre organizing traditional skills workshops see page 16

2006) compare and contrast historical and present suicide patterns in Inuit society. Contemporary studies such as these provide a rich and diverse basis for understanding social relations in Nunavut today and in fact this thesis will build on and add to an understanding of current adaptive strategies employed by Inuit women in Iqaluit.

Tester (2006) recognises that although the colonial officials had a desire to do good, they were unsure how to do it and hence witnessed the contradictory results of their actions on the lives of the Inuit. With the recognition of the pain and stress that resulted from government and institutional policies (see for example McGrath's (2007) novel of the High Arctic Relocations), and the growing awareness of oppression by aboriginal people around the world, a number of the parties responsible have been pressured into issuing formal apologies. Amongst them were leaders of the different churches, who ran residential schools for First Nations in Canada. Prime Minister Stephen Harper of Canada, apologised on behalf of the Canadian Government and monetary compensation was agreed on during my stay in Iqaluit (CBCNews.ca 11 June 2008). On the other side of the world, Prime Minister Rudd of Australia apologised to Australian Aborigines on behalf of the Australian Government (13th February 2008). As can be expected, the process of land claims negotiations and gaining the right to self-determination, especially with reference to Nunavut - the biggest land claim ever negotiated - is another popular current topic (Gombay 2000; Hicks and White 2000; Legare 2002; White 2002; McGrath 2005; Valaskakis 2005; Berger 2006; Nuttall 2008; Jull September 25-28, 2001), and the ongoing nature of building Nunavut society is also a topic which will be explored in this thesis.

Finally, some other recent publications stemming from the Arctic are Briggs' (2000) comparison of the community radio with the traditional song duel as a means to relieve tension in the community without direct conflict. Kishigami's (2006) study of urban Inuit in Montreal, showing changes in bases of social interaction. Kulchyski's (2006) absorbing paper on social values, expressed and embodied in culture studied through gestures and the language of gestures in Pangnirtung finally, helped me adapt to life in the North.

#### 4.9. CHANGING GENDER ROLES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS: DEPENDENCE AND INDEPENDENCE

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There has recently been a resurgence of interest in feminism within Arctic anthropology. This can be explained by two paradoxical processes affecting Inuit society and Inuit women in particular. On the one hand, Inuit women seem more successful on

the labour market (Kleinfeld and Andrews 2006; Tremblay 2006), on the other hand, they have increasingly become the victims of domestic violence (Emberley 2001; Billson 2006). Whilst these two processes might seem to contradict each other - women on the one hand becoming more independent, whilst at the same time getting more restricted within the household - women's success might actually work to perpetuate men's loss of self-esteem, which could lead to violence as a way of re-establishing control, or to drug and/or alcohol abuse, which in turn might lead to violence under the influence of these substances.

Inuit society is reported to have a rather unique view of gender. For example, Rodrigue (2005) argues Inuit society cannot be studied using an oppositional model, as the identities and activities of Inuit men and women are interrelated. Trott (2006) quotes Briggs' conclusion that male-female relations are ambivalent and flexible, adapted to variable ecological conditions, with children raised according to the sex of their namesake, not their biological sex. Interactions between different people in society are thus key to understanding the importance and meaning of gender roles. Amongst the Inuit, Western categories of male and female are especially problematic as some individuals 'straddle the frontier between the sexes or genders', these individuals often become shamans (Saladin d'Anglure 2005); others 'change sex at birth' (Ekho, Ottokie et al. 2000; Saladin d'Anglure 2003; Saladin d'Anglure 2005); some males are raised as females and some females raised as boys, depending on the sex of their namesake (Stewart 2002; Trott 2006). Stewart argues the dichotomy of man vs. woman is not a universally applicable model and uses the example of the *kipijuituq* in Inuit society (a newborn male child raised as a female) and the practice of changing social sexes of children in order to remedy sex-ratio disequilibrium (see also Saladin d'Anglure 2003; Saladin d'Anglure 2005). In short: 'sex is unstable and changeable' (Saladin d'Anglure 2003) and can therefore not be seen as a binary opposition between two categories, rather, in Inuit society, individuals are seen as contributing parts of the family; parts of the whole (cf Gombay 2000).

Notably, an edited volume by Frink, Shephard et al (2002) aimed to 'fill the gap concerning descriptions of women's and men's roles in Northern Native communities' and to 'analyse past and present gender roles and relationships', has many examples of varied ways in which both Inuit and other First Nations peoples view gender and gender relations traditionally. Ackerman (2002) studied the Colville in North Central Washington found men and women and their roles are considered equally valuable. Frink (2002), writing about the Chevak in Western Alaska, concludes that women in this society have a very big responsibility in storing and allocating food, a role that gives

them a certain power. Whitridge (2002), Brumbach and Jarvenpo (2002), Jolles (2002), Stewart (2002) and Tobey (2002), all conclude that, in order to understand the concept of gender as it is understood amongst different Arctic and subarctic North American societies, it needs to be restructured and freed from Western preconceived notions. According to Whitridge gender must be understood as a plural and changing phenomenon, constructed and reconstructed consciously and unconsciously through 'speech, posture/movement, economic roles, social interactions, material culture production, dress and adornment'. Tobey's archaeological study leads her to view gender as a 'process that is constructed as a relationship, necessarily embedded within other cultural and historical institutions and ideologies, such as status, class, ethnicity and race'. She further argues that different cultures have different numbers of gender categories. Brumbach and Jarvenpo argue that through life histories, a complex construction such as gender can be shown as it is experienced by 'real individuals, interpreting the ambiguities of life, weighing the costs and benefits and taking courses of action'. Jolles similarly credits life histories for their capacity to increase understanding of how different aspects of one's life all influence personhood.

The absence of women's voices in many Arctic reports has been noted by Shannon (2006:12), who argues that the focus on hunting in Inuit society is a result of the greater importance of hunting (in comparison to gathering) in terms of calorific returns in the Arctic, as opposed to most other Hunter Gatherer societies. Cruikshank (2004:24), writing from a Yukon perspective, takes a rather more assertive stance when she says: 'In all likelihood, [a woman's] story would be ignored because it confuses rather than confirms familiar categories', thus an absence of women's voices is a way of protecting and reconfirming familiar categories. In fact, Altamirano-Jiménez (Winter/Spring 2009:130-131) argues that 'the centrality of the image of the hunter and the economic and cultural emphasis on the continuation of traditional practices and subsistence used under the nationalist language contributed to place women and women's activities in a less valued position than those of men, or, at least, in a position no longer considered 'traditional''. In this way women are denied the opportunity to voice their opinions on the creation of policies and laws in the new territory of Nunavut. Minor (2002) concludes that although many Inuit women are active in politics at the community level, few participate in territorial politics, mainly because of their primary role as mother, which limits their opportunities for extensive travel necessitated by participation in territorial level politics. Similarly, Kafarowski (2006) concludes that the main role of Inuit women is to protect the health of their family (sometimes their extended family),

extending to the well-being of the whole community, resulting in Inuit women being actively involved in community life.

The earliest Arctic anthropological work focussing solely on gender is Giffen's account first published in 1930. She drew her data from the accounts of early explorers and travellers and concludes that men - the hunters who provide 'sustenance, clothing and fuel' - were 'highly prized while girls, who are considered to some extent as "unproductive consumers" are often killed at birth' (Giffen 1975 [1930]:1-2). However, infanticide has since been the focus of detailed investigations and although it is more common for females to be killed at birth (Balikci 1967:621; Balikci 1968:81; Freeman 1971:1011; Condon and Stern 1993; Guemple 1995), they are by no means 'often killed at birth' (Ackerman 1990:205), infanticide is not practiced in all areas in the Arctic (Briggs 1974:267) and male infanticide is also practiced in times of hardship (Laughlin 1968:242). According to Giffen, the importance of hunting can be demonstrated by the fact that the education of a boy is centred around hunting, the catch of a first animal is subject to ritual and ceremonial observances, a man can only marry after having demonstrated his hunting ability, respect of community members depends on hunting skills and hunting scenes are the most common subjects of art (ibid:2). There is of course no question about the importance of the hunt in an environment so limited in plant foods, however, this does not mean women's activities were considered worthless (Briggs 1974:285; Condon and Stern 1993), furthermore -with reference to hunting being the chief subject of art- this can be explained by the fact that carving is a pastime of men, as Giffen herself notes (Giffen 1975 [1930]:33). From the early ethnographies, Giffen concluded that women were mainly responsible for gathering berries and other plant foods; cooking; distribution of food; interior furnishing of the dwelling; making of the tent; tending the lamp; preparing skins and sewing; making of clothing; magical performances ensuring good luck to the men in hunt; hunting the 'less important animals' and setting traps. Men for their part, engaged in hunting particularly by means of a kayak; building the snowhouse; working wood, metal and bone for tools; carving and trading. Whilst Giffen states these gender roles quite categorically, she also provides numerous exceptions for each of these gendered activities. This indicates a great deal of flexibility in daily life. In her conclusion Giffen states: 'co-operation is the keynote of domestic economy. This common-sense attitude of the Eskimo, which permits either sex to take advantage of the relatively infrequent opportunities on a grudging Arctic atmosphere [...] is relatively sophisticated' (ibid:83).

Since Giffen's early work, the issue of gender equality has been much debated and contested in Arctic literature (e.g. Chance 1990; Briggs 1991; Condon and Stern 1993;

Condon 1995; Guemple 1995; Ekho, Ottokie et al. 2000; Rojas 2000; Minor 2002; Rodrigue 2005; Williamson 2006), and accounts are contradictory about certain aspects of the traditional gender division of labour in the North. The equality and complementarity of husband and wife are stressed, but the ultimate control of the husband does not seem to fit with that value. The absence of the idea of gender is stressed, yet the clear division of labour, even with its exceptions, seems to contradict this (Blackman 1989; Guemple 1995; Klein and Ackerman 1995; Rojas 2000; Rodrigue 2005; Williamson 2006). It is therefore quite difficult to get a clear picture of traditional gender relations amongst the Inuit and, with a human tendency to idealise the past, it might now be impossible to clear the confusion.

Guemple (1995) for example, argued that, traditionally, gender roles amongst the Inuit were characterised by equality. Men and women had distinct, clear roles in society, which were very different, but were equally valued (see also Ackerman 1990:215 amongst the Yupik; Mitchell 1996; Williamson 2006:53). However, this seems to contradict his earlier statements that the concept of gender did not exist and did not play an important role in traditional Inuit society. The value of human beings, and the type and quality of work done was the most important identifying factor (Guemple 1995). Both men and women were praised for exemplary work performance and productive potential, and were looked upon as desirable marriage partners only when performing their responsibilities skilfully. Of course there were exceptions, in that some individuals did not perform the usual tasks assigned to their gender; for example, Sadie – in her life history recorded by Blackman (1989:39) - remarks: 'My mum was the hunter of the family [...] she had her own dog-team.' In addition, as argued by Shannon (2006), there are also certain activities that are done by men and women to the same extent. According to her, fishing, knowledge and awareness of the environment and 'skill in procurement need not be divided by gender' (ibid:23).

Once married, the complementarity of tasks and responsibilities meant that marriage partners were only together for limited periods of time, such as for meals, certain domestic chores and sleeping (Guemple 1995). Marriage did not involve the subordination of women: instead, each partner had their separate responsibilities, in which they had full control. Both genders could, however, perform the tasks of the other gender. Although the woman behaved as the man's equal, both within and without the house, the ultimate control over domestic matters lay with the men, but they seldom had reason to interfere. On the whole, younger people answered to older people and females answered to males, with age being the main determining factor. Thus, older women did not answer to younger men (ibid).

From Guemple's account it does not become clear to what extent gender equality really existed in traditional Inuit society. However, Apphia Agalakti Awa (in Wachowich 1999:21) tells the story of her mother's husband, who was about twice her age, and already had three daughters with another wife. For that reason, Apphia's mother was forced to give her up for adoption (being the fourth girl), which left her heartbroken. From this account it is hard to discern whether age or gender was the determining factor that left the mother powerless, but it is clear that she was not her husband's equal in this decision. According to Boulton (2006:24), women were able to influence their husband's decisions within the homelife (see also Lantis 1946:246), whilst the husband took public responsibility for these decisions (see also Briggs 1974:287; Mitchell 1996:4). Nevertheless, family is seen as the heart of society and family moulds the behaviour of both men and women. Family is thus certainly not seen as a subordinate woman's domain (Klein and Ackerman 1995).

On this topic, Rojas (2000:22) explains her own understanding of the position of Inuit men and women, which is that 'Inuit women are not subservient to men but rather, both Inuit women and Inuit men together make up the complementary parts of one whole.' She further notes '[b]oth women and men have to carry their own burden in order for the society to function smoothly' (ibid.:23). In other words there is a strong co-dependency between men and women in Inuit society (Freeman, Bogoslovskaya et al. 1998:66). Amongst the Iñupiat, women's role in transforming the animal into food and clothing and sharing the products of the hunt are vital in maintaining 'amicable animal/human relations' thus creating a powerful position for women in this society (Chaussonnet 1988; Bodenhorn 1990:64; Bodenhorn 1993:171). Whilst Williamson (2006) writes that Inuit in Greenland perceive themselves first and foremost as human beings, their identity as men and women is secondary to that. The kinds of tasks children learn are not as important as becoming responsible as individuals, irrespective of their gender. Alia also shows (2007:57) that women are not subservient to men:

We never referred to the house as my father's house. My father made decisions about when we were going to be leaving for this camp or whatever...but within the house, it was my mother's domain. So I would have considered my mother as 'head of the household'. My grandmother was head of her household; my aunt was head of her household.

The emergence of permanent settlements in the '50s brought social disruption as well as hospitals, churches, schools, police and government. Some aspects of society, however, have remained remarkably similar. For example, according to Condon and Stern (1993), the gender socialisation of girls has remained very much the same across time. Collings (2000:111) also notes 'a great deal of cultural continuity on an ideological

level'. This can be illustrated by Sadie (Blackman 1989:216) who is a whaling captain's wife in Barrow, Northern Alaska. Whaling has now been incorporated into the US economy but heavily relies on women for clothing, care and food, just like it always has. However, I present examples to the contrary in this thesis (see sections 5.3, 6.4 and 7.3 in particular). Williamson (2006:53) also suggests the position of men and women in the originally 'genderless society' in Greenland changed as a result of Southern influences. Similarly, Rojas (2000:84), focussing on Nunavut, comments: 'I strongly suspect that the position of Inuit women in Inuit society had declined since the first encounters with whalers, missionaries, RCMP, and government officials' (see also Bodenhorn 1990:67; Chance 1990:106; Billson 1991:60; Tester 2006:238). The realities of every-day life in the communities have certainly taken a different turn with the danger of death through freezing or starvation much less immediate. It has been argued that as a result the mutual dependence of men and women is not quite as strong (Condon and Stern 1993). With the introduction of the wage economy, and the increase in cost of living and maintenance of (hunting) materials, a cash income these days is indispensable.

By their mid-twenties most young Inuit women turn their time and energies to the responsibilities of work and child-care. They are viewed by society and by themselves as more mature than males of the same age, and better prepared for the social responsibilities of adulthood (Condon and Stern 1993). Briggs (1991:284) agrees: 'By the time a girl is in her later teens, she often sees what needs to be done in the house and does it without being told to. My impression is that a boy of the same age who is hunting with older men is still very much told what to do.' Similarly, Jolles (2002:46) notes that 'girls stayed closer to home than her brothers and had more household responsibilities at an earlier age than boys.' Inuit women have become dominant in the wage economy and single-parent households are increasing, in addition, women remained primarily responsible for the household and childrearing (Minor 2002), in fact, mothering is an expected part of every woman's life (Blackman 1989:227). Increasing female wage employment is a continuing trend as more and more women take on leadership roles in careers and still more women are entering the labour market (Minor 2002). Thus, one could argue that the processes of globalisation in the Canadian Arctic have provided women with new employment and political roles (cf. Laurie, Dwyer et al. 1999:3; Minor 2002).

Male roles, however, show great discontinuity from the pre-contact period: they often indulge in a long transitional period between childhood and maturity in which socialisation with the peer group is the main activity. These peer group activities are largely non-productive, such as playing hockey, driving snowmobiles, hanging out with

friends etc. Because they are behaving more like children, they are indulged by their parents for longer, and as a result it has been suggested that males tend to be much more materialistic than females (Condon and Stern 1993). Maybe this is one of the reasons why males often have unrealistic expectations of the jobs available to them, and why they are more selective about the jobs they deem acceptable (ibid.).

Because school is largely seen as a 'girl type of thing', with the emphasis currently on academic courses, rather than vocational ones - which would be likely to attract more males (Kleinfeld and Reyes 2007) - and resource depletion combines with high equipment maintenance and purchase costs to erode subsistence hunting, males tend to fall through the cracks in contemporary Inuit society. This could in some cases lead to feelings of low self-esteem, (domestic) violence and ultimately even suicide (Billson 2006:74; Wexler 2006:2939). Those men that do have access to financial means (either because they have a regular, well-paid job, or because their wife can support them financially) will still go out hunting or fishing. But most only take up these activities as their parents age and become unable to provide themselves (and their children) with 'country food' and thus men take their turn by providing for their parents (Condon, Collings et al. 1995).

Several sources (e.g. Condon, Collings et al. 1995; Hovelsrud-Broda 2000:197; Pars and Bjerregaard 2001:23) have noted the importance of female employment for the survival of the household in different parts of the Arctic. In Pars and Bjerregaard's (2001:23) study of Greenland, 71% of households depending primarily on subsistence activities for their income, have at least one partner, in most cases the wife, with supplementary income as a wage earner. In the Canadian North, many households would not be able to get by without the cash income of women - usually the wife, but occasionally a son or daughter - to meet increasing equipment cost and rising prices for gasoline and oil. With the financial independence wage employment brings, comes the dependence on others to help keep the household running, especially in the case of female headed households, which are on the increase (Condon and Stern 1993). Wage employment therefore doesn't necessarily bring greater levels of independence. In addition, these women still have obligations to their extended family networks, and may well be expected to provide extensive financial support (Mitchell 1996; Angmarlik 1999:278; Wenzel 2000:73; Searles 2002; Chabot 2003:31).

As mentioned above, the increasing number of cases of domestic violence against women could be linked to their participation in the labour market. Billson (1991; 2006; 2007) suggests that violence against women has been caused in part by 'male loss of identity and self-worth, societal tension as well as issues of power and control.'

Emberley (2001) firmly ties domestic violence, which she labels 'micro-political violence', to 'macro-political violence', or colonial state policies, thus going back to the root of the problem of societal tension (see also Kral, Wiebe et al. 2009:295-296). Does increasing participation on the labour market mean women have become more powerful in Inuit society, changing the traditional marital equality between the sexes? If this is the case, and domestic violence can indeed be seen as a consequence of this emerging inequality - we should also question whether this higher status of women in Inuit households is perceived to be positive or negative by women themselves, by men and by society as a whole. These questions resonate with Jackson's (2002:501) warning that the 'autonomous individual does not necessarily enjoy greater well-being.' It should be noted that males and females are sometimes presented as two internally homogenous groups in these writings of Inuit gender issues, however, individual variations do exist. In this thesis I will present the different ways in which different individuals deal with changes and tensions in their lives, by presenting women's stories with all their variations in these women's own words. This will prevent the problem of stereotyping by critically evaluating what are often highly contested concepts.

#### 4.10. PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

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Through the years an impressive selection of works on the Arctic has accumulated from a large variety of theoretical backgrounds and on a large range of different topics. It has developed from early attempts to 'represent the totality of culture' (Kulchyski 2006:156) from an evolutionary point of view, through the search for the 'pure culture' at a time when life in the Arctic started to be more influenced by outside forces to a large array of studies on topics from culture change to environmental adaptation, and from political process in traditional and contemporary times to family and childhood studies and climate change. The earliest writings are used in this thesis to reconstruct certain traditional practices, for example kinship structures, gender relations and socialisation practices, in order to compare these with contemporary practices. However, the worldview of the early ethnographers seriously impeded their attempts to produce accurate descriptions of life as it would have been viewed by the Inuit themselves. My thesis departs from the idea of studying 'pure culture', which Levi-Strauss considered the anthropologist's responsibility, in that the fieldwork on which it is based was undertaken in the biggest and most diverse community in Nunavut. Here different ways of life and cultures mix and clash and new cultures emerge and evolve alongside 'older',

'original' cultures, all of which evolve in mutual interaction with each other. The case studies of cultural change conducted from the 1950s and 1960s onwards provide information into the varied, localised history of communities across the circumpolar world and provide examples of the different ways in which different communities have been affected by and have experienced these changes. These studies are useful in the analysis of the stories from the people in this study, as they come from different parts of the Arctic and therefore have had varied experiences of social and cultural change. In 1963 the Honigmans provided a detailed account of life in Iqaluit at that time, the ways in which it was organised through various institutions, the relationships between Inuit and Qallunaat, the emerging town culture and – most relevant to the topic of this thesis - the extent to which this culture was adapted by the different genders. More recent works have influenced this thesis by emphasising the political and advocacy role of anthropologists, especially when working in collaboration with members of the communities under study. The large number of studies on childhood and socialisation has helped supplement my material and increased my understanding of Inuit childrearing practices, although material on the area now called Nunavut, and especially the area around Iqaluit, on this topic is very limited. The more recent works done by Inuit themselves and written in collaboration with Inuit are insightful in that they add to the mosaic of voices to make up a more complete picture of the views and experiences of Arctic peoples in traditional and contemporary Inuit society. As well as generating new understandings, this thesis will add yet another aspect to understandings of the variety of Inuit life.

## 5. FAMILIES IN THE NORTH

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Previous literature on childhood in the Arctic has focussed mainly on three things: first, naming practices as they are used in Inuit society; second, the practice of adoption as it has been applied and continues to apply to Inuit society; and finally, differences between traditional and contemporary times in experiences of growing up. In keeping with these themes, I will first present an overview of naming practices in Inuit society. This will not only provide a background for the materials that follow in this chapter, my observations of the ways in which this custom is still practiced in contemporary Inuit society will show its meaning in everyday life (section 5.1). Second, I will use the habitus to explain reproduction of gender roles as they were remembered to have taken place in women's childhood (section 5.2). Thirdly, I will analyse changes that have taken place in this aspect of life, firstly as a result of the incoming forces and the authority and power that was vested in them and their messages and ideas and secondly as a result of changing ideas of Inuit women themselves, through the perspectives of the women as parents in contemporary Inuit society (section 5.3). As the institution of adoption is a very important aspect of Inuit life, and is closely related to ideas about the habitus, the reproduction of values and attitudes and interactions with different individuals in society, this chapter will end with an analysis of the ways in which this institution has continued to be important in Inuit society and how it may differ from earlier times. Within the institution of adoption, strategies are available to individuals enabling them to meet their needs without breaking the rules of the habitus (5.4).

Throughout this chapter I will draw out and develop two theoretical strands. First, I will trace gender differences in Inuit children's upbringing and socialisation. This will start to unravel some gender differences in the challenges faced by Inuit men and women in contemporary Inuit society as discussed in the chapters which follow. As we saw in Chapter 3, Bourdieu's work on the habitus provides a useful starting point for understanding how processes of upbringing shape people's lived experience and world views. However, although Bourdieu's idea of the habitus is valuable in helping to explain the reproductive character of values and attitudes, it falters in its ability to offer an adequate explanation of gender differences and the different kinds of habitus that men and women operate in, which, as we shall see, are crucial in the Arctic. The ethnography in this chapter shows the importance of an emphasis on this aspect of the habitus in the lives and experience of men and women.

Second, this chapter will make a start at embedding postmodernist ideas about power

relations in individual interactions in the environmental determinist ideas of the environment as a factor limiting and ultimately determining the lives of individuals in any society. I will do this by analysing the gendered dimension of interactions with the environment.

## 5.1 NAMING PRACTICES IN INUIT SOCIETY

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According to ethno-psychology, children's upbringing is determined by parents' ideas about creating ability in a child to feel and behave appropriately, or in an adult manner (Lutz 1983:250). The actions believed to be necessary to raise a child to become a responsible and respectable adult vary between and within cultures, depending on the local cultural theories of child development. In Inuit society, children are believed to inherit an identity and personality through the name they are given and their ability and willingness to learn is believed to grow naturally as the child grows (Briggs 1991).

It is generally known that the name carries a special importance in Inuit society (Rasmussen 1908; Stefánsson 1922; Rasmussen 1927; Birket-Smith 1936 [1927]; Lantis 1946; Jenness 1957; Carpenter, Varley et al. 1959; Boas 1964 [1888]; Guemple 1965; Balikci 1967; Giffen 1975 [1930]; Mauss 1979 [1950]; Chance 1990; Briggs 1991; Condon and Stern 1993; Mitchell 1996; Freeman, Bogoslovskaya et al. 1998; Park 1998; Kulchyski, McCaskill et al. 1999; Uyarasuk 1999; Hicks and White 2000; Nuttall 2000; Stewart 2002; Kishigami 2004; Briggs 2005; Irniq 2005; Visart de Bocarmé 2005; Bodenhorn 2006; Boulton 2006; Trott 2006; Alia 2007). Usually children are given the name of a recently deceased relative - in some areas this was traditionally the name of the last deceased person (e.g. Mauss 1979 [1950]:28; Chance 1990:95). This ensures that the deceased person will continue to be cared for and remembered by his or her relatives. With the name, the child receives a 'name spirit', providing children with certain personality traits and characteristics as well as a whole network of (kinship) relations (e.g. Boulton 2006). The child receives the same treatment and respect the deceased person would have received, which is the baseline of certain childrearing practices. For this reason children are considered to know when they are hungry or tired, and are not generally told what to do, as this would be considered disrespectful behaviour towards an elder (e.g. Boulton 2006:16). A child might choose its own name, as it will cry until it has been given the right name (e.g. Birket-Smith 1936 [1927]:154). Changing a child's name can also help to ward off disease or spirits (e.g. Boas 1964

[1888]:204). Inuit names are not gender specific, thus it is not unusual for a small boy to be given the name of his recently deceased grandmother. In some parts of the Arctic, this might mean the boy will be raised as a girl, usually this is reversed after the boy has secured his first catch (e.g. Giffen 1975 [1930]:57; Stewart 2002; Trott 2006:95).

Although I observed parts of this practice during my fieldwork it is not as ubiquitous as in earlier times. One day, as I was preparing to leave the friendship centre after an evening of sewing and chatting with the women at the centre, I noticed an older woman calling a young woman 'anaana' (meaning mother), I smiled in surprise and it was quickly explained to me that the young woman and the older woman's mother had shared the same name. Thus, the young woman shared certain personality traits of the older woman's mother and therefore, in calling the younger woman 'anaana', the older woman was 'calling a social relation into being' (Bodenhorn 2006:153). Another example was one of the male students in the environmental technology course at Arctic college, who was living at the Residence, as I was. He told me that when he was growing up, he had been raised as a girl as he had been named after a female relative, but after he caught his first seal he was no longer treated as a girl. But the most telling example of the meaning of this naming system is the cancellation of my interview with Mary. I had made an appointment to see her and walked to the office where she worked, when I was met by her secretary, who said she was very sorry that she had not been able to contact me on time to let me know that the appointment had been cancelled. Mary's cousin had passed away the day before, and because this cousin had been named after Mary's mother, Mary felt like she was losing her mother all over again. She had the same strong emotions and was not able to come back to work for more than a week as a result. This example clearly shows that there was a strong connection between the two individuals with the same name and in fact, to Mary, it was the loss of the connotations the name had for her that made it so difficult for her to accept.

When looking at this practice from the perspective of Bourdieu's idea of the habitus (Bourdieu 2002 [1972]), we might ask ourselves a number of questions, such as how the idea that the child is born with a fully formed personality and individuality influences the embodiment of the habitus. The habitus, a set of embodied dispositions that influences individual development from the moment they are born and that is fully formed around the age of six or seven, exists largely unconsciously within the individual and is shared between different individuals in a group. Through possession of a habitus, individuals have the ability to act appropriately as if by second nature in certain spaces, positions and situations; however, it also limits those individuals to act appropriately in other spaces, positions and situations that require a different habitus. The habitus is

specific to the different socio-economic classes in a society and enables easy communication and conduct between individuals who share the same habitus, but it does not relate to skills or specific knowledge and/or abilities (Bourdieu 2002 [1972]).

Naming practices in Inuit society on the other hand influence personality traits, not necessarily in a gender specific way - although some do temporarily influence the gender socialisation of the child (but this could then be reversed at a later date) – it is not related to social class, but to knowledge and/or skills. Whereas this might sound more restricting than the idea of the habitus, children generally receive more than one name, thus the combination of names, and therefore of personality traits and skills, is unique to each child. For example, someone named after a great shaman, might be a great shaman, someone named after a great hunter might be a great hunter. There is also the more recent concern that naming a child after someone who committed suicide – out of a strong desire to have that person back and to care for him or her once more - might result in the new name bearer also committing suicide. Thus naming in Inuit society has the potential to help a child acquire actual skills, whilst the habitus determines the possibilities (and impossibilities) (Bourdieu 1986:46) within reach of someone with a certain socio-economic background.

In fact, Bourdieu himself mentions naming practices among the Kabyle as ‘not simply an act of filial piety’, but also as a way of bringing ‘[an] eponymous ancestor ‘back to life’ and to predestine the child to follow in the footsteps of this ancestor (Bourdieu 2002 [1972]:36). Whilst this clearly suggests some continuation in time, naming practices in Inuit society go much further than this in firmly rooting the child in historical ancestry, family relations and expectations. Bourdieu doesn’t connect this short aside on naming practices in Kabyle society to ideas of habitus and how the two relate to each other.

Naming practices amongst the Inuit at once seem less controlling than the idea of the habitus, because children have a combination of names and thus have their own unique options and possibilities for the future. Yet, at the same time, they seem more restricting as children are raised as if they were the deceased person, are given the same respect as the deceased person, the same role in society and they receive the same set of relatives as the deceased. Inuit naming is therefore also very similar to the idea of the habitus, in that on the one hand a name helps one to communicate, relate and act within a group of relatives, whilst on the other hand it restricts one’s options for a future career as people have certain expectations based on one’s name.

## 5.2 GROWING UP

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A child's upbringing and socialisation influences - to a great extent - what he or she will end up doing later in life. Parents' outlook on life, the values and morals they transfer to their children, their beliefs and the opportunities they see fit for their children, create the child's worldview and the child's view of the future (cf. Bernstein's invisible pedagogy, Sadovnik 2001). As Ditte (45 business owner, interviewed 07 and 22-06-07) says: 'kids don't do what you say, they do what you do.' Bourdieu calls 'this system of lasting, transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks' (Bourdieu 2002 [1972]:82-83), the habitus. In addition, it is in this early stage in life and in interaction with one's parents that the 'awakening of consciousness of sexual identity' (Bourdieu 2002 [1972]:93) takes place, thus giving children a role in life in accordance with their gender.

One of the prerequisites for feelings of belonging and self worth, and thus a positive self-identification, are a safe and secure home and family environment, greatly influencing future aspirations and achievements. However, in the case of Nunavut, recent contacts with the Canadian government and the rapid change that resulted, have also affected people's identity. This section focuses on three interrelated activities which form part of growing up for every child to a greater or lesser extent, namely playing, learning and working. Often these activities are linked, and playing, learning and working happen simultaneously. As we shall see, there were a lot of differences in the childhood situations of my research participants, leading to very different childhood experiences and memories.

Inuit Quajimajatuqangit (Inuit traditional knowledge, commonly referred to as IQ, see also Chapter 8), is seen by many Inuit and government policy makers as a bridge to the past and a key to a better future. As we shall see in Chapter 8, Inuit Quajimajatuqangit is also used as a foundation for a culturally sensitive government structure in the Territory of Nunavut (Aylward 2007). On another level, it also informs family living and children's upbringing. The following essential pillars refer to learning:

*Pijutsirniq*: responsibility or social obligation to someone or the community.

*Pilimmaksarnik*: learning by doing, acquiring skill or knowledge, a child learns best by observing and imitating, therefore this is a family element.

*Piliriqatigiigni*: learning by feeling and testing out ideas, through interaction and partnerships, this is thus a social aspect of learning

*Qanuqtuurunarniq*: learning by reflecting and experiencing

*Aajiqatigiingniq*: consulting those who are more knowledgeable (Arnakak 2005:179-180)

These pillars prescribe being helpful (as mirrored in Boulton 2006) and responsible to others around you and a practical and experimental and, above all, social attitude to learning. This learning includes partnerships with others in the community, observing and imitating adults in the community and consulting knowledgeable people in the community. As such it is similar to Pálsson's (1994) idea of 'enskillment' (which he coined in relation to fishermen in Iceland) as 'immersion in the practical world, being caught up in the incessant flow of everyday life' (ibid.:901). It attends to the 'whole individual' as part of a community (cf. interactions showing right and wrong in Briggs 2005:12), with social relations and roles and responsibilities to (as well as rights and privileges from) those relations, with its focus on everyday life and daily activities as well as the ways in which these practices and activities are embedded in the time, place and space of community life in general. In fact, Ukallianuk (2005:182-183), mirroring common Inuit perspectives, believes one 'cannot claim to have knowledge if you did not experience it yourself.'

Some of the women, when asked what chores they had when they were growing up, were careful to remind me that at that time, they were kids, and first and foremost, they were expected just to be kids, similar to the 'considerable emotional spontaneity' Honigmann and Honigmann (1965:175) observed and the 'almost complete freedom' as noted by Park (1998:272) to be part of children's upbringing in Iqaluit in the 60s:

Mostly it's playing, when you're young. Before you're assigned responsibilities, it's just playing, when you're young. (Jane, 50, health sector worker, 20/02/07)

A lot of it was being kids, just being kids, with some expectations of obedience. (Pitsiulak, 50, health sector worker, 22/03/07)

Although these quotations might sound like children were simply given the opportunity to be children and to play at their own volition, Crago (1992) suggests it was deemed unacceptable by some older parents she interviewed, for children to participate in adult conversation and the 'ways of adults because they were small' (ibid.:494) and therefore not ready for adult conversations. In order to protect children from adult concepts and adult conversation children were not to interfere in adult conversation. In other words, rather than freedom it can also be seen as a restriction on children's behaviour.

One woman I spoke to specifically remembers her dolls and their function:

From my recollection, my relatives, our camps, nearby camps, every girl used to have their set of Inuit dolls, they're little ones. And it's a family set. Before you learn to make the head and stuff from wood or soapstone or bone, your father makes them for you and your mother makes the rest of the body and clothing. But what your role is is

to learn to make your own clothing for them as you learn to sew better and better and better and better. And that's how you learned to make patterns. Pattern of the *amauti*, pattern of the parka, pattern of the pants, pattern of the *kamiks* and pattern of the mitts and everything, not mitts because they were very small, so we didn't have, most of the Inuit dolls didn't have arms, but we still made sleeves for the parkas and stuff. So every day, as a young girl, you'll play with your Inuit dolls, every day, every day, when you're not doing something for your mother, that's what you do.

I was given a lot of freedom to be on my own and do my own thing, which was always playing with my Inuit dolls and making and sewing. And in the summer camp I had my *illumiuq*, which is my playhouse. As girls we also learned how to make playhouses from rocks, I loved these things. Yeah, so that's how I grew up in the home... (Sylvia, 50, business owner, 11/06/07)

Sylvia was playing and learning at the same time, because while she was playing with her dolls, she learned how to take care of them and dress them, so that she was able to use those skills later in life, for her own family. Park (1998:274), using information from classic ethnographies and archaeological field work, found that playing house was a common activity for all children, as evidenced by the small house foundations constructed of pebbles found in various sites in the Arctic. Playing with and making dolls seems to have been limited to girls, according to Jenness (1922 quoted in Park 1998:274): 'girls make dolls out of scraps of skin, and clothe them like real men and women. Their mothers encourage them, for it is in this way that they learn to sew and cut out patterns'.

Most women recalled learning from their parents when they were young, both traditional skills and reading and writing:

And also I was educated out on the land with my parents; my parents were my teachers until I was 15. Then I went to a Qallunaat school, which is four walls, you have to sit at the desks all day long and when I was traditionally educated, I was learning only when I'm ready and I was never forced to learn something that I was not ready to learn. But at that moment when I'm getting interested and either my father or my mother would teach me. And I learned to read when I was two years old. I remember sitting on my potty before going to bed and reading a verse from the bible. That was my reading lesson, because at that time the only reading material that we had was the bible and there weren't any children's books or anything like that.

When I'm ready to learn something, let's say my father brought a seal or something he would cut it up when he start butchering it and I'd say: 'What is that?' and he would tell me the name of the organ or something in the seal, and also he would tell me the function of that organ. And then he would tell me it's in your own body too, and this is what it does in your body. And I learned to read and write at home and also I learned to prepare skins and I was learning how to make my own clothing when I was maybe 14 years old, out of skins. And I remember making my own *kamiks* [sealskin boots]. And that summer, I was still 9 years old, but I was turning 10 and I was interested in making *kamiks*. All summer long I was practicing making *kamiks* but I don't know how many pairs I made. Then I remember one day I wanted to make waterproof *kamiks*. Of course my mother was sort of helping me and I wanted to make them out of canvas. And my mother did not tell me, you know the canvas is not going to be waterproof, or it's no good, it was for me to discover on my own.

So I made my waterproof *kamiks* that day, and it was going to be low tide in the evening. My brothers used to look for those ugly fish, they would be underneath the rocks in the high tide of flats. They wanted to go out to catch those ugly fish, and I wanted to go with them after I finished my waterproof *kamiks*. Then I went and it

turned out to be, my *kamiks* weren't waterproof. They would fill with water every time I step on the rock and there would be water squirt out through the stitches. It seems like, the stuff I learned and the culture we had, is for the survival, because we live in a harsh country up here and everything we do is something to do with the survival. Like, you have to be able to make clothes, warm clothes and able to hunt for food and stuff like that.

But when I turned 15 I had to go to school. Before that every time my friends and my relatives went to school in the fall, then I would go to my parents and say: 'can I go to school?' And they would say: 'nonono, not yet, you're not ready to go to school yet, you have lots of things to learn yet at home. When you're ready we'll tell you. We'll tell you when you're ready to go to school.' Until ... I was 16, my father said *panikulu*, now you're ready to go to school. I was 15, then I went to Igloolik to go to school, and I didn't know a word of English. Then when I went to school, instead of learning from the real things, I have to learn it on the paper and also be in the room with sooo many kids, in one room. And I was hot, I remember my ears being hot and my cheeks being hot and that noise... And I didn't like it, I stick it out and every time my father comes to trade I went to him and said: 'Can I go home now?' 'Nonono, you aren't going to go home until the school is over!' So I had to wait until when the school was over to go home. (Jeela, 45, education sector worker, 05/03/07)

This wonderful and revealing story tells us many things about growing up at a time when many things were changing. Jeela grew up on the land and lived there right up until she went to the Qallunaat school. Her parents recognised the value of Qallunaat school, but wanted to ensure that she also had the skills needed to survive.

The teaching she received from her parents was varied, it included skills related to hunting and butchering, anatomy of animals and humans, sewing and reading. Lessons learned were applied and experiential and she only learned when she was ready to learn (cf. Briggs 1991:268). During my stay in the field, I looked after Jeela's 11 year-old son for a few days while his parents were away (for health and educational reasons). I noticed that his reading was very poor for his age and when Jeela came back I commented on this to her. But Jeela was not concerned and knew that her son would learn when he was ready. Similarly, when I was visiting Aisha for an interview, I met her 5-year-old daughter, who could not yet talk. When I asked her if she was not worried about this, she also remarked that she was not worried, she knew that her daughter would start talking once she was ready to do so, because she knew she was intelligent, understood what people said to her, and knew what was going on around her, she just didn't talk.

This attitude of parents to children's learning means it is the child's own responsibility to learn, to discover. This is illustrated by the story of the waterproof *kamiks*; it was Jeela's responsibility to make mistakes and learn from them. This is very similar to what Briggs (1991:283) observes in the Central Arctic. She says children are not prevented from making mistakes; exploring and experiencing possibilities and limits to themselves and things and persons around them teaches children the different possible outcomes and different meanings of interactions. In this way 'children learn

from daily experience to feel, think, and practice the attitudes and skills required for experimental living.’

Morin (2005:246-247), I suspect, misunderstood this when he argues: ‘Some Inuit have a tendency not to frustrate, contradict or confront their children. If this situation is true, are young Inuit properly prepared for modern adult life if they are not confronted with the consequences of their acts and the social rules that surround them?’ As can be seen from the quotation above, Jeela’s mother did not ‘confront’ her, or ‘frustrate’ her by telling her that she should not make *kamiks* out of canvas, but precisely because she did not do this, Jeela was able to learn from the consequences of her actions. Another striking example of children learning the consequences of their actions can be found in Briggs (2005:12) where she recalls watching a mother encouraging her child to throw stones at her. The mother cries out in pain, which shows the child that the consequence of its actions are that its mother is hurt. Briggs concludes: ‘Aggression may be fun, but it hurts. It may be fun, but there are negative consequences too.’

Morin further argues that Inuit are tolerant of deviance to the extent that there are no sanctions for deviant behaviour. Again, this appears to be a misreading of the texts: whilst Inuit are tolerant of otherness, they do not tolerate behaviour that is in direct opposition to the social norms, as can be seen from the ostracisation of Briggs for her aggressive outbursts (Briggs 1970)<sup>9</sup> and the ostracisation of Igah for leaving her husband (Chapter 6).

Finally, Jeela’s story also touches on going to school in a different environment, away from everything familiar, and, for the first time, away from parents. There is no question that school was an unpleasant and uncomfortable experience for her, but her parents wanted her to finish what she had started and she listened.

Leah also recalls learning through examples and learning to read from the Bible:

Girls in my family were not encouraged to hunt, we were encouraged to be at home and do sewing, help our mother, learn that way, through examples. One interesting thing for me when I was growing up, was learning how to read and write in Inuktitut when I was very very little, when we were very little we had to learn. That was only through Bible, because we had no other reading material. All I knew was there was Bethlehem, there was Israel, there was Galilee, from the Bible that we read, before I ever knew there was Montreal or Toronto. So that was good, I learned to sing hymns and write and read. (Leah, 50, senior government official, 27/06/07)

The above examples are of women in their 50s, who lived on the land for at least part of their childhood. Tracey is from the next generation, she is around 40 years old. She recalls:

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<sup>9</sup> In her book, Briggs describes how she is ostracised from the camp after she aggressively defends the Inuit she lives with from dishonest traders.

Whenever [my dad] got the chance he would go out [hunting or fishing]. And for some of us we were also being taught at the same time different skills and also helping with the chores. Like skinning, gutting fish, chopping fish, helping preserve fish to things like, when he brought in a rabbit for example he would show us the first couple of times to say this is how to skin a rabbit and to cut it up. You know, the proper ways to cut it up. So we would catch on and would be able to do it on our own. But he taught through observation, but he also did it so we could help around with the chores, so - he said- my mother wouldn't complain so much with all the chores that had to be done [laughs]. (Tracey, 40, professional working in the media, 19/02/07)

Chores and responsibilities feature highly in people's accounts: Tracey watched and learned from her father, so that she would be able to do the tasks on her own next time, and in that way she would relieve her mother from some of her chores. All the women I spoke with had similar chores. Monica is in her 20s; she also recalls:

A lot of my responsibilities were helping my mom with my siblings, chores around the house, regular household chores, dishes, laundry, taking my younger siblings out to play. (Monica, 28, senior government official, 04/05/07)

Every woman remembered doing some general household chores such as washing the dishes, sweeping the floor, keeping the house tidy and –in the case of women who grew up on the land, or who grew up before the communities had water services - getting water or ice, helping with the preparation of skins for clothing and looking after the puppies and feed the dogs. Every woman also looked after their younger siblings, or looked after small children for other members of the community, this was observed by Jenness (1957:67) as early as the 1920s, which suggests great continuity in this aspect of life. Chance (1990:98) suggests that the chores done by young children in Alaska makes these children feel important, because they are 'expected to be useful, working members of the family.' Both boys and girls are expected to participate in family activities, which are shared by those that are available, thus fostering family cohesion. Crago et al (1993:216) agree that a child should be given tasks as soon as he or she is able to understand, and as the understanding of the child grows, so the tasks and instructions grow progressively harder. The importance of understanding instructions is 'part of the process of acquiring cultural membership [...] of becoming an appropriate Inuk who knows how to learn by looking and listening'.

The role of children in the day-to-day running of a family camp at the time when people were still living out on the land is explained by Mary:

My upbringing in my early life was living on the land, where my people hunted, gathered, fished, worked really hard in order for us to survive. And in that kind of life, in a small group of people, we all had chores, tasks as soon as we were old enough. We were always included in helping out people, I think that kind of upbringing led me to work harder than what it is today I think. And we had lectures from our people; anybody that was older than us lectured us that we must try harder all the time. And the rewards were, we were told the rewards would be enormous, like rest, peace, love harmony, that sort of thing, when you've done all your chores. (Mary, 60, senior government official, 24/11/06)

Children were thus included from a young age in providing help and contributing to the work that needed to be done. More specifically Leah recalls from that same time:

You can't go to the store to buy running shoes or boots or anything like that. My mother had to make everything, my sisters had to make everything, so we helped them to tan hides and to tan sealskin, to make *kamiks* or mitts, we chew them. When you go picking little flowers or tiny little, rhubarb-like, we call them *qunguliit* and there's *upilattunnguat*, those are little pink flowers, and roots that we would go and pick. And we would take our little two-, three-year-old siblings with us and something to chew, to tan, and you'd go pick in the summertime. Or you go everywhere with this skin, that you're chewing to tan, whether it's for top of the leg for your *kamik*, or the bottom, so you've always got something... If you can, when you go picking, or when you take your little brother for a walk or something, you do. Because your little siblings might be getting tired of being in a tent or something, so you take them out walking and you're about 9, 10, 11, you're chewing to tan the things for your mum. (Leah, 50, senior government official, 27/06/07)

At the same time as collecting flowers, and looking after her small siblings, Leah is also chewing a sealskin in preparation for sewing. She is thus helping her mother in three different ways at the same time.

I was often reminded that: 'maybe it was only my mother, I'm just talking about my family, I'm not saying that all Inuit families did that' (Leah, 50 senior government official, 27-06-07). This individualising of families can be explained by traditional living arrangements, where very small family camps were completely self-sufficient, and sometimes would not meet anyone from another camp for months at a time.

From these stories and recollections of growing up two common themes emerge. First, a lot of the women I spoke with stressed the importance of being helpful and being of service and of doing things that needed to be done. This is also stressed in Chance's account (1990:100) of the Iñupiat in Alaska where both boys and girls are expected to be able to perform a wide variety of tasks, so that they would be able to provide assistance when needed.

That was always encouraged by my mum, to help each other. (Jane, 50, health sector worker, 20/02/07)

My main role as a child, as a girl was to help my mother with daily chores, so that we survived, they survived, and a big part of that learning too, was doing the chores. (Sylvia, 50, business owner, 11/06/07)

It all kind of depended on whether we served a purpose or not. I guess back then, our life was really around one another, helping one another, you have to have a purpose, you can't just hang out. (Tracey, 40, professional working in the media, 19/02/07)

So in Inuktitut there's not, make a list, this is what I'm going to do, this is what you're going to do, do we agree to do that? It's not like that, you do things because they need to be done. You don't do things because it's your job, or it's your chore, it's not like that. It needs to be done, so you do it. (Leah, 50, senior government official, 27/06/07)

However, doing what needed to be done in the house, had a different meaning to Meeka. For her it meant she should not expect appreciation or praise for what she did, she did the things she did because they needed to be done, and she wanted to do them, not because she wanted to be praised:

And I remember too, there didn't seem to be much value in what I did. I mean, not all the time, I know now that you don't do things because you want someone to be grateful, or you want to be praised, you do things because you have to do it, or because you want to do it. As a person you have to choose that you're going to do it. (Meeka, 32, senior government official, 07-07-07)

The second theme emerging from the women's stories of growing up was learning how to survive, and preparing for adulthood:

But in the Inuit world it's all about preparing a child to be an adult, but in a transferring way, of role-modelling and showing and just caring. (Pitsiulak, 50, health sector worker, 22/03/07)

One of your main roles was to learn your tradition, because in your adult life you would be the next teacher, so that was my role, to learn and to be taught by my mother. (Sylvia, 50, business owner, 11/06/07)

This is mirrored in Park's (1998:280) study where he coins the idea of 'children as miniature adults' who 'enjoyed carrying out, in miniature, the tasks they would have to perform when they grew up'.

Thus Inuit children grow up learning how to be helpful and preparing for adulthood, but how does this differ between boys and girls? The women I spoke with had very different experiences with this. In some families, the tasks children did were very much determined by their sex:

We knew our chores very well. Chores for us were helping out with what would be called mother's responsibilities. I often got to help with softening of sealskins, and because with my mum had a lot of...us siblings were close to each other, it was also looking after other siblings. So, it would free mum to do her chores. In my family girls were very taught to be girls. Meaning we were taught to do, really mimic what my mother's roles were. When you compare that with now that's very different. In my immediate family I don't really remember getting involved with the hunting aspect of our life, it was very much in the house. Getting the water, cleaning the house, making sure things were clean for other siblings, making sure there was enough water in the house. It was really listening to what mum had to delegate to us. Whatever mum delegated to us as tasks, we just shared it among the sisters. (Anne, 50, business owner, 30/01/07)

In this family, not only was there a clear distinction between what the boys and the girls did, it is also clear that the children were very well disciplined: they 'knew their chores very well.' Again, preparing sealskins, babysitting and household duties were amongst the chores for the girls in this family.

In some families there was no difference between what the boys did and what the girls did. In others, there were clear distinctions between boys' and girls' chores, and for

some women there was some resentment about what they were and were not allowed or expected to do.

In my family, my parents didn't separate, this is boys' chores and this is girls' chores. We used to have a choice, our own choosing. The only difference I think would be, the boys, my brothers, were less interested in sewing, then the girls. Girls were more into sewing than the boys, even though at that time, the boys needed to know how to mend things, and make things. Like, simple mittens and boots, my father was able to make beautiful mittens, because if you're out on the land, if you lose, even if your dog has eaten your mitten or your boot, you have to be able to make a boot, or a mitten. Because if you don't know how, it's dangerous and your hand will be frozen, or your foot will be frozen. And the boys are normally interested in playing with the dogs, and playing, pretending to go out hunting, girls normally into sewing. (Jeela, 45, education sector worker, 05/03/07)

In her own family Jeela also does not make a distinction between girl's and boy's chores. She was raised that way and she also raises her own children in that way:

Sometimes other people would have say: oh that's women's job, that's man's job. In my own family we didn't do that, so it sort of flows into my own family that we never ever tell our children that this is man's job, this is woman's job. They can do whatever they want to do. Me when I was growing up, my parents never told me, that's man's job or a girl's job or anything! (Jeela, 45, education sector worker, 05/03/07)

I grew up with my father telling me, especially in the Inuit culture, men were very revered, because they are the providers of food and they brought food back. But my father always said when I was growing up, and he really helped me, he said, it doesn't matter whether you're a male or a female, as long as you do what you want to do and you want to do it well, and work hard at it. (Kristy, 34, government worker, 15/05/2007)

In these families clearly gender was not an issue. In both families, the children did what they chose to do and it seems there were no assumptions about boys and girls having different abilities.

One woman, who grew up with five brothers, recalls her mother wanted her to do girls' tasks, but since she did not listen, she stopped telling her.

My mum often tried to get me to sew, to do some, what she called 'the woman's stuff', but I refused because my brothers didn't do it, why should I? For example, cleaning the house, she often tried to get me to clean the house, but I refused, because my brothers didn't do it.

My mum used to tell me it was a woman's job to sew, to do this and do that, but I always...I didn't listen to that, because my brothers didn't do it. And I think she...eventually somehow she stopped saying that. And I had my father who always encouraged me to do what I wanted to do, so that helped a lot.

I think my mum wanted me always to be the good wife. Yeah, when I was younger she used to mention, to be a good wife you have to be able to sew, you have to be able to clean something, you have to be able to do that to be a good wife. But I didn't listen, I didn't want to be the good wife. (Kanayok, 40, education sector worker, 14/02/07)

Jenny grew up in Iqaluit; she lived in a one-room house with her grandfather, her parents and her siblings. She recalls she had very important responsibilities in the house when she was growing up in Iqaluit in the 50s, but she remembered her chores were usually considered boy's chores:

My parents and I and my older sister, we lived with our grandfather. He had a house, a one-room house and we all lived together.

I had a big role in the chores of the house, where we didn't have any running water or an oil tank to heat the stove. So I did a lot of boy things, like getting the water and stuff like that, I was responsible for getting the snow in the wintertime, for drinking water and washing and so on. And in the summer I would help my mother get water by pails, we used to get them by pails. And for the heating we had an oil stove. And I was responsible for pumping the oil into a 5 gallon tank, from a barrel, like 45 gallon barrel, with a pump. And that was my job every day, because the stove that we had only burned 5 gallons at the time, so you had to go and get it regularly. So I had a little sled, *qamutik*, to drive it with, that was my job. (Jenny, 55, business-owner, 15/03/07)

For other women their gender roles posed a bit more of a struggle:

The women seemed to be the only ones cleaning, and looking after the house. In my whole entire life as a child I don't remember seeing my brothers do any dishes, but I did see them cook. Men at least cooked, but cleaning and that I never saw that. (Kiuga, 55, senior government official, 07/05/07)

Kiuga does not necessarily articulate that she did not agree with the way the tasks in the house were distributed, but there is a certain hue of resentment in her tone of voice.

Naomi, on the other hand, is clearly opposed to the expectation of women staying in the home and had the courage to change her opportunities by getting an education and leaving her home community.

I grew up with a dad who really believed the woman's place was in the home, getting pregnant, in the kitchen sort of thing, and my mum was that. I never wanted that for me. But I have a lot of resentment from men, because I had the courage to get out and get an education and do something for myself. And I have gained a lot of respect from women for doing that. It's difficult sometimes, I'm not a stay at home mom. (Naomi, 50, government advisory position, 03/04/07)

Meeka has different experiences again:

My dad would say that I was supposed to be a man, I don't know if you know about this, but when people are giving birth the sex can change, so I knew that I was supposed to be a boy, but then when I was given birth to I changed, and I was a girl. And so my brothers, three, right after me they're all guys. And so my dad would go hunting and he'd take my brothers and I would say, 'I want to go hunting too', but he would say '*Arnaugavit!*', no, you're a girl! Not that I never went hunting, but I didn't go hunting as often as my brothers. (Meeka, 35, senior government official, 07/07/07)

Some of Meeka's experiences are painful and very touching. What she felt was expected of her during her childhood definitely seems to have been far more than what was expected from any of the other women I spoke with. She thinks this is due to the fact that she 'changed sex' during birth, which resulted in her father being disappointed in her from the moment she was born. She also says girls are expected to do more in the house than boys, and finally she was the first born. Often in Inuit families (as in many other societies), the first born seem to be given more responsibilities in the family than subsequent children (see also Sprott 2002:100).

No one ever said I had chores, but I always did things. And also because I was the girl I did more in the house than my brothers, I know that. Because I was the oldest I

always had to do dishes, I always had to wash dishes, wash the floor, make bread, cook for them, wash clothes, I was like another mother, because my mom was working, but she'd have babies every two years or so. So there'd always be a baby around. (Meeka, 35, senior government official, 07/07/07)

Two other women I spoke with during my research also commented on the fact that the first-born are given more responsibilities than the younger siblings, similarly Chance (1990:96) observes for the Iñupiaq in Alaska that 'some families hoped the first-born would be a girl who could assist in caring for those who followed.' Sprott (2002:100), also writing about Alaska, likewise observes that 'sometimes the older girls especially get burdened with too much care responsibilities, such that they become 'mini-mums' and end up with an attenuated childhood,' which seems to be exactly what happened to Meeka.

For a lot of the women I spoke with however, the division of labour in the families in which they grew up was completely natural and did not seem to be the cause of any feelings of resentment or unfairness.

Main thing we would do is we would get a pail of water for drinking or cooking, and washing, and little things that we did for our parents to help out. And as the boys are getting older, maybe age, I don't know, 5, 6, 7 then they start going hunting with their father. I for myself personally had not been hunter person, I was very much at home, helping to sew stuff and learning from my mother and my older sisters. (Leah, 50, senior government official, 27/06/07)

Traditionally, because the girls stayed close to their mother, so more inside the house, inside the dwelling. So we helped our mother in the managing of light, not heavy, light chores, according to our ability. And for young boys they mainly stayed with their dad, hunting, learning hunting skills. (Pitsiulak, 50, health sector worker, 22/03/07)

My brothers were expected to help out with my dad in sort of preparing his sled, or getting ready to go, when they would go hunting. They would go with my dad more often than us girls did. Because often us girls stayed behind with my mum, but now and then we would go with my dad too, when the weather gets nicer. We had separate tasks, chores to carry out because often in traditional societies, women's tasks and men's tasks are quite separate. Because often men would do the outdoor stuff, like go hunting, or feed the dogs or maintain the equipment, or repair the snow house or repair the *qammaq*, the sod house. In addition, women would look after the children, mend the clothes, or make the clothes, maintain inside the house and cooking and keep the oil lamps, make sure there is enough oil. They had quite different responsibilities. (Celina, 50, senior government official, 05/04/07)

Celina's comment about the girls going with her dad when the weather gets nicer is interesting in the light of Angmarlik's (1999:284) comments on the way the school tries to incorporate land and camping-trips into the curriculum. He critiques the schools in taking the children out only in good weather, because this will not teach the children the skills needed for survival through bad weather. It might be that Celina's father was unusual in this attitude, but I believe it more likely that boys and girls were treated differently in relation to teaching land skills. Thus the school's approach to learning survival and land skills is comparable to the attitude parents traditionally had towards

girls learning those skills, which suggests a loss in male skills and a loss of the defined gender differences between male and female roles in society.

Having said that, traditionally boys and girls also needed to know how to perform the tasks of the other sex. As Jeela already mentions above, when the dogs eat a hunter's mitts, he needs to be able to make himself a new pair in order to survive. And again, when the father is out hunting for a few days, the wife will have to do everything on her own, which might include male duties such as repairs to the house, or fixing things:

Men still had to know how to repair the clothes if they were away for a long time. But if my father was away for long time hunting, my mum still needed to know how to do outside stuff. So it was often, you still have to know what is involved even if its men's duties you have to do it when you have to. (Tracey, 40, professional working in the media, 19/02/07)

Chance's (1990:100) account of the socialisation of Iñupiat of Alaska again mirrors my findings on the division of labour in families in Iqaluit. According to him, a division of labour, however well-known and recognised by all, was not fixed or strictly adhered to. Boys were observed sweeping the house and cooking, whilst girls were observed going hunting. Chance also stressed that each gender needed to be able to perform the other sex's responsibilities if necessary (see also Guemple 1995; Minor 2002). Park (1998) cites several ethnographies stating that some girls were trained to become hunters from early age, some women enjoyed going hunting and some women develop 'impressive reputations as hunters' (Saladin d'Anglure 1984, Briggs 1974, Guemple 1986 resp. all cited in Park 1998)

In short, children growing up in what is now known as Nunavut are expected from a young age to participate in family activities. Children's socialisation is focussed on teaching survival and preparation for adulthood, while at the same time teaching them to be helpful, of service and attentive to what needs to be done, so that they do not need to be told what to do.

While gender differences are clearly recognised, as evidenced by the different skills taught to boys and girls in many families, children are also reminded of the importance of knowing the tasks normally allocated to the other sex, in case they ever find themselves alone and needing to do a task that would normally be done by the other sex. The experiences of the women I spoke with varied widely with respect to the gendered division of labour in the families they grew up in. With some families clearly distinguishing between girls' and boys' tasks, and some women accepting it as natural without feelings of unfairness and resentment, and others resenting and rebelling. Other families didn't differentiate between what the boys did and what the girls did: chores were simply allocated by preference.

When teasing out some of the theoretical issues of this thesis from the quotations above we can draw a few preliminary conclusions. First on the topic of power, authority and dependency, it becomes clear that unequal power relations existed in the household, between parent and child, elders and others in the family, and in some cases between husband and wife. This can also be deduced from Lantis' observations in Nunivak, Alaska in the '60s. She concludes that young adults are very submissive towards their elders. In her work this is most clearly illustrated by the young adult male, named Paul, whose daughter Melissa was adopted by his parents, but who was not well looked after by them. Although Paul doesn't like to see his daughter poorly looked after he doesn't say anything about this to his parents, but quietly waits for his parents to die, when he will take his daughter back again (Lantis 1960:58).

The parent-child relationship, which was usually strongest between mother-daughter and father-son (although some of these women clearly had very close relationships with their fathers, and seem to have been taught mainly by their fathers), however affectionate, is ultimately a power relation. The parent is more knowledgeable, and therefore teaches skills and transfers knowledge, thus occupying a powerful position. In addition, the child is dependent on the parents to perform certain tasks they are not yet able to perform by themselves. The parent decides when a child can come hunting or camping depending on the child's usefulness during the trip. The parent decides when the child should or should not go to school; depending on the child's readiness to leave the parental home and on the child's usefulness at the parental home. The parent decides which chores the child needs to perform before he or she can go out to play, as survival depends on everyone doing what needs to be done. The relationship between elders and others in the family is of a similar nature, as the elder is more experienced and knowledgeable and therefore needs to be treated with respect (cf. Williamson 1986:69; Ekho, Ottokie et al. 2000). The knowledge and skills that the elders hold and can share with the younger generations again puts them in a powerful position in Inuit society.

The relationship between husband and wife is less clearly communicated in the memory of these women. Kanoyak's father and mother clearly differed in their expectations of her and she chose to listen to her father, not her mother, in the end her mother gave up, which might suggest that she didn't have enough authority to challenge her husband's wishes, or it might just be a result of the Inuit attitude of accepting one's faith (with the expression: 'it can't be helped' cf Briggs 1970). However, what becomes apparent time and time again in these stories is that the different members of a family were interdependent. The children were dependent on their parents for food and

clothing, but the children helped their parents with their chores; similarly, elders held more knowledge and were able to transfer this knowledge and their skills on to others, but they were dependent on the younger members of the family to provide them with food as they became less able to contribute to the family in that way; finally, the husband had the important role of providing the family with food, thus potentially creating a dependency of the whole family on his contribution, but he was not able to go hunting without the help of his wife and daughters who provided him with clothes and his sons who helped him prepare and get ready to go out and helped him during the hunt as they got older (Chance 1990). This interdependency helped to counteract absolute authority of one member of the family over the others, thus limiting the possibilities for certain members to dominate other's choices, decisions and lives (as suggested by Brody 1975).

Girls helped their mother and their big sisters and learned and observed from their sisters and mother the roles appropriate for their gender, in this way gender roles were reproduced within the family. The boys followed and helped their fathers, and learned and observed from their chores and tasks the roles appropriate for their gender.

However, up to a certain age (according to Leah this would be between the ages of 5 and 7) children were all treated the same and all did similar 'little things' to help out. Whilst this seems to support Bourdieu's idea of the habitus as a reproduction of the past in the future and a determining factor in shaping one's life, there is also evidence in these stories that the expected roles are not always simply adhered to by Inuit women.

Despite what her mother told her, Kanayok refused to do what her gender prescribed to be the proper thing to do and she went hunting, competing with her brothers for her father's attention. Similarly, Naomi did not aspire to the woman's role - as promoted by her father - of being in the home, in the kitchen and getting pregnant, so she left the community to get educated and work on a career. Interestingly, she says that though the men in her community resented her independence, the women applauded her. This may suggest Inuit women are more open to changes in general, whilst Inuit men are more likely to prefer to stick with the familiar (see also Matthiasson 1976:209); or it may suggest that some women in Inuit society feel they do not have equal, or sufficient opportunities for personal development within their current family roles, whilst the men see women's education as a threat to their authority. Despite gender differences hard work was valued from everyone, regardless of gender, and especially doing the tasks that needed to be done - even if they might normally be considered the role of the other gender - was more important than gender roles. Thus whilst the habitus - structuring individual's possibilities and limitations - is reproduced through socialisation practices in Inuit society, there is considerable scope for individual agency

and I recorded many instances of people choosing to refuse and resist the status quo.

Whilst the role of the environment in the upbringing of the women was not expressly stated in these women's stories, there are a few interesting threads that will be explored in more detail later on in this thesis. For example, it becomes quite clear that seasonality plays an important role in children's lives. Children played differently in summer than in winter, for example, playing in the *illumiuq* in summer and playing with dolls in winter. They also learned different things in summer than in winter; they would practise making kamiks all summer. Finally, they would carry out different chores in summer than in winter: boys go fishing in the summer, Jenny used to get snow for drinking water in winter, whereas she would get water by pails with her mother in summertime. From this it becomes clear that children's 'lessons' were based entirely on the environment, and they were taught environmental knowledge that was situated in the context of every day life. This is mirrored in Duerden (2004:206), who considers the 'intergenerational transmission of detailed traditional environmental knowledge [in the form of important stories on places, practices and events] central to sustained well-being'. Playing, learning and chores also were dependent on the different resources available in the vicinity of the camp in summer and winter. Gender differences and roles were also to some extent dependent on the season, for example Celina says that the girls in the family would go hunting too, but only 'when the weather gets nicer'. Jeela similarly remembers that in summer her brothers would go out fishing, and she would go and help them. Interestingly, she clearly states she only wanted to go fishing 'after [she] finished [her] waterproof kamiks.' Thus, women have to finish their own tasks before they can join the males in theirs. Some of the women emphasise that women's upbringing was primarily an indoors affair. For example, Sylvia concludes her story with 'that's how I grew up in the home', Anne also comments her upbringing 'was very much in the house', this could be seen as an opposition to an upbringing on the land, a phrase some of the other women used. As such this kind of upbringing must be seen as more sheltered and therefore less dependent on the weather than an upbringing on the land. This connects neatly with comments about women 'always doing something', 'women are never idle', because their chores are largely done indoors and need to be done on a daily basis, regardless of the weather outside, whilst the men might have to wait out a blizzard before being able to go hunting again, spending the day largely in passive anticipation for a change in weather. Thus the environment affects men and their roles in the family, their patterns of work and their daily lives very differently from women in Inuit society which seems to have repercussions for their lives in contemporary Nunavut society, as we shall see in Chapter 7.

Finally, the stories presented so far have indicated some changes in upbringing and in daily life as they were experienced by the women whilst growing up. The Bible was introduced with its wealth of new and theoretical knowledge that was not based on the immediate environment. Leah remembers that when she was very little she 'had to learn' how to read and write through the bible, this in contrast to the sewing and generally helping her mother and older sisters, which she was 'encouraged' to do. Thus with this new kind of knowledge, new, more forceful, kinds of learning were introduced. According to Jeela, in school children 'were forced' to learn, even when they were 'not ready to learn'. Apart from the changing knowledge and the changing ways of learning this knowledge, schools also introduced new power dynamics. Although parents had always had authority over their children, the teachers were more forceful, also, the teachers were in no way dependent on the children, and therefore could be dominant towards them. The influx of Qallunaat people into the territory, also resulted in inter-cultural marriages (I will go into this in more detail in Chapter 8.4). Thus, just like Crago et al. (1992; 1993) found in Nunavik, the changes in the community have affected child-rearing practices in Nunavut as we shall see in the next section.

### 5.3. CHANGING IDEAS ABOUT SOCIALISATION AND PARENTING

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In this section I will move from the perspectives offered by the childhood memories of the women I spoke with, to the perspectives of the women as mothers of their own children. I assess parenting in the Iqaluit of today, where – according to Kafarowski (2006:41) - the role of Inuit women as carers of children and transmitters of language, culture and values to the next generation has been supplemented by employment outside the home, and compare this with parenting at the time the women I spoke with were growing up. I will start this section with a short look at parenting around 50 years ago, then move on to talk about changes in lifestyle and family composition. Finally, I will briefly assess changing expectations and opportunities and how they have resulted in the different parenting techniques adopted and used currently.

From the stories I have been told, it seems that until recently parents had very clear expectations of their children. Children had to learn their role in society, how to survive, to help others and share with others what they had, and they were told this from a very young age.

From the time we were small, they always said that when you grow up, you must get these skills, you must be able to make *kamiks*, you must be able to take care of yourself as a good little girl, so that when you grow up you will be a good wife. That is the basic principle teaching. (Anne, 50, business owner, 30/01/07)

When my parents were young children, their parents and their grandparents had the expectation that they would survive and in order to survive they needed to learn how to sew skins, catch animals, provide, share, in order to survive. So that was before the child was born, they were preparing already and they were counselled and advised, that if they are going to be a good mother, then they have to do this dadadada, and there was an expectation. (Akulliq, 50, senior government official, 12/10/06)

These messages were conveyed through role modelling by adults, reciting stories and debating their meanings, with children mimicking their parents.

Every single thing they did every minute of the day...they modelled. They weren't saying you have to do this, this is how you do it blablabla but they modelled, we watched and I think that was very effective for me. And other community members, because it was a small community the adults and elders would share their ... what they want to see or what is proper to do and what is not proper, all that was more out in the open, in terms of what is a good citizen and what you should not do. Through various ways, for instance, when they get together in their rare spare moments they would talk and talk and talk and someone would start reciting a legend, and laugh, and someone would even....I know a couple of elders who would usually end up singing the legend and the song and so on. (Jenny, 55, business-owner, 15/03/07)

This relative clarity and certainty about one's role in the future disappeared when communities were formed, the schooling system was introduced and people started to participate in the wage economy. Suddenly children spent most of their time away from their parents and there was not much time left for parents to model the proper way of life and conduct to their children (Chance 1960). Parents were totally unfamiliar with the concept of school and therefore were not able to provide their children with support and advice on how to do well in school. Thus, school dramatically changed children's socialisation in the family; simultaneously expectations and opportunities changed from preparing children for survival on the land to preparing them for survival on the job market – a very different concept.

I'm sure it was very hard for [my parents] to know what to expect, because we were at the verge of major change in our social life. You know, I was the first one to go out of the community to go to school, and it was at the time when outside forces were coming in terms of telling you what you need to do. So they never said I expect you to be this or that, because I'm sure that they didn't know what to expect at that stage. Although they were very much giving me directions in terms of doing well in what I do, and doing well at school. I guess that was all they could do at the time, and that's what they did with all my siblings. Making sure that they understand that they have to do well what they do and try their best. (Jenny, 55, business-owner, 15/03/07)

People don't have a mindset when they come into a job... You're not hunting to provide for your family anymore every day, but you're hunting in your work to earn that money to provide for your family, and in order to do that you need these skills, and these skills will get you a job in order to do that. So that kind of mindset has to be there. (Akulliq, 50, senior government official, 12/10/06)

Kleinfeld and Andrews (2006:120), recently conducted a study into educational attainment in Alaska, and concluded that female gender role expectations now include

‘the ability to support themselves and their children, without dependency on a male provider.’

However, the two themes identified earlier, namely being helpful and being of service, and learning how to survive, are still very important teachings, although their context is very different today. The wage economy has entered the domestic sphere and children need to learn about money and how to deal with it:

The chores that I had to do are very different from my children’s, although to some degree it’s not that different. They were responsible for keeping their own rooms clean, which wasn’t always the case but...And responsible for taking care of the dog, we usually have a dog in the house. And help with the dishes, making sure that their dirty laundry is in a certain area where they have to put it, cleaning the house and sometimes even help with minding their younger siblings as well. It’s slightly a different context, but it’s similar. And again, my daughter when she was in her teens or preteens she would baby-sit, and she liked doing that. But this time, she was getting paid and I was never getting paid, it was not in the concept of the culture to pay your babysitter, it was part of a community volunteerism. (Jenny, 55, business-owner, 15/03/07)

Times are a little bit different too, because now he [Martha’s son] is in the school talking about allowances. Having to do chores for allowances. We did chores because we had to, because it was part of every day, and we weren’t given allowances. And I think it’s because of that that I chose not to, I didn’t grow up with it. So in some sense too I worry about spoiling him in that way, because there’s not a whole lot of expectations. But he periodically does do chores to earn money, like I say, we taught him the concept of money at a very early age. (Martha, 45, senior government official, 03/07/07)

Thus, one of the biggest differences between growing up today and growing up some fifty years ago is the fact that children now expect a monetary return for the time they spend helping their parents. People now expect children to learn the ‘concept of money’ and work and earning at school and children as a result expect to earn money when they ‘work’ at home. Thus, ‘community volunteerism’ seems to have been lost.

Another change is family composition. Sixteen of the women I spoke with were single parents. This has an impact on the upbringing of the children, because the modelling only comes from one gender, thus some of the gendered skills and knowledge are no longer transferred. It also might obstruct the ‘awakening of consciousness of sexual identity’ (Bourdieu 2002 [1972]:93).

Like for instance as a single parent, I would love for my boys to be taught how to make *qamutiks*, to be taught how to hunt, how to skin the animals...that they are not hunting, because they don’t know how. As a single parent, my time is fully engulfed in providing for my family and paying my mortgage and stuff like that. I don’t have the skills. I never learned the skills of a male role in terms of hunting. (Jenny, 55, business-owner, 15/03/07)

Because most single parent families are headed by females, Jenny believes the boys more often lose out on learning traditional skills and knowledge than the girls, as they do not have a father to transfer these skills. Sylvia observes that being able to drive a

dog team is much like an initiation into adulthood for boys; the first catch is also celebrated as a transition into adulthood:

Traditionally every, I mean not every, most young men, before they wedded, before they were married they would start developing these skills and a big time was when they would have their own dog team. And that in many ways was like an initiation into manhood with an ability and skill to be independent, so I expect that with my children. Very highly. (Sylvia, 50, business owner, 11/06/07)

Thus, those boys that do not have a father to teach them these traditional skills, will not be able to go through this initiation into adulthood, and thus remain boys. Because boys have limited responsibilities in comparison to men, I suggest there is a potential danger that boys who have not gone through this initiation might not feel nor act responsibly. This might be an important reason why the first catch is still celebrated in Iqaluit through a community feast on the first of January. Everyone who in the previous year made their first kill of a certain species and their proud relatives are welcome to attend. On the first of January 2007 Tanii was proud to attend to celebrate the first kill of her grandson, whilst Ivalu attended because she herself had caught her first caribou.

In general, children's chores are more important in single parent families (in fact Chabot 2003 :23 found in Nunavik in female headed households 23 % of income was earned by adult children), as all the women I spoke with had jobs outside the home which limited the time available for their household duties.

They always had chores. When I left my husband in the 90s, I realised that I had been doing everything, so after I left my husband I realised that my children also needed to help out because I was going to school, I was going to work, and I just didn't have the time to do everything. And they've been doing their chores since then. They do dishes, they clean the bathroom, vacuuming, folding clothes, and garbage. There's five of them, so there's five chores, but now there's two left, so I need to reschedule, because my oldest one's left recently, I need to reschedule the chores for the two boys. (Igah, 45, justice sector worker, 07/06/07)

Working in order to provide for her family, studying in order to better herself and the future opportunities of her children and doing all the housework was clearly not feasible for Igah. Therefore she needed her children to help her out at home. Interestingly, she does make up a schedule, whereas most of the women I spoke with said in their family the chores were not structured or managed, they just did what needed to be done (see for example Leah page 84).

Lauri doesn't just refer to the fact that when she comes home from a hard day at work and she is tired, what she can do in the home is limited; she also refers to the fact that her earning potential compared to two-income families is limited and therefore she cannot provide her children with everything they want. She has taught them that if they want something, then they will need to go out and work for it:

My son works most evenings, I don't do a lot of cooking, because we eat a lot of country food.<sup>10</sup> I let them know that I work all day and I'm tired some evenings. At least do dishes and whatever.

Being a single parent I have been a mother and a father to my children. I taught them how to become responsible and being a single mother, money doesn't grow in my wallet. And so I taught them that they have to find a job, because I'm not going to be here forever, I'm not going to be there for them forever, although I want to. So I taught them how to become responsible, find a job and buy whatever they want for themselves. (Lauri, 60, health sector worker, 08/02/07)

Valerie's upbringing was very different. She is the eldest of five children of an Inuk mother and a Scottish father. The marriage went downhill and after about four years of instability, her parents broke up when she was 13. She then went to live in Ottawa with her father and her stepmother.

I had a stepmother who put us in teams of two, and there was a rotational schedule. To do dishes, sweep or dust floors and wash floors, do laundry, we had something in the order of up to 13 cats, so there was the cat detail, and each one of us, oh yeah there was the laundry detail, so dishes, cats, floors and laundry. And each one of us had to make our bed just as soon as we got up in the morning. My stepmother was half Irish, half English, and I guess that was good experience for all of us. She made a good sergeant major!

[With my mum], it wasn't structured, like when we were with our stepmother. It wasn't structured like that at all. Loosely managed shall we say. (Valerie, 50, senior government official, 03/07/07)

Thus Valerie's upbringing was divided in different stages, first with her Inuk mother while they travelled around to find a place where both her mom and dad would be happy and later, when that didn't work out, with a Qallunaat stepmother in Ottawa. Her childhood involved many changes, moving around to many different parts of the world (Northern Quebec, Nunavut, Scotland, Manitoba and Ontario) and very different environments, living with parents from different cultural backgrounds and living with different mothers. This situation is not unique and many children today have similar experiences. As Valerie says:

Something was always troubling me from the home environment. I would say homes with domestic strife are harmful to children's psyche. (Valerie, 50, senior government official, 03/07/07)

Valerie says she might have been able to do better at school, if she hadn't experienced problems at home. This supports the perception (see page 78) that the home environment greatly influences children's future course in life. On a practical level, problems at home might limit the children's livelihood opportunities as a result of poor school performances, and on a psychological level it could negatively effect the child's confidence and sense of self.

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<sup>10</sup> Country food, such as seal, caribou or Arctic char, is often eaten raw and frozen and thus does not require cooking, however this does not mean that all country food is eaten raw and it certainly also does not mean that no preparation is necessary, Lauri seems to be downplaying the work involved in order to increase the apparent value and attraction of eating country food, thus promoting cultural practices.

Today's children's chores in the home are generally very similar to the chores their mothers had to perform in the house. These include doing the dishes, or emptying the dishwasher (depending on the context), keeping the house tidy (putting away toys), keeping their rooms clean, taking the garbage out, looking after siblings and taking care of the dog.

Meeka says of her eldest daughter:

You know how I said because I was the oldest, I always did so much, when I had my oldest...when I had my daughter, I remember thinking, "I don't want her to do too much. I don't want her to be a mother, or in a mother role". Now I kind of regret it! Because then there was ehm, there's my oldest daughter and then there was another daughter and because I was so conscious that I didn't want her to do too much, I didn't tell her to do things as much, but I'd tell the second one. I'd go, "oh, pick that up" or whatever, and so now that they're older I notice that the second one is very much more thoughtful about her surroundings and other people and she's aware that if someone is going to eat something, "oh do you need an *ulu* [woman's knife]?" You know, very much more aware, of service. And the older one is much more in her own little world, so I think I've done a disservice to her, because I was being so conscious about "I don't want her to feel that she always has to do everything." (Meeka, 35, senior government official, 07/07/07)

Clearly, Meeka did not want her daughter to have the same experiences in life as she herself had during her childhood, but by treating her daughter differently, she has learned the value of her upbringing, and has come to accept it, thus normalizing her upbringing. According to Bourdieu (2002 [1972]:14-15) the disposition that is ingrained from the early years of life is what accounts for all behaviour and practice in adult life, and this disposition is 'constantly reinforced by calls to order from the group.' This 'implicit guidance' (ibid.:29) guides behaviour through rules unknown to the individuals in the society to which they apply. It seems that in this case, despite the fact that Meeka was aware of the treatment she received at a young age, and despite the fact that she considered it so unfair that she didn't want her daughter to experience the same, somehow she was 'called to order' and, with her second daughter she conformed to the 'unknown rules of society'.

Meeka now believes that she herself had a better upbringing than she gave her daughter and that she was better prepared for life than her daughter will be. Her upbringing provided her with a clear picture of who she was and what her abilities and responsibilities were, while it prepared her for an adult life of hard work and many responsibilities. Her daughter's upbringing on the other hand distanced her somewhat from the needs of people around her, freed her from responsibilities and did not prepare her quite as well to become an independent, hard working adult. However, at a later age Meeka's daughter's upbringing might enable her to break the mould and challenge the reproduction of gender roles. According to Bourdieu, people's interactions are mediated by their past and present positions in the social structure of society and individuals

learn to 'know their place' and do not step out of line. However, some people, who are 'endowed with a determinate type of disposition', might be triggered by a certain event in their lives to affect a change in habitus (Ibid.:83). We will see different women's responses to changing life situations in the next chapter.

Sylvia raised her children about thirty years ago and she says:

I wasn't expecting Jimmy to carry out my chores with me. I truly believe in men's responsibilities and women's responsibilities and the balance. I also believe in allowing the freedom, if Jimmy chose to cook in the house, I value that a great deal. My father was a cook in the household (laughs), my mother did too, but my father catered to my mother very very well. So there is really no tight expectations, you're a man, you shouldn't do the women's role and vice versa, that kind of expectation, we don't have that. But still, we expect as a family, and I do too with my children, because my daughter is a woman, I expect her to have sewing skills, raising her kids with ability and my boy, because he's a man, I expect him to have hunting skills. So we've provided him such things, such equipment, so he can practice that. (Sylvia, 50, business owner, 11/06/07)

Thus, Sylvia expectations of her children were very similar to how she herself was raised, reproducing the arbitrary even though the habitus had changed considerably. Once she was sent to school by her parents, they expected her to stay there and do well and, similarly, Sylvia also expects her own children to do well at school.

I expect everybody to go to school. When I went to school nobody missed school. We weren't even expected to miss any school, by parents and by teachers. There was this expectation that as long as we were not sick, we went to school. (Sylvia, 50, business owner 11/06/07)

This opinion is shared by all the women I spoke with. However, not all parents are able to support their children in going to school. We will return to this issue in Chapter 6 (Section 2).

Southern beliefs of childrearing and parenting and the modern economy have influenced the Inuit to some extent, with children being prepared for school, where they subsequently (but covertly) are prepared for urban, professional roles. For example, Crago et al (1993:212) found that children who grew up with older mothers were not encouraged to ask questions and interfere in adult conversation, whilst children of young parents asked questions, their parents responded to their questions, and the children interrupted adult conversation. This suggests these younger parents had different ideas of children's role and learning than the older parents. They further found that a traditional practice called *aqausiit*, the singing of loving, playful chants to children has greatly diminished in importance in Nunavik. In their study they quote a mother who explains: 'You can't do it when you feel anxious. We are too anxious these days. We have to get up and run off to work in the morning.' This clearly indicates the influence that the modern economy has on the relationship between parent and child. In Ekho, Ottokie et. al. (2000:66) one of the interviewers, who is a young Inuk mother, tells the

elders that she is worried to let her children get used to constant close physical contact – which the elders have just explained is what children really need - because she has to go to classes and she travels. Thus this is another way in which views on childrearing have changed as a result of the modern life-style.

Berreman (amongst many others) observed as early as 1955 in Nikolski in Alaska that: 'The teacher's influence and decreasing influence of old people resulted in children's progressive divergence from the traditional culture.' Both he, Billson (1991:61) and van der Voort (1996) in fact go much further in saying that 'degradation of ethnic identity was part of the informal curriculum.' We can still see this process at work several generations on in different parts of the Arctic. It has been argued (Visart de Bocarmé 2005:148) that art could go some way to restore the relationship between the generations in that it expresses the value of the past and allows a visual transmission of knowledge without direct contact, which has been limited by the schools.

Ukallianuk (2005:185), an elder in Inuit society, highlights another important difference. In Canadian law, everyone over the age of 16 is treated as an adult, which means that when a 16 year old is sentenced their parents' role is disregarded. According to Ukallianuk, 'in the Inuit culture, the children have to listen to their parents for as long as they live' and therefore parents have an important continuing role to play in keeping their children on the right path. The extent to which this happens in reality would be an interesting topic for future research.

All of the above demonstrates the reproduction of the habitus in Inuit society. For example, Akulliq talks about what good mothers have to do, and the expectation that all mothers will follow the advice, in other words, there is an expectation of conforming to the habitus. Jenny similarly remembers that the elders would share their opinions on 'what is proper to do [...] in terms of being a good citizen', this can be interpreted to be the promotion of the habitus by authoritative figures in society. However, at the same time there is also another example of individual agency that works against this reproduction, here I am referring to Meeka raising her first daughter differently from how she had been raised herself. Although Meeka had different ideas of appropriate conduct for a young girl to her parents and didn't want her to be in 'a mother role', I would suggest that her view of appropriate behaviour for a teenage girl was similar to that of her parents, because when her daughter reached her teens, she was not as helpful as a teenage girl should be. Thus, although she rebelled against the reproduction of gender roles, she has now come to accept that the kind of upbringing she herself received was a better preparation for life than the upbringing she gave her eldest daughter. This example seems to undercut some of the foundations of the idea of the

habitus, namely that it is largely unconscious, which in this example is clearly not possible as Meeka was very conscious of the hard work that she had to do and made the very conscious decision not to raise her own daughter in the same way. This example - as well as the earlier examples of 'rebellion' - also seems to suggest that there is a lot more play and opposition possible within the habitus of Inuit society than Bourdieu seems to have supposed possible, in that deviation from the rule is by no means an exception.

The ethnography presented here also provides us with additional evidence in support of the argument that though authority is vested in certain individuals in relation to other members of the community, it is limited because of the interdependence between these different members of the community. For example, Sylvia says she values the freedom of individuals to choose in which ways they want to contribute to the household, rather than having set, 'tight expectations'. A change in her attitude is illustrated by her laughter when she recalls her father was the cook of the household. She clearly finds this a laughable idea in the context of today. This is a limitation to the theory of habitus as proposed by Bourdieu. Not only does it seem to be too deterministic in its restriction of human agency (Cronin 1996; Frow 2000; Joppke 2000; Moi 2000), but neither does it deal sufficiently with incoming cultural changes that affect life as they have in the Arctic (Frow 2000; Joppke 2000; Moi 2000). Although Bourdieu tacitly admits: '*social action has nothing to do with rational choice, except perhaps in very specific crisis situations when the routines of everyday life and the practical feel of habitus cease to operate*' (Bourdieu 1988:783), agency seems to have a stronger presence in the lives of the Inuit than Bourdieu seems to consider possible, in terms of choosing a way of life regardless of existing conventions. The 'outside forces' have also had a very large influence on the way of life of the Inuit population in Nunavut, thus interfering with the reproduction of the habitus, causing confusion about the habitus and necessitating adaption of the habitus.

The context of childrearing has changed in many other ways; for example, Inuit have now become dependent on different resources. Rather than relying on the natural environment to provide these resources, Inuit have become more and more dependent on wage labour and money to provide for their family. Through schooling, work and the use of money, Inuit have appropriated some parts of the new incoming culture into their daily lives.

In contemporary communities - as opposed to the traditional family camps - interactions with a much larger group of people are frequent and inevitable, and it seems from the stories of the women I spoke with that these interactions are now often

mediated by money. For example, Jenny talks about her daughter babysitting for money and similarly Martha says her son periodically does chores for money. The interactions have also changed in other ways: Igah and Lauri are two single mothers bringing up their children on their own. They are thus no longer dependent on a husband to help them out with their part of the household chores, creating a greater independence, however, both rely on their children to help them out in the house, thus this interdependence between parent and child continues in the modern context.

The changes also included interactions with outsiders, which Jenny calls 'outside forces [...] telling you what you need to do'. The power relations between these 'forces' and the Inuit were very unequal, Inuit were considered to be in need of assimilating into the larger Canadian society and were not asked for their opinions. They were made more and more dependent on the incoming forces by being moved into communities from where hunting opportunities were limited, and they were made dependent on government hand-outs, in return there was very little that the Inuit were asked to do for the Southern Canadians that came up north, thus the interdependence that had characterised relationships of authority until then did not exist between different people of different backgrounds that were now residing in the north.

Children in Inuit society were traditionally raised to become 'responsible adults', but in the context of contemporary Nunavut society, this now means something very different from what it meant whilst Inuit still lived on the land. Lauri says that she wants her children to become responsible, by which she means to 'find a job and buy whatever they want for themselves.' This suggests a sudden change in 'habitus', which by definition must mean no habitus is currently in place, as it is no longer shared, no longer automatic and no longer subconscious.<sup>11</sup> For example, Jenny recalls her parents didn't know what to expect for her future, which suggests that the former habitus had been dismantled. Sylvia, on the other hand, says both her and her parents expected 'everybody to go to school'. However, rather than assuming an easier transition to a different habitus, this might have been the result of the forceful methods with which the Canadian government pushed its assimilative policies. Akulliq, talking about contemporary times in Iqaluit, says that the mindset to go out and get the skills needed to be able to get a job and provide for the family are not fully there yet for many Inuit. This suggests a new habitus takes a long time to become fully functional. New family constitutions in Iqaluit today also influence the formation of the habitus. Take Valerie,

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<sup>11</sup>Critics of Bourdieu (e.g. Moi, 2000; Joppke 2000; Frow 2000; Throop and Murphy 2002) have posed the habitus as less deterministic, more conscious and potentially changeable.

for example, who moved from the Arctic to Ottawa with her father after her parents got divorced. Her new environment contrasted sharply with the 'loosely managed' household that she had grown up in until then. Suddenly chores in the house got done according to a rotational schedule which threw her into a completely different way of life, with its own and unknown habitus, a completely different set of 'mental structures through which [to] apprehend the social world' (Bourdieu 1989:18). Bourdieu doesn't tell us how long it would be before a completely alien set of dispositions are formed into the automotive and subconscious habitus (Cronin 1996; Joppke 2000; Throop and Murphy 2002; Jenkins 2003). The increase in one-parent households also stands in the way of the reproduction of a gendered habitus, for example, Jenny says she cannot teach her sons male skills and knowledge since she herself was not taught the male role.

Whilst a lot of things are changing in terms of socialisation and upbringing of children in Iqaluit, there is also evidence that certain values are transferred from generation to generation. Think for example of Martha who says she chose not to pay her son for doing occasional chores around the house because she 'didn't grow up with it'. Sylvia expects that her children will develop the ability and skill to be independent, just like traditionally young people were expected to. Thus there is some evidence that certain aspects of the traditional habitus are still being reproduced in the younger generation.

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#### 5.4. STRATEGIES OF ADOPTION

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Although Bourdieu is often criticized for his determinism with respect to the habitus, he has written extensively (Lamaison and Bourdieu 1986; Bourdieu 2002 [1972]:22) on strategies and tempo which can be employed by 'playing the game', in other words, using the rules in order to better oneself socially. Because the rules are created in response to past practices, they constitute not only desired, but also the most effective behaviour. Thus, by obeying the rules, individuals achieve their desired ends most effectively and in a way that society respects and honours. In following the rules, individuals gain doubly, once in achieving the immediately desired ends and again in achieving prestige and respect from other individuals in the group. In this final section of this chapter I will look in detail at the practice of adoption and the ways in which it is employed by different individuals to achieve different goals. This will uncover some of the meanings, uses and strategies employed by individual agents partaking in this cultural institution and the options open to individuals to 'play the rules' of the habitus (Lamaison and Bourdieu 1986:113).

As mentioned before, adoption is very common and widely practiced in Inuit societies (see for example Lantis 1946; Chance 1990; Briggs 1991; Ekho, Ottokie et al. 2000). Traditionally, children were considered a real asset and childless couples would often be given a child so that someone would look after them in old age. Also, adult children often gave their first-born children to their parents for adoption (Balikci 1967:620), to reciprocate the gift of life that they had received from their parents. According to Uqsuralik (quoted in Ekho, Ottokie et al. 2000:92):

In the old days, adoption was always part of our lives. There would be couples that were incapable of having their own children. In the old days, there weren't that many children. Today there are a lot more children than there used to be. One of the best ways to have a child in the old days was through adoption.

The practice of adoption is still very much alive in Nunavut today. However, the reasons behind adopting children out today are sometimes very different from what they used to be. For example, young teenage mothers might give their children to their parents because they have no time to look after them while they are in school or college, or because they do not have the skills to look after a child. Whereas Boulton (2006:20) asserts that child neglect is uncommon in Inuit society and that the constantly moving relations between adults and children 'helps ensure that all children are wanted and cared for properly' (see also Sprott 2002), other sources (Rasmussen 1908; Lantis 1960; Jenness 1961 [1928]; Boas 1964 [1888]; Ekho, Ottokie et al. 2000) all relate examples of orphans or adopted children who were not well looked after. Uyarasuk (1999:262) in fact suggests that these days there are too many children and therefore people give them up because they do not want them (as is also reported to happen occasionally amongst the Iñupiaq in Alaska by Chance 1990:94).

Mary doesn't want to raise her grandchildren, she says:

I'm not a typical grandmother who looks after the grandkids. They come and visit me. I know a lot of women my age, their daughters are giving their children to them to look after and that's a hardship on women in my age group. But I say: "take them back to their mother". Cause they often want to go fishing, and go hunting or berry picking, and they have to look after their grandkids. (Mary, 60, senior government official, 24/11/06)

However, Lauri and Mary were themselves adopted when they were little, Mary's parents passed away when she was little, and Lauri's mother died when she was young.

I grew up with my sisters, being the youngest, I was number six, my mother died when I was two so I was passed on to one or another of my sisters. I stayed with my father on and off on the land, so I've learned how to survive on the land...(Lauri, 60, health sector worker, 08/02/07)

I think we were living in the system of, we're a very communal society, sharing and things, it takes a village to raise a child: it's so true! And I was like that, I was an orphan, so the whole village looked after me and they would take turns to have me. My uncles would have me for so many months, or so many years. When they had to

move away and they couldn't take me, then I was given to another aunt, or stuff like that, so it worked out ... really good! (Mary, 60, senior government official, 24/11/06)

Celina turns it around when she says she grew up in the care of her parents, because her grandparents died before she was born:

My parents had 12 children all together, however there are seven of us left because some have passed away. So there are seven of us left, there are three boys and four girls. And I'm about the middle child, I'm the seventh child and I always say seven is a lucky number. And most of us have lived with our parents, because our grandparents passed away quite young, they had all passed away by the time I was born, so we all grew up in the care of our parents, until we went away to residential school. (Celina, 50, senior government official, 05/04/07)

Most of the women I spoke with had firsthand experience of adoption, by being adopted out themselves, adopting one of their children out, adopting a child themselves, or any combination of the three. The practice is very open, everyone involved is aware of it, and it is not necessarily irreversible. For example Pitsiulak first tells me she has five children, then she tells me what four of them are doing, not mentioning that one of them is adopted out. She also tells me that initially her eldest son was adopted out to her parents, but that when they passed away he moved back to her own family instead.

I have five children, half way to what I wanted. At first I wanted ten. My oldest son is an aircraft mechanic as well as a pilot, he's got his pilot licence, so he's working all the time. My daughter is in university right now but very involved with youth movements, for the betterment of youth. And then I have two that are still in grade school.

*That adds up to four...*

Huhuh...oh, one is adopted away, sorry. Adopted away to relatives. My oldest children did know [my parents] but not the younger ones. My parents played a role in particularly the oldest one's life, they were there for the oldest one, he was originally adopted out to them, but when they passed away he went under me. (Pitsiulak, 50, health sector worker, 22/03/07)

This strategy can be considered very positive not only from the parent's and grandparent's point of view, but also from the child's point of view. A friend who studied at the Arctic College and lived in the Residence with me told me that she felt very lucky to have been adopted by her grandparents, because they were experienced and knowledgeable and looked after her well.

Kanayok adopted her youngest brother when her parents died:

I'm a mum, I could have five kids, but now I have two, the other two are with their mum, through my husband and the other one has moved out. He stayed with us when my mum died, so I took him in. Now he has his own place.

*So, was this really your brother?*

Yes. (Kanayok, 40, education sector worker, 14/02/07)

Valerie adopted her brother's children when he divorced his wife and was granted full custody over his children:

I helped raise my second youngest brother's two boys, when he divorced his wife, she granted him sole custody. And their boys were ages three years and a half and

nine months old when they broke apart, so him being a pilot and always travelling, I suggested he move up to Iqaluit from Northern Quebec and I take care of his boys while he was away working. So they lived with me for 11 years. (Valerie, 50, senior government official, 03/07/07)

Kiuga's family life while she was growing up was very complex. She was adopted to an older couple, who had two sons of their own. Later they also adopted her (adoptive-) mother's niece, because the girl's mother died. When Kiuga went to school her mother adopted two more children, who were her biological grandchildren. Kiuga's mother died when Kiuga was 17 and she then became responsible for her mother's two grandchildren.

I was born here in Iqaluit, I was adopted to older couple, maybe they might have been in their late fifties when they adopted me. And my biological parents were from Pangnirtung, they were in Iqaluit for a couple of years I guess for work. So I grew up with older parents, but my adopted father passed away when I was maybe three and a half, and my mother had two sons in our household and her niece who became her responsibility when she lost her mum when she was about 16. So there was about 5 of us in a two bedroom house in Apex, I grew up in Apex, that's where my family were. And my adoptive mother passed away suddenly when I was 17. So at 17 I didn't finish school, I was working for the government of NWT, because my mother had her two grandchildren, so they became my responsibility after she passed away. (Kiuga, 55, senior government official, 07/05/07)

Aisha had not wanted to adopt and did not at first welcome her adopted daughter at all. Her father had suggested she and her boyfriend adopt a child in order to strengthen their relationship:

My dad passed away a couple of years ago, he said: If you want to stick together, you should adopt a child. My mom didn't want me to, she said no, because she knows what he [her boyfriend] is like. But my boyfriend asked for my cousin's baby without telling me. He told me later and I said, no, I don't want a baby! Then one day really early in the morning I got a phone call. It was the hospital and they said: you have a daughter! I didn't want a daughter! I didn't want to adopt a baby. But now, I won't let go of her now! When she was three she laughed, and I suddenly realised that she has feelings too. That's when I suddenly felt that she was mine. She was a human being with feelings, just like me, she's mine now! But the day that I got her at the hospital I had to fill out the forms for adoption. My boyfriend didn't come with me, he didn't have time, so I had to go and pick her up by myself. And I didn't put his name [on the form], I just put my name on the adoption papers, because my boyfriend wasn't there with me. (Aisha, 40, seamstress, 07/06/07)

These stories show how common adoption is as an institution. Relatives often adopt each other's children for practical reasons, and often adoption is practiced as an emergency mechanism when one or both of the biological parents pass away. Uqsuralik (Ekho, Ottokie et al. 2000:98) remembers a case of a child whose mother died during childbirth. In this case the baby would normally be taken by the immediate relatives, if there were any, or else a couple who wanted to adopt might take it, if no-one was found the midwife would take it. Another reason for adoption was to ensure an aging couple would have someone to look after them in old age; in more recent times this also

included financial contributions from the government in the form of family allowances (Suluk and Blakney 2008:63).

Adoption in Nunavut does not carry the stigma that it might have in other societies, because it is so common and because often the decision is made in order to provide the child with the best possible care (though Lantis (1960:167-171) records that in practice this doesn't always materialise). As I mentioned before, children are seen as valuable assets and thus giving a child to a parent or relative is a very precious gift. In addition, elders hold a lot of knowledge and wisdom which children will benefit from, even if they are only with them for a limited time. At the same time, as Uqsuralik observed, there are now a lot more children than in the old days, and children are more likely to be adopted out because parents are not ready, or not able, to look after their own children. While I was living at the residence, there was a 19-year-old girl who got pregnant at the start of the year. She had already had an abortion before and therefore decided she would put this child up for adoption. When I asked her about who would take it, she answered there were lots of people who wanted to adopt a baby. Although everyone at the residence knew who the father of the baby was, it was generally accepted that he didn't want anything to do with the baby and that he was not interested in taking on any of the responsibilities that go with it. However, when the baby was born the following May, the mother decided to keep her after all and she and her new boyfriend, who she had started seeing shortly after getting pregnant, appeared happy when I met them walking down the street. I later saw pictures of the young family on the internet with comments that clearly supported this view. Thus, although she might not have been ready to look after the child as she was young and still in education, and the father did not take any responsibilities for the child, in this particular case, the baby was not adopted out. Certainly, then, the decision for adopting children out is not taken lightly even in cases where the situation for raising the child by the biological mother might be less than perfect.

In this final section we can see that in the specific case of adoption practices in Iqaluit many different strategies are employed depending on the desirable outcome. The first example is of Mary who is not 'a typical grandmother'. Her comments, taken together with Celina's comment that none of her brothers and sisters were adopted by her grandparents - which suggests that normally some of the children would have been adopted out - seems to suggest that Mary is breaking with tradition in not taking care of her grandchildren, which might have been an unspoken expectation in 'traditional times'. Indeed, Balikci (1967:620) suggests that amongst the Netsilik: 'Elderly women, being more experienced in child-rearing, often acted as supervisor for the children,

freeing the young mother for other chores.' However, Mary's grandchildren do visit, thus she certainly does play a role in her grandchildren's lives. Mary is a very busy woman, with a very responsible job, therefore, she can only realistically do for her grandchildren what she currently does, even if her daughters are also busy with their jobs.

Mary herself was passed around to different relatives, her uncles, her aunties, who would temporarily take her in and look after her for as long as they could before passing her on to another relative again. This passing around of children was clearly a strategy to make sure that children were well looked after, and people would be fulfilling their responsibilities to kin by looking after their children. But whilst people are expected to be helpful and orphans are ideally taken into a family and cared for as if they were part of that family, it is clearly not uncommon for these adoptions to be temporary and reversible. This at once makes it more likely that a family will take on the responsibility - because it is the 'right thing to do', and after all, it can be reversed if necessary - but at the same time it makes it more likely that the passing on of children is not considered to be a problem and therefore practiced frequently and at the will of the parents, which could potentially be damaging to the child.

The coping system is also clearly demonstrated in the case of Lauri, who was adopted by her older sister because her mother died whilst she was still young. But this did not instigate a loss of contact with her biological father, who continued to spend time with her and continued to teach her the skills for survival on the land. Similarly, Pitsulak's oldest child was initially adopted out to his grandparents, but this was reversed when they died. When Kanayok's mother died, she took in her youngest brother and looked after him until he was old enough to move out of the house and look after himself. Similarly, Valerie, who is herself single and without children of her own, is fulfilling her family responsibilities by looking after her brother's children because he split up with his wife. Kiuga is given responsibility for her adoptive mother's adopted children, who were her biological grandchildren, this seems somewhat unusual, since the biological parents were still alive at the time and therefore, they would have normally gone back to them, and indeed, later on the children temporarily did go back to their biological mother. In most of these cases children are provided with the best possible care, whilst adults perform their family duties by looking after them. In some cases the biological family lost contact, whilst at other times, they were still performing very important roles in the lives of their children that were adopted out. In Valerie's case, not only was she performing her familial duties by adopting her brother's children, at the same time she also secured for herself the help and care of these children in her old age.

Aisha's boyfriend arranged the adoption of a relative's baby, without Aisha's consent, as a means of sanctifying the relationship of the couple. In this case the adoption was initiated by the adopting family, rather than by the biological family, not in order to ensure the best care for the child, but rather to strengthen the relationship of the adopting couple. Aisha's boyfriend was taking full control; his strategy was geared towards a stronger relationship with Aisha, Aisha herself did not have any control over this decision. However, the roles were reversed when Aisha went to pick the baby up from the hospital: Aisha took full control, both in physically picking the baby up even though she didn't want it, and subsequently legally, by signing the adoption papers only in her name. In doing so the link between her boyfriend and the baby was never formally established, thus Aisha's relationship with her boyfriend was no longer connected to her relationship with the baby. Therefore, the adoption did not have the effect - desired by her boyfriend - of sanctifying the relationship, but instead it enabled Aisha to establish a new relationship - unrelated to her relationship with her boyfriend - with the baby.

This brief description of adoption in Inuit society - which is practised frequently and, until quite recently, without regulation by formal laws and regulations - shows us the meaning, uses and strategies employed by individual agents partaking in this cultural institution. It shows the options open to individuals without breaking the rules of the habitus. Some individual agents chose to distance themselves from involvement with grandchildren beyond visiting, because adoption limits the mobility of the grandparent. Some initially agreed to adopt, but as and when their life situation changed, or took them elsewhere, they would reverse the adoption and let someone else take over. Others initially adopted their children out, so that their children would be raised by their much more experienced and knowledgeable grandparents, whilst knowing that at some point in the future, they would return to live with them when the grandparents died. Aisha's story is interesting in that her boyfriend tried to use adoption to strengthen their relationship, whilst Aisha's behaviour around the official adoption papers rather weakened their relationship. Thus the ideals of adoption, where every child should have a supportive family in which he or she is cared for and welcome, where a child should preferably be adopted by a relative, and where a child should be told from a young age who the biological parents and/or relations are, can be applied quite differently by different people and for different reasons. These are different strategies that allow people to employ their agency in relation to the conventions and constraints of the habitus (Bourdieu 2002 [1972]).

## 5.5.CONCLUSION

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As we have seen in this chapter, children in Inuit society are given a personality and a set of relations through the name they are given. Because each child has a unique combination of names, children have the ability to choose to act on one or the other, and so create their own personality from the traits available to them through their names. They also could foreground one or the other depending on the context and company they find themselves in, thus employing their agency and behaving in ways appropriate and most conducive to meeting their needs at that specific moment. Thus, although the naming system is restricting in some ways, there are opportunities for individuals to strategise. In this Inuit naming practices are similar to the idea of the habitus, which is restricting - in that individuals have a certain set of conventions and logic which they have to comply with - but at the same time individuals operating within a habitus have different strategies at their disposal which they can use to meet their goals. Through naming, a child is not just named after an ancestor or elder, but is in fact to some extent construed as this ancestor or elder, thus this is a very strong way of rooting children in the past. This could be seen as one way in which the Inuit are trying to restrict, or combat, or at least deal with the modern influences and changes that they are experiencing in contemporary Inuit society.

This chapter also shows how gender roles were reproduced within the family by girls learning through observation and helping their mother and older sisters and boys learning through observation and helping their father and older brothers. There is the expectation that people will conform to proper behaviour and this is promoted by authoritative figures, mostly elders or parents, in society. But whilst this is the usual mode of events, reality doesn't always follow this predetermined path. As we have seen, quite a few of the women recall stories of deviations from the 'conventions'. This suggests that people are more conscious of their habitus than Bourdieu would have us believe, as they are consciously making up their minds to oppose it. Thus individuals in Inuit society can exhibit a considerable degree of agency in negotiating and shaping the habitus.

One way in which such negotiations manifest themselves is in people's responses to situations of cultural change. This chapter has introduced some of the changes that have taken place in Inuit society and the perspectives of Inuit women on these changes. First, the interdependency that used to characterise all interactions and power relations in traditional Inuit society, was supplemented by the dominance of the incoming forces, such as the teachers in the classrooms, the RCMP officers and other government

representatives from southern Canada. Since the Inuit were not given the opportunity to contribute in any way to the Southern Canadian institutions, the relationship between these institutions and the Inuit was a relationship of dominance and dependence. Changing interactions included not only far more frequent interactions with far more (unrelated) people, but also interactions with institutions that originated in the southern Canadian culture. These changes in interactions have resulted in money being used more frequently as a mediator. Raising children to become 'responsible adults' has come to mean that children had to be able to find a job and earn a living, rather than survive on the land. Another important change is that numbers of one-parent, female-headed households are increasing, which dissolves the interdependency between husband and wife. The single mother is more independent of the father of her children, though the interdependency between her and her children still remains. This increase in single mother households also impedes the reproduction of gender roles, because role-modelling is one of the main methods of transmitting knowledge and skills in Inuit society, and in these families, there is no male role model, so the boys do not have a clear picture of male adulthood to strive for. This is one of the reasons why females are better prepared for adulthood, and therefore better able to benefit from training and career opportunities in the territory.

The role of the environment in daily life has also changed in the life of Inuit men and women. The environment and seasonality played an important, if tacit, role in children's play, in what children learned and in the chores children had to perform. As such their lives and learning were not only embedded in the environment, but also the environment was embedded in their knowledge and experience of life. Boys' and girls' responsibilities were shaped differently by the environment, because a lot of the girls' chores were daily chores that took place inside the home, to some extent sheltered from the weather and had to be done regardless of the weather. On the other hand, the boys' chores were more strongly influenced by the weather in that the weather did place ultimate restrictions on their ability to go out and provide for the family through hunting. According to Duerden (2004:206) historically, intergenerational contact, and the transfer of knowledge were central to survival and well-being. However, according to Qamanirq and Kinnon (2006:4), the connection between the younger and the older generation has been severed, thus limiting the opportunities for this transfer of knowledge and threatening well-being. Whilst in modern life in the communities both men and women are more removed from the environment, thus negatively affecting the well-being of both, traditionally men's lives were much more directly connected to the environment, the climate and weather conditions. Men have been socialised to be

opportunistic about work and work opportunities as an adaptation to the changing weather conditions, rather than being used to regular, pre-planned activity, similar to women's tasks in traditional family camps, which is the norm in the communities. Their well-being might also be more directly influenced by the absence of the environment in their daily lives, as it was once so much more pervasive in their lives than in women's lives.

Finally the chapter shows us the strategies employed by individuals in relation to the institution of adoption. According to the conventions of the habitus, adoption is practiced in order to make sure that children are well looked after. Adopting an orphaned child is a responsibility that individuals have towards their kin, but fulfilling this responsibility, thus conforming to the norm, might have other advantages. First, in conforming to the rules and doing what is proper to do, individuals will gain respect from others within the community, at the same time individuals who do not have children of their own can secure the help and care offspring can provide in old age by adopting children. Adopting a child into a relationship might also help to strengthen this relationship or alternatively new relationships can be established through adoption, not only with the new baby, but also potentially with the baby's kin. This last section thus clearly shows the options available to individuals operating within the habitus, and provides examples of how conforming to the habitus is actually the most beneficial in terms not only of gaining respect and prestige, but also in terms of reaching alternative goals (Bourdieu 2002 [1972]:76-77).

The stories of these women suggest a sudden change in habitus, which, since habitus should by definition be shared, automatic and subconscious, must mean there is currently no habitus in place (or a weaker habitus becomes paradoxically more noticeable through visible alternatives). The former habitus had been dismantled and it becomes clear that a new habitus takes a long time to become fully functional. Although certain values are still transferred from generation to generation, 'outside forces' have also had a very large influence on the way of life of the Inuit population in Nunavut. Through schooling, work and the use of money, Inuit have appropriated some parts of the incoming culture into their daily lives. We can conclude that the cultural changes that are still taking place today have interfered with the reproduction of the habitus, causing confusion and necessitating adaptation of the habitus.

## 6. SOCIAL CAPITAL, GENDERED POWER RELATIONS AND EXPANDING HABITUS IN A SITUATION OF SOCIAL CHANGE

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### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

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Following our consideration of the family in Chapter 4, this chapter investigates social relationships in Iqaluit more generally under three main themes – social capital, power and habitus. Following a discussion of relevant literature, I go on to present three life histories which exemplify these elements. I offer a vivid account of how these issues are experienced and negotiated by different women in Iqaluit. The extensive literature on social capital shows that it can be useful for social support, social leverage, social control and community organisation (Carpiano 2006), and as such it influences people's health positively (Whitehead and Diderichsen 2001). However, there are also distinctly negative components of social capital, with gendered differences. These include claims on labour and remittances, heightened control, familial obligations, constraining ideals of moral conduct and unequal access to the more beneficial 'bridging networks' (Silvey and Elmhirst 2003:874). It is therefore incorrect to assume a direct link between social capital and an increase in personal well-being, as this depends on many extremely complex interrelationships between social capital, institutional power, inter and intra household relations etc. (Mayoux 2001:436). The argument in this chapter is that social change has enabled greater flexibility and diversity in the ways in which people develop and manipulate social capital.

Social relationships are indeed fundamental to people's lives and well-being as they form the basis of personhood. Blackman (1991:59) found that, in life-histories, Alaskan women described themselves as a part of relationships, as opposed to men who describe important events related to subsistence and travel on the land. This is insightful as one's position within relationships, which are all inherently power relationships and which are at the centre of women's experiences, further determines one's ability to act: one's agency (Layton 2003:458), and this interdependence would seem to be stronger amongst women than men. This chapter takes a critical look at the social relationships that were central to the women I spoke with and the ways in which they changed throughout their lives.

Relationships among the Inuit were traditionally marked by contrasting degrees of sociality in winter and in summer, with summer being characterised by small family camps with limited social interaction. In contrast, winter saw the amalgamation of several camps with intense social, religious and ceremonial interactions (Balikci 1967; Balikci 1968; Mauss 1979 [1950]; Saladin d'Anglure 1990). The most common solution to tensions arising within these intensely social camps was flight, rather than confrontation, as the latter would endanger the whole camp (e.g.: Lantis 1960:167-171).

According to Briggs (1991:284), Inuit traditionally form close and extremely dependent relationships with very few people, because of the dangerous uncertainty they perceive in human relationships. Rather than focusing on the positive influence of social relationships on people and the way in which relationships produce and reproduce personhood, this view emphasises the shifting nature of individuals and relationships which could potentially cause pain through loss. Another interesting commentary on social relationships in Iqaluit is Honigmann and Honigmann's (1965:242) point that telling someone what to do is not acceptable behaviour in Inuit relationships (cf: Rasing 1993:97). This ideal of non-interference should theoretically limit the influence of social interactions on people's lives and thus potentially the usefulness of social capital. In contrast, Lantis (1946:256) asserts that relationships - and the responsibilities that went with them - were an important means of social control, which suggests that indirectly people strongly influenced each other's behaviour. Social relationships prescribed that elderly women were expected to help younger women with their childcare responsibilities (Balikci 1967:620); on the other hand social relationships enabled movements from less productive to more productive hunting areas (Balikci 1967:618). Today the increased mobility and communication to distant places provided by new forms of technology has problematized some of these traditional modes of social relationships.

Among hunter gatherers around the world, personhood and agency are negotiated through sharing relationships (Bird-David 1999:s73), which in Inuit society are seen as simultaneously creating and maintaining relatedness and interdependence between people and the environment (Nuttall 2000), and act as a buffer against environmental uncertainties (Gombay 2006; 2009). However, the obligation to share has the potential to burden some individuals more than others. For example, Wenzel (2000) found that in Clyde River, a small community on the Baffin Island coast north of Iqaluit, younger working women were often heavily burdened by their obligation to share their wages with relatives (though see Angmarlik 1999:278 for a different perspective). It becomes

clear that negotiation, manipulation and nonconformity can and do take place within the 'sharing ideal' (Bird-David 1999:s72).

Relations between individuals and sharing conventions have been changing since foreign visitors entered the Arctic. For example, Chance (1990:113) reports interracial tensions in Alaska; Qamanirq and Kinnon (2006:19) report the policy of removing women from their communities for birth jeopardizes the creation of a relationship between the family - most notably the father - and the newborn (see also Kaufert and O'Neil 1990; O'Neil and Kaufert 1995) and reporting on First Nations fathers in British Columbia; Ball (2009:29-30) notes the residential school policy has diminished men's roles and 'created a fissure in the sociocultural transmission of father roles across generations', because the men who attended these schools did not have 'experiences of being fathered'. Whilst she writes about a different cultural context, she notes: 'it is generally acknowledged that most Indigenous men and women in Canada are either survivors of residential schools or have suffered 'secondary trauma' as a result of being born to parents who lacked parenting role models': and her research participants have similar experiences to many Inuit in Nunavut. This chapter shows in detail how three women, in particular, negotiated their roles and the expectations that went with those roles in the household and the wider family.

Social relationships are inherently power relationships since power interweaves all aspects of relationships and obligations. According to Bourdieu, relationships exist only through agents' actions and they are maintained because they fulfil vital functions (Bourdieu 2002 [1972]:39). At the same time, some agents have the ability to manipulate them, whilst others are kept in their place (ibid :82). For example, among female immigrant workers in Indonesia, Silvey and Elmhirst (2003) found that networks limited women's decision-making power about sexuality and social mobility both within the labour market and activist networks; thus their lived experience was strongly influenced by power relations and specific social history (Townsend, Porter et al. 2004:884). The women I spoke with navigate their roles and obligations and the power relations to which they are subjected in their lives in different ways.

Among Inuit societies, authority is gained through age and experience (Anderson and Nuttall 2004:7), but there is more emphasis on individuals conforming voluntarily, obeying willingly and foreseeing others' needs and wishes (Briggs 1991:267), as Inuit do not feel comfortable regulating one another (Honigmann and Honigmann 1965:237). The most powerful regulating agent in Inuit society is a very powerful ideology. An ideology 'governs practice ... by mediation of the orientations and limits it assigns to the habitus's operations of invention' (Bourdieu 2002 [1972]:95). Inuit ideology determines,

for example, that one should share (Gombay 2006:502), young adults should submit to elders, everyone should submit to the demands of the community (Lantis 1960:167-171) and ensures everyone is aware of their allocated tasks (Angmarlik 1999:167). Balikci (1967:619) notes that historically some wives were scared of their husbands and had no option but to follow their husband's decisions; however, in the 60s, at the time of his own research, he found that it was generally the individual with the strongest personality (male or female) who made the decisions. Damas (1968:88) found affection and obedience to be the controlling factors in kinship relations, and different relations were characterised by dominance and subordination (between older and younger individuals), closeness (between close kin), cooperation (between close kin), leadership and followship (between parent and child) and respect (between elders and youths). Fienup-Riordan (2000:129), writing about the Yup'ik in Alaska, found that, although elders have valuable knowledge and are willing to share this knowledge, it is up to the youths to decide whether or not they want to use this knowledge, thus suggesting a great degree of autonomy for the youths in this society. As we shall see in this chapter, Tracey's life is still greatly influenced by ideologies and expectations: she is married and looks after her family as a matter of course. Sylvia, on the other hand, divorced her husband, thus rejected some of the ideology, but still believes very strongly in other aspects of the ideology and expects her children to follow this too. Finally, Igah seems to have discarded most aspects of the ideology: she left her family and later her husband and his family and set her own course for shaping her own life. As we shall see, their experiences of life today are radically different as a result.

With the establishment of The Co-op in the Canadian Arctic, described in great detail by Mitchell (1996:xiv), power relations were altered considerably, creating asymmetries between Inuit and Qallunaat and between different Inuit, by making some into bosses and managers, whilst limiting others to remain traders, employees or customers. But sometimes, individuals representing foreign bodies (e.g. the clerk at the Hudson Bay Company (HBC)) respected traditional conventions of power relations and worked in collaboration with traditional leadership (Angmarlik 1999:275). According to Mitchell it also became clear to Inuit in the communities that power was tied to ethnic position (Ibid.:117). This powerful position enabled Qallunaat to replace Inuit knowledge with Qallunaat knowledge as the dominant and only accepted way of knowing, doing and living (cf:Bird-David 1999). This process has also influenced the women I spoke with and their views of themselves, their lives and their possibilities in life to a greater or lesser extent.

Together with changing power relations, these new forces generated new social settings, ideologies and environments and hence new experiences for Inuit, potential new courses of action and forced different kinds of social interaction through which the Inuit gave meaning to their lives and their world (cf. Townsend, Porter et al. 2004). Inuit and Qallunaat conventions provided different, and sometimes opposing, options, with costs and benefits attached to each. Choosing a course of action from different possibilities within the habitus, thus exercising agency (e.g.: Layton 2003), is as unlikely to produce an 'unpredictable novelty' as it is a 'simple mechanical reproduction of the initial conditionings' (Bourdieu 2002 [1972]:95). In other words, within a framework of ideologies and conventions there is room for manoeuvre, this tension between agency and structure (see also: Brumbach and Jarvenpo 2002) is further complicated in Inuit society as multiple ideologies vie for a dominant position, whilst Inuit are negotiating their identity and search for meaningful interactions within and between societies and environments (Frink, Shephard et al. 2002).

For example, fathers are reported to struggle to find their place within their families and societies, whilst women 'took on dual workloads' from the 1980s onwards (Sprott 2002:92): they look after the children, prepare the food and 'tell men what to do' (Ball 2009:44). Gombay (2006:517) reports one Nunavik male felt he had to break traditional rules of sharing in order to be successful as a businessman in non-Inuit society. Because of the centrality of sharing to Inuit identity and maintaining social relationships, changing these sharing conventions by implication also changes what it means to be Inuk in this wider society. Inuitness has been a contested notion since Inuit started to resist the unequal relations between Inuit and Qallunaat in the late 1970s (Mitchell 1996:xvi), but its emphasis on a strong 'spiritual and cultural bond between humans and the natural world' is widely accepted (Nuttall 2000:377). But whilst this is the rhetoric of the Inuit ruling class, in reality for many Inuit this connection is lost, or losing its meaning as a result of the changes in lifestyle that have taken place.

The remainder of this chapter consists of three main sections, each introducing one of the Inuit women I spoke with and part of her life story. Under the three overlapping themes discussed in this introduction, the first section will mainly focus on changing family dynamics and different aspects of social capital, the second will emphasise power relations and the ways in which people get tied into expectations, whilst the third section will call attention to the ways in which women can and do negotiate the habitus and why this is successfully done by some women, but not others. The central stories are case studies exemplifying the arguments made about the particular theme above against which the views expressed in the literature and by other women I spoke with can be

analytically compared. Finally, the last section forms a discussion and conclusion in which I will synthesise the different references to social change to draw out what these changes have meant in the lives and families of the women I spoke with.

## 6.2 FAMILY DYNAMICS AND OPPORTUNITIES AND LIMITATIONS OF SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

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In Nunavut there is evidence of both the loss of certain traditional forms of social networks and the creation of new kinds of social networks. Families might hinder members from moving into the city in search of work, because individuals are expected to take care of grandparents, thus obstructing economic development. Financial obligations to family members (Wenzel 2000) could potentially limit individual's options for further education or career development and their ability to care for themselves and their families. However, integrated families do not have to be an obstacle for an individual's economic development. The success of one member of the family might encourage another member to take up education as well. But the decline of highly integrated families, as seen in Nunavut in recent years, might furthermore affect social control, and thus potentially result in an increase in unsocial behaviour. On the other hand it could also create more freedom for individuals to go against the grain and choose their own way. Morin (2005:250) suspects women especially 'suffer from obligations of reciprocity and might feel exhausted because they feel obliged to help or because the conditions of people in need are critical'. Responsibilities, obligations and expectations are interrelated with power relations, therefore the more powerful are generally more likely to benefit from social networks, whereas the subordinate will be more likely to feel the negative influence of being a member of a certain network. However, individuals are members of several different networks at the same time and within these networks individuals might occupy more or less powerful positions, providing them with more or less possibilities for agency. They thus 'carry a number of social identities which influence what it is possible for them to be and do' (Jackson 2002:501). In order to illustrate some of these complex theoretical constructs, we will now turn to Tracey's story, through which I will explore changing family dynamics and how these changes affect people's expectations of and obligations towards each other. I use Tracey's story as a base from which to draw on other women's experience in this section too. We shall see how certain families remained stable, whilst others were in a state of flux, affecting intergenerational relations, negotiations of gender roles and

ideologies differently. I will end with a consideration of how these roles and ideologies can impinge -negatively or positively- on those involved.

Tracey was not like some of the women I spoke with, who had to turn down most of their interviews because of the sheer number of requests they got from visiting researchers. She was a woman in her early forties with a modest income, working in a steady job, and financially supporting her family. She had a husband who was currently unemployed and responsible for childcare and five children, of which three still lived in the parental home. I met her at her work, where she took me to the meeting room, so that we had lots of space and peace and quiet to conduct the interview. She had a lot of work still to do that day and, though she was enthusiastic about participating in my research, she warned me in advance that she could only speak to me for about half an hour. However, her stories were animated, using the map in the room to point out the different places where her father used to take her and her siblings by boat and her vivid memories made both her and me lose track of time completely. We talked about her childhood responsibilities in the family, about responsibilities of the different members in her own family now, and about problems working mothers in Iqaluit face:

I saw a lot of changes as a child, because it [the military base, which provided the community of Apex with its services] was formally run by the American government and then it was taken over by the Canadian government. And as kids we kind of saw a lot of things that changed. And that's sort of like the environment that I grew up in, where there was constant change. But what was always stable in our home life was that family was always strong and connected and the community itself with people knowing one another and relationships with the community were very strong too. So that would never change. That's what I have noticed.

I come from a very large family of approximately... a few have died now, so all together there were probably about thirteen children. For my mother it was quite a strain, but she was the stay at home mum for a long time. I remember growing up though she did a lot of different things, like volunteering and getting involved in the community. And later on she was working herself, in different positions, different jobs and starting up things on her own even. And my father, if he saw something wasn't quite there, he'd start it himself. So he was always driven to get something done, so that was the environment that I grew up in. When we were little kids, probably in the early '60 he started up a corner store in Apex. And we had to work after school even, to help pitch in the family business.

My father was also a very hunting, fishing type of person. Whenever he got the chance he would go out. We were also being taught at the same time different skills and also helping with the chores like skinning, gutting fish, chopping fish, helping preserve fish. When he brought in a rabbit for example he would show us the proper ways to cut it up. So we would catch on and would be able to do it on our own. But he taught through observation, but he also did it so we could help around with the chores, so he said, my mother wouldn't complain so much with all the chores that had to be done.

We did follow a lot out on the land. It all kind of depended on whether we served a purpose or not. Or whether he taught us something, I guess back then, our life was really around one another, helping one another, you have to kind of have a purpose, you can't just hang out. We did a lot of boating. There's lots of good fishing spots, and certain areas to go and catch walrus and certain places to catch *ujjuqs* -

bearded seals- and to get to know the whole South Baffin Island, I think it was almost like a story book. We were taught the beginning, but it's not ended yet, but we looked into each chapter of a book with each inlet. What is there, it was always fascinating. They are good memories. There was one time we were out hunting and I was on the qamutik, the other party was already gone ahead and I was on the qamutik my father was on. He was driving along and the qamutik had bumped over and hit over what they call a lake ridge, like the ice had formed right up on the lake, and the qamutik had hit it in a funny way and I literally flew off the qamutik. But I had kept walking on the trail, so that he would, I knew he would eventually turn back, but I had mixed feelings. It's all part of hunting. We had just caught some caribou and we were on our way home.

[My parents] had high expectations, but they never really pushed. They always gave everybody an idea that you can always achieve. And that was important. And [they] let us know that human relations are a big part of whatever education you pursue or whatever jobs or whatever career that you end up in. But there was always something about getting along and you know, people make mistakes and being able to forgive them, sort of moving on, always having some kind of anecdote about the fact that we're all humans on this earth and we have to get along: it always came across.

I knew I always wanted to be married and I got that, and I knew I wanted a lot of kids, I have five children, but it's not quite as many as what my mum did get. But I knew I wanted to be able to get our own home and we got that. [When I was a teenager] I also helped to really get stuff going for young people, because we knew it wasn't happening. So we got ourselves organised and formed a committee, we organised dances and trips out on the land and did all kinds of fundraising: we always said to ourselves if there's nothing available for us then we'll just get out there and do it ourselves. And we organised things for...not just for ourselves...but we knew it was things to do for everyone, to keep everybody out of trouble.

And a group of us we went down to what we called the old tennis court. It was just a flat gravel, somebody's great idea once to build a tennis court, but nobody ever used it, and there was never any equipment there. But we thought, 'Ah, the kids want to play basketball.' So one time we just dug up the hole at each end to make the post for the basket and we put these home made basket nets on top and you know, we just went ahead and did it. And it was down there for a couple of years and nobody ever said: 'you can't just do that!' And then finally the city kind of clicked in, so there's some actual metal poles there now, but only after the fact that we put these big huge pieces of big lumber, and we put them up ourselves and we dug the hole pretty deep, but we did it ourselves, we just said 'we need this' and we went ahead and did it.

My husband has partly chosen to be at home, because of our kids and partly because he was ill for quite a while. But he'll help out. My husband will work when the opportunity comes up, he'll take it. But it's short term, like contract work here and there. Well he's a full-time hunter and fisher man. Right now though it's like helping out, being at home, it's a big thing for him to do that. But if tomorrow there's an opportunity, if he'll like it then he'll do it.

If I'm working more, my husband will help pitch in with laundry and dishes, but he's also like, fixing a skidoo at the same time, like he's multitasking, just as I would if I was at home, right? And on the weekends or evening, when there's more dusting to be done or mopping, I'll get involved and do that. Or, if I don't want to do anything myself I'll ask my daughter, you know, can you get around to doing that, before you go on and do your other work? Because my youngest one has decided she wants to do part time dishwashing...to get paid. I don't expect my kids to be heavy handed with chores that my husband and I could also split between ourselves, but I do expect them to do their rooms, they can handle it themselves, that's their job.

Childcare is a big issue. I used to bring my kids everywhere, to work, or to meetings or things, or left them with my mum, or one of my siblings, when it wasn't long. When I went to university for one summer, for a summer course, I brought my sister along so she could look after him during the day. And any work that needed to be done at night just to make sure, and my husband came along too. So that was a big help. Just bring everyone along! I know here at work everybody used to bring their babies when they were all small. It doesn't bother anybody here at work. I also help

my daughter with raising my grandson too, because if she's on midnight shift for example, we'll look after him. That's part of the big reason too why my husband is not working. 'cause he's able to help my daughter out. It's really beneficial for her and the family as a whole. That relationship with your family is so important eh, you don't want to have it any different than to have it strong, it's important. It's good to be able to rely on your parents when you don't have a babysitter, yeah, it's good for her. We love that kid to death. (Tracey, 40, professional working in the media, 19/02/07)

When Tracey grew up, the community was constantly changing, in contrast, the stable relationships within the family and the community 'never changed'. Akulliq's experiences mirror this. She is in her fifties and remembers how life changed dramatically after her family moved into the community; new experiences and new temptations arose, but the relationship between the different members of the family - most notably between her parents and her grandparents - helped keep the family together:

back in the '60s - people had just moved into the community - my grandfather looked over our families, and my grandmother, I guess mostly my grandmother. My father started drinking at one point, and my grandfather counselled my father and my father had to make a decision, if he was going to continue down that road, then my family would fall apart and so he made a decision to not drink anymore. And so that's what strengthened our family, my grandfather was able to provide that guidance. (Akulliq, 50, senior government official, 12/10/06).

As a result Akulliq's family was close knit and 'ways of doing things [...] were the way they were because that's just the way it had been for generations.' In other words, the habitus was shared and reproduced by everyone in the family, maintained through the knowledge and authority of the grandparents, and because it enabled people to be themselves and there was a feeling of security in knowing what to expect and what was expected from them, people did not challenge or question the habitus.

In contrast, as we shall see in greater detail in section 6.4, Igah experienced marked instability in the family. She grew up in a small community in Greenland until she and her family were moved to a larger community by the government. This is when life and family dynamics changed dramatically, and Igah had to look after her younger siblings, because her parents became alcoholic and were no longer able to look after their children. Meeka also remembers instability as her mother worked all day and left the community regularly to give birth (cf O'Neil and Kaufert 1990), leaving Meeka in charge to look after her siblings. Leah comments on frequent family break-up as a result of medical evacuations (most common in the 50s and 60s), which - especially in the case of the mother being ill - would lead to children being taken away from their fathers as they were unable to look after the children whilst out hunting, as well as an increase in divorces and single parent families, which according to Leah are not the way Inuit

traditionally lived. The literature however, suggests that traditional Inuit marriage was not as stable as Leah suggests (e.g.: Oswalt 1999 [1979]:100).

Another example of changing dynamics in the family that most of the women I spoke with experienced to some extent was the influence of school. The introduction of formal schooling meant that children were no longer supervised solely by their parents, but were instead taught very different skills in a very different manner and in a very different environment. Among many others, this situation influenced Tanii's life greatly:

When I was 10, I was sent away for school, for eight years, except for holidays and even then, the first five years I never came home for Christmas, never saw winter for five years. From the age of 10 to 18 I was away for school in Southern Canada, so those developmental years of my life, were gone, they were taken. And I was raised mainly by strangers, in strange places and setting. So those formative years, when you're really learning your role in life as an Inuk, as a girl, as a woman, were not in my cultural setting. (Tanii 55 retired 16-07-07)

Thus, in many cases family relations created stability, but at the same time the family constrained individuals through their expected roles. These family relations were threatened for example by the introduction of alcohol, which resulted in certain family members no longer being able to perform the expected roles and medical evacuation, which could be temporary, for example for birth, or long term for the treatment of TB (e.g. Stabler and Howe 1990:264). School was another institution which changed family relations permanently. It threatened intergenerational transmission of knowledge, but in so doing it also lifted the constraints of family expectations, and created new possibilities as individuals gained new knowledge.

Tracey remembers learning many different things from her father, whilst she doesn't mention learning from her mother, which seems to suggest the pattern of girls learning from their mothers and boys learning from their fathers didn't strictly apply to her. Her father taught her by observation how to do certain things so that she would be able to relieve her mother from her chores, thus indicating that her father knew very well how to do these things and was proficient enough to be able to teach the skills to his children. It also shows that he took on these chores regularly to show the children how to do them. This is in contrast to others I spoke to, such as Sylvia, who remembers: 'I was home with my mother every day. She's the one who trained me women's skills', and Celina recalls: 'my brothers were expected to help out with my dad, us girls stayed behind with my mum. We had separate tasks, women's tasks and men's tasks are quite separate.' Tracey was expected to help out and to relieve her mother from her chores, which was reflected in interviews with most of the women I spoke to, for example, Mary told me: 'We were always included in helping out people.' From Tracey's account we can

deduce that women's and men's roles in family were not set in stone, rather, roles were negotiated within each family according to need rather than following set rules.

Tracey possesses some skills related to hunting as a result of her father's teachings. The importance of the environment in Tracey's upbringing comes out in her memories of going caribou hunting with her father and how he showed her the storybook that is South Baffin Island. Tracey can remember times when she went out hunting a lot, but believes she and her siblings followed her father on his hunting expeditions more frequently in summer. In contrast to Tracey, Sylvia and Leah both told me that 'girls in my family were not encouraged to hunt, we were encouraged to be at home,' suggesting their experiences of going hunting were very limited. Similarly, Meeka remembers with some indignation: 'Not that I never went hunting, but I didn't go hunting as often as my brothers.' But we saw in the previous chapter that Kanayok regularly went out hunting and fishing with her brothers, Lauri also told me: 'I stayed with my father off and on on the land, so I've learned how to survive on the land.' Lauri, just like Kanayok, still uses her skills today to go hunting quite regularly. As we saw in the previous chapter Kanayok's mother was unable to keep Kanayok home, though she tried to teach her women's skills. Her father seems to have ultimately had the authority to take Kanayok away from the tasks her mother expected her to perform. Similarly, Lauri's sister, who was raising Lauri most of the time, had to listen to her father, which meant that Lauri, rather than staying with her and helping her in the house, went out on the land with her father.

Tracey considers her parents' teachings about human relations and getting along with others crucial to her and her siblings' success. In the literature (e.g.: Mauss 1979 [1950]) this is also held to be of vital importance in small family camps as individuals were interdependent and therefore open conflict would endanger the survival of the family and themselves. Martha's parents also told her: 'you're going to have to learn to co-exist with others, to be cooperative and to work with different cultures.' Respectful relations between people are considered the most important teachings both learnt from parents and taught as parents for the women I spoke with. This suggests an emphasis on maintaining positive community relations, which can indeed be very important for success. However, close and frequent contact could result in social control and scrutiny and could be constraining, especially for an individual who wants to explore new possibilities and negotiate a new role, position or direction in life.

Despite entrepreneurialism and the can-do attitude in her family, Tracey's aspirations were firmly entrenched in what could be seen as traditional expectations of the female

role in society. Following in her mother's footsteps, she wanted to get married, have lots of children, and own a home with her husband. Tracey achieved all these things and in addition holds a permanent, stable job, in which she is happy despite the fact that the remuneration is modest and career development opportunities are very limited. However, for Tracey 'it's not about the money. I'm happy where I'm at.' To her it is important that her family is supported, which is after all what she wanted in life. Pitsiulak tells me she 'wanted to have many kids, but I also wanted to work, because after we moved to Iqaluit we started to be exposed to the Western culture', thus her aspirations were embedded in both traditional Inuit and Western expectations. This contrasts sharply with Lynn's view: 'I always used to think I would be a single person forever, not have kids, work in a school, that's what I saw, but it never happened. After growing up with four sisters right? God love 'em!' She did not plan to stick to the mould but now she's a single mother with an important and demanding job. This indicates the strong pull of the ideology of women as mothers. According to Blackman (1989:227), motherhood is an expected part of every woman's life. When applying Bourdieu's theory of habitus one could ask whether this particular aspect of the habitus is the most effective means for women to reach their goals (e.g. Lamaison and Bourdieu 1986:113). In this case, this might mean being recognised and valued in Inuit society, fulfilling emotional needs, providing oneself and the family with support and help in the future and most importantly perhaps for the mothers, someone who will go 'under them' in the familial hierarchy (recall Pitsiulak's eldest son: 'when [my parents] passed away he went *under me*'). Many of the women I spoke with had gone against certain expectations others might have had of them, and had demonstrated considerable courage to do so. However, I didn't meet anyone who did not conform to the mothering role that is so firmly expected from Inuit women.

Just like her parents, when Tracey was a teenager she made sure things that were needed got done, thus she and her peers were providing an important contribution to the community. Similarly, Mary told me: 'I always considered [working] as contributing...not only to my household, but to my relatives and to the community, because our whole way of upbringing was sharing what we had', and Jenny remembers babysitting for different community members as 'part of a community volunteerism.' Tracey's husband has embraced this role and has temporarily put his own employment on hold in order to support his daughter. Leah will also put her family's needs before her work. This illustrates that cooperation is a much valued feature of life in Iqaluit and that helping family and friends still is considered more important than personal gain by some people. Mary is ambivalent about this tension between personal and communal

gain: whilst she stresses the importance of contributing to the family, community and society, she also stresses that mothers shouldn't give their children to the grandmothers to look after, because it puts too much stress on the grandmothers (see page 104). In this Mary is a bit of an anomaly, as seen in the previous chapter, most grandmothers were more than happy to help babysit their grandchildren. This tension between the structure of communality and agency (which could potentially lead to personal development) is continually negotiated by the women I spoke with in Iqaluit. When viewing the person as part of the community and the community as part of the person, personal gain becomes communal gain. Personal gain can also benefit the community whilst communal gain is also personal gain, because a healthy community is an important basis for personal health. Further, contributing to the community is good for self-esteem and could provide the individual with status and prestige. Even so, within this ideal, power relations create unequal access to potentially helpful resources and unequal contributions to provide these resources, thus this 'social capital' is more enabling for some, whilst it is more constraining for others.

Tracey's husband is not currently providing a financial contribution, but plays an important role in the family. He went down south with Tracey when she went on a summer course; he hunts and fishes, fixes skidoos and helps out at home and with the children. In addition, he takes on occasional seasonal or part-time employment when 'something comes up'. Similarly, Alicia's (a southern Canadian woman) Inuk husband 'does work and earn a fair bit of money in the summer months, but the rest of the year, he needs to do the more traditional things. And he's happy', which enables Alicia and the rest of her family to be happy too. Jeannie's (also a southern Canadian woman with an Inuk husband) husband works full-time, just like Jeannie herself and the family has clearly defined the different roles within the household: 'I go home and cook, he sits down and plays with the children, we eat supper together, he does the dishes, I sit down and spend time with the kids and in between that, I'm doing the laundry, I clean the bath out, put the kids in the bath.' When it comes to playing with the children, Jeannie prefers to stay indoors and do arts and crafts, whilst her husband likes to take the children outside 'to the playground, playing in the water, playing in the mud.' On the other hand, when it comes to community volunteerism, Jeannie does 'enjoy volunteering with the daycare, and I enjoy working with the little girls. My husband is the total opposite of me, he doesn't like to volunteer his time for anything or participate in anything outside of the house.' Sarah split up with her children's father some time ago, but they still share childcare responsibilities between them: 'that way he's helping me, I keep them Friday to Friday, and their dad Friday to Friday so we've been rotating that and it's going good.'

In contrast, Olayuk does not rely on her children's dad for help, because she doesn't trust him or his family, leaving all the responsibilities to her, with occasional help from her parents, who live in a community north of Iqaluit. There is thus considerable difference in allocated roles, which suggests that every family negotiates this to its own advantage. I would further suggest that the range of possibilities has been widened considerably as a result of social change. Whilst gender roles were always negotiated to some extent, the alternatives available in traditional Inuit society were more limited to the extant situation, where alternatives and different arrangements are visible and provide options for change.

Although Tracey had the power to take her husband and sister to college with her, she currently does not have the power to quit her job (for example for educational purposes) because her family relies on her financial support. Similarly, Alicia and Jeannie wouldn't be able to stop working, as their wages are vital to the running of the household, despite Jeannie's wish to 'stay at home with the kids all day long' (Jeannie, 50 education sector worker 07-11-06). Sarah and her children's father seem to have a fairly equal power relation, sharing childcare equally, although I noticed during a visit that she had the children in a week when they were supposed to have been with their dad. Olayuk is totally independent from her children's husband, although they do visit him on occasion, he doesn't provide any consistent care. This again means she is not able to quit her job and take educational leave without support from the government or her employer, but on the upside she can spend her wages on her and her children only, providing her with status as a good mother, prestige for her knowledge and position on the job market, emotional well-being as a result of her ability to contribute and some assurance for support in old age.

Tracey's story ends with an emphasis on the importance of having a strong family bond and being able to rely on family members for help. Tracey is able to depend on her family network to help her out, but also emphasises that she would leave her children with her mum or one of her siblings 'when it wasn't long'. This illustrates a limit to what you can ask a relative to do for you. Tracey, just like Mary and Akkuliq, was able to go to training courses and develop herself because she could rely on the support of her family. Her husband came with her down south, but he is not expected to look after her son on his own, but her sister comes along to help him out. The arrangement was satisfactory for both parents and the child, however the sister might have been prevented from taking a summer job or doing a summer course herself if she had been so inclined, because of her family responsibilities. On the other hand, she might have been grateful for the opportunity to go South with her sister and expand her horizons. Tracey's

husband more recently decided not to go to work and aim for personal development, but rather support his daughter by looking after his grandson since his daughter works shifts and therefore can't take her children to the day-care.

Family relations and the obligations and rights that are inherent in family relations, provide individuals with clear notions of their role in the family and wider society and thus who they are, but whilst this can potentially provide security, it can also limit an individual's possibilities. Tracey can depend on her family for childcare, likewise her family can depend on her and her husband for the same reason. She provides for her family financially, whilst her husband looks after the house, the children and goes hunting. Tracey's future expectations were firmly embedded in the expected mother role and her current development opportunities are constrained because of her financial responsibility to her family. Thus, whilst Tracey's bond with her family is emotionally important, and provides her with options for childcare, and possibilities for meaningful contributions, on the other hand it also limits her options by expecting her financial support. However, the roles of individuals in this family are continually evaluated and negotiated, to continually adapt most efficiently to the changing reality. Job opportunities or changing relations within family or community can change one's rights and obligations, thus either providing more options, or further restricting opportunities. And these changes might in turn change the norms which the family lives by, making it harder or easier to break free from expectations and conventions. In the next section I will explore the ways in which options and opportunities are influenced by ideologies.

### 6.3 POWER AND EXPECTATIONS AND THE POWER OF EXPECTATIONS

I had been in e-mail contact with Sylvia even before I reached the field. She immediately showed an interest in my project upon first hearing about it. When I arrived in the field I contacted her again and arranged to visit her at her home towards the end of September. I had already learnt that when visiting Inuit homes, I should not knock on the door, but simply walk in. A visitor should not be left standing outside the door for too long on a cold, windy winter's day and a host should not be expected to leave everything he or she was doing behind in order to open the door, when the visitor is perfectly able to do that him or herself (Kulchyski 2006). During this first visit of my fieldwork my host prepared a lovely pot of tea, which she left on a bed of heather collected from the tundra and provided me with a cup. As we were talking the smell of the tundra drifted across the table as the heather was warmed by the tea. After a while, Sylvia asked me: 'Would you

like me to pour your tea for you?' I 'politely' answered that I would like that very much. It was not until much later I realised I should have much earlier taken the pot and poured myself some tea: no need to tax my host with this task when I can do it myself!

During this first visit, Sylvia's grandson was quietly playing on the other side of the room, whilst we sat at the table and chatted. Sylvia was looking after him because he was not feeling well, so hadn't been taken to playschool as usual, whilst his mother went to her course at Arctic College for the day. We talked about all the impressive projects that Sylvia was working on through her various businesses which she ran from her home. At the end of the visit she promised to send me a list of people who she thought might be interested in participating in my research. This resulted in a number of very interesting and informative interviews. I visited Sylvia's home on a number of other occasions, amongst which a movie night and a candle party, but towards the end of my fieldwork I realised I had never interviewed Sylvia herself. So I set up another visit with her in June during which we spoke at length about her childhood experiences, about schooling and about employment in the territory. Through Sylvia's story, we see how gendered norms and expectations shape childhood experiences and the acquisition of knowledge and skills. They also act to determine and constrain the daily life of Sylvia's mother. Throughout this section I will introduce other women's testimonies to show the power of expectations in shaping women's life choices in adulthood.

Annually hunters would go into Pang with their skins to trade for supplies. So that's what my father did, he hunted every day for seals and stuff to trade, to bargain with Hudson Bay, that's how we would have our staples provided. So every day the mother tends to skins, well, it's a routine, I'll start from the morning, it's a daily routine. Early morning the mother tends the *qulliq* (the seal oil lamp), which is a big chore, one of the biggest chores although it's small, because that's what keeps you warm and fed and lit. You know, the *qulliq* is so...very very important element in the family in the culture and that's probably why we light the *qulliq* when we start meetings and workshops and stuff today. Traditionally it was our main source for heat, light, cooking element, element for drying clothes, because the hunter is out in the cold all day, their clothing has to be dried, very important, veryvery important.

So the mother, the wife starts the day off with lighting her *qulliq*, warming the place up before her husband goes out and the chore involves going out into the cold porch – and everything is cold anyway, but – going out to the frozen porch, the cold porch and pounding the blubber that will be used for oil in the *qulliq*. So that's her first chore in the morning, after dressing, is tending to the blubber, making it into a usable oil for the *qulliq*, and lighting it and warming up tea and stuff and in my particular case, we were five kids in the family and by the time I would wake up, my father would already be gone hunting. So my mother's daily chores would start very early in the morning.

From that you tend to, we had in our dwelling, which we call *quammaq*, which is the traditional hut, we had a skylight window, that's made traditionally, even in my early years it's made from bearded seal intestine, but after that it was from clear plastic. But it froze every time, because after the heat, there is no more heat in the nighttime, because the *qulliq* is left this small with flame, or no flame at all, depending on how much you had to conserve your blubber supply. So in the morning you have to hit it with a broom or something, a stick, get all the ice, frost down from the window and do that so that you can get decent light and heat and that you don't leak.

And she starts her day with whatever comes next, you know most of the time, if not all of the time you tend to skins immediately, right, you cannot rot them, you cannot keep them sitting there or else they get spoiled, not in the sense of smell in the winter per se but the skin, the fur stains very quickly if it's not cleaned. There used to be high expectations that the skins would be treated in progressive stages. And they all had to be well dried, cleaned, washed and *attaqi*, means, you scrape them so clean so well that there was no excess oil left in it. So they were very intensive stages of cleaning skins, and there still is, it never changes, that's how you clean these skins at home.

So as a young girl, you help out with these things, but from being very young, I would be expected to observe and my mother would not allow me to just roam around walking outside, no, not at all. She said, that was my brother's role, to be out there, but my role was inside. So she got me to start sewing very very early.

My father was a full time hunter, so there'd be times when he'd be gone for a long time. Hunters used to prepare to be gone daily, or overnight couple of nights, or be gone a long time, because they travelled by dog team, and not a machine, so it would take longer to go places. And if they went out to *sinainga*, which is ice-flow, and I'm sure I can be very sure of this, even though I'm not a man, that our flow was much further out than it ever is today in Tornait Bay, so it's quite a journey down and back, so there'd be days when my father was out hunting and so our day was slightly different in terms of meals and stuff. If my father was hunting and expected to be back the same night, my mother would be prepared with dinner, with meals, if my father was coming to join us. But other times when my father was away our meal times were different also, not so much...Our meal times traditionally were not like today's, we were very disciplined, we couldn't just pick up food any time we wanted to, there was no such privilege. Maybe when you had enough for a while, it was a little better, but Inuit survived on what they had. So, our mealtimes were quite controlled. You had a more hearty meal in the evening, when the father came, so when my father was away during our summer camping season...my mother and I are both fussy eaters, I mean she was fussy eater so I followed, I think we survived on very little food!

But anyway, so even though there's always something to do, if she's not cleaning skins, she's sewing clothing, because everything is made, hand made, nothing much of store bought, you know Pang having the Hudson Bay and the man only...being the man, the only one being allowed in the store, you'd have the pleasure of having something store bought only once in a great big moon.

The Anglican diocese or something like that, used to have women's auxiliary, the mission hospital would send boxes of fabric and sewing products and so even though there were three tents in the camp they'd still get together and run their women's auxiliary sessions. And from their beautiful fabrics and stuff women would make things for us, like a dress we wouldn't have had otherwise.

The woman is also managing the camp, the community and dealing with daily affairs, very subtly, nothing was chaotic. And the woman is also midwife. And at night time, my mother was a wonderful storyteller, very natural storyteller and very outspoken. And she had lots of stories to share, even when I was her only audience. And that's how I know about my family background, because my mother shared so many wonderful stories about them. (Sylvia, 50, business owner, 11/06/07)

Sylvia cautions me about the particularity of her story: 'Now, we're talking about Tornait Bay, because it differs all across the North, so you really cannot have a generic study on these things right?' Similarly, McGrath (2005) and Schweitzer, Biesele et al (2000:19) assert individuality and diversity within Inuit society are accepted and admired. Interestingly, this is reflected in traditional art which was produced to accommodate different points of view and different interpretations and thus the viewer's

individualism (Carpenter, Varley et al. 1959). As mentioned in Chapter 2.4, Morrow (1990:152-153) found a similar appreciation of individuality and diversity in Yup'ik stories. It is therefore important to provide a context for Sylvia's life: She lived close to the community of Pangnirtung in her youth, roughly 50 years ago. She tells me this area had been influenced quite heavily by the whalers in the 1800s and the missionary and hospital, Hudson Bay Company (HBC) and the RCMP were all present from the time that the community of Pangnirtung was established in the early 1920s (see also Damas 2002). Thus the relationships between Inuit and Qallunaat had been well established at the time of Sylvia's youth. So, Sylvia remembers her father was a full-time hunter, who visited the HBC on a more or less regular basis to trade his products for 'supplies'. Typically these would have included items such as ammunition, flour, sugar and tea.

Sylvia describes the qulliq as the centre of family life, which is vital for survival of the family. This places the mother in a very important and potentially powerful position within the family, although the husband is responsible for providing the seal-oil used to light it. The symbolic importance of the qulliq is illustrated by its centrality in contemporary meetings in Iqaluit. I attended several meetings during my stay where a female elder was invited to light the qulliq at the start and where it burned in the centre of the room for the duration of the meeting. Symbolically the participants are represented as a family, sitting around the qulliq, representing the mother as the central figure in the room. This might be another reason why women feel more at ease in such settings. The qulliq had a very different meaning in Olayuk's life. She had grown up on the land using the qulliq and perceived this as being 'different' when she moved to a community in her teens. The other children at her school perceived this difference as inferiority and bullied her and Olayuk longed to be 'the same as people [in the community]'.

Sylvia's mother was the first to get up and make tea for her husband. Sylvia recounts this responsibility of her mother towards her father very matter-of-factly, this is just how things were and Sylvia never seems to have questioned this convention. In fact, Rasmussen (1927:71-72) writes: 'the women were busy; we were indeed astonished at the amount of work which fell to their share.' Conventions or ideologies can be a powerful means of controlling behaviour. For example, Reimer (1996:79) concludes: 'Female consciousness is tied to the deeprooted, age-old experience of women in giving and preserving life, nurturing and sustaining the family. It refers to women's recognition and acceptance of the culturally defined gender role they are expected to fulfil.' Thus women's experiences shape the lives of future generations of women and help create expectations which in turn can transform into ideologies. In many cases ideologies are

sufficient to influence people's lives. For example Tanii and Kiuga, both about 55 years of age, chose to delay their educational plans in favour of getting married and starting a family:

I was going to go into a social work programme in Saskatoon, I was going to be interviewed to see if I was a good candidate, I guess, for their programme, but I ended up staying in Pang, to marry my husband at that time. (Kiuga, 55, senior government official, 07/05/07)

I became a doctor's assistant and I helped deliver nine babies and I did x-rays and I gave injections. I was trained by the doctor in the years when it wasn't such a big issue to have a registered nurse helping the doctor at the time. So I became his full assistant for four years, with different doctors and it was an amazing experience, I loved it, I loved it! And then they decided they would try to tailor make a special programme for me in Quebec city, where I wouldn't have to go and take medicine for 7 years, but I could take it in a more condensed 3 or 4 years, very geared for the North only. And I was ready to go and then I met my husband to be and we got married. We fell in love and got married, so I never pursued that after that. And then I had children, I had two children. We were twenty when we got married. (Tanii, 55, retired, 16/07/07)

From this it becomes apparent that in these women's lives marriage and family are more important than education. It is not clear whose decision it was to postpone education. Maybe their parents expected their daughters to marry and have children. Maybe their future husbands expected their prospective partners to give up on personal development in favour of starting their own family. This would suggest an imbalance in power and decision making within the family and the women's simply acquiescing with the more powerful. But it might have been the girls' own decision, in turn based on what they felt was expected from them by others around them and how they wanted others to see them, as educated women, or wives, or mothers of their children, thus reproducing the habitus. It might also be seen as another example of following the rules for maximum benefit. Their views on marriage at the time were thus clearly linked with staying at home and looking after the children, although both women did pursue further education at a later age.

Whilst the ideology of the stay-at-home-mother seems to have temporarily limited these women's opportunities for personal development, overt power was not used as a means of controlling their decisions. In other women's experience the more powerful did on occasion resort to violence as a means of control. For example, I spoke to Aisha whilst she was in the women's shelter, building a new life with her young daughter, independently from her abusive boyfriend. At one time Aisha earned more than her boyfriend, giving her the power to independently buy plane tickets to go to her home-community at will. Her boyfriend subsequently denied Aisha this power by forbidding her from working and controlling her contact with friends, so that not only did she no longer have the financial means to leave, she also did not have the social ties to fall back

on for support. Her family obligation to obey her boyfriend's wishes made her a different person, shaped her identity and severely diminished the control that she once had on her life. Similarly, Meeka had a difficult relation with her father and always tried very hard to get recognition from him, without ever reaching a standard where he was proud of her. She blames the fact that she was born a girl, when she was supposed to have been a boy (see page 87). Her dad was not only not proud of her, at times he was violent towards her, even if he was never violent to any of her other siblings:

In my mind never reaching that standard of being good enough. Partly because I'm a girl, even now, my dad says, *arnaugavit!* women...you know, but now I'm stronger and I'm able to respond. I would never...one time I said something to him and it was super scary! He came and he had his fist so close to me and looking at me and I remember thinking, oh my goodness, he's going to hit me right in the face and then he didn't. And I knew that I could never say anything bad about my dad or question his decisions on anything.

I would be the one who he would hit, and he wouldn't hit my brothers as much. And I thought it was also because I was a girl and why couldn't I have been born a boy, and why did I change? And I remember too, there didn't seem to be much value in what I did. (Meeka, 35, senior government official, 07/07/07)

Meeka's father determined the standards of what was 'good enough', which was maintained by the threat of violence. This violence did not often have to be resorted to in reality, as Meeka 'knew [she] could never say anything bad about [her] dad or question his decisions on anything,' indicating the depth of her father's authority.

Sylvia remembers 'there used to be high expectations' about skin processing. The correct treatment of animal products ensured a positive relationship between human and animal was maintained, which was essential for a successful hunt. This correct treatment included proper skin preparation and wearing clean, carefully and beautifully sewn clothes (Lantis 1947:95; Chaussonnet 1988; Bodenhorn 1990). However, during my sewing classes it became clear that different women were using different techniques especially for softening the skins, some insisting using salt was the easiest way to make the skins soft, whilst others in contrast maintained this would dry the skins out and make them hard, still others used chemical cleaning materials to soften the skins, whilst others were very much opposed to this idea and used only the traditional scraper and their continued hard work. Thus, despite Sylvia's assertion that 'it never changes' women had very different ways and were using very different products for the progressive stages of treating skins. However, the general consensus is that women were and still are very busy and 'never stopped working', this is supported by the experiences of Jenny, Jeannie, Kiuga who are all in their 50s, and Martha, who is in her late forties.

Sylvia used to observe and help with her mother's chores. According to her mother, Sylvia's place was inside the *qaummaq*, where she had to be of service to her mother, her

brother's role was to be outside. Thus the female is associated with tasks and chores that take place mainly inside the dwelling, whilst being out on the land is associated with the male domain. These different domains each had their respective knowledge and expertise. This is why – when Sylvia talks about the flow edge – she modestly acknowledges 'I can be sure of this, even though I'm not a man,' indicating that she is not an expert on this subject, which belongs to the male domain, knowledge and expertise. Sylvia's mother imposed the gender ideology on Sylvia quite forcefully and in turn Sylvia still strongly believes 'in men's responsibilities and women's responsibilities and the balance', which influenced the way in which she raised her own children.

She remembers – with a smile – that there was a big difference between the meals that she and her mother shared and the meals that she shared with both her parents. Whenever her father was not around, they 'survived on very little food', but when her father was expected to be back 'my mother would be prepared with dinner.' This suggests to me that providing the man with a good and nutritious meal was considered to be the priority, whilst feeding the women and dependent children was less urgent. This importance of the male figure might have been influenced by the whalers and later by the missionaries, traders and police officers. Certainly, Sylvia's comment that the man was the only one that was allowed in the store, seems to support this. Because the traders in Pangnirtung considered trading to be a male activity, they did not allow women into the store, thus limiting women's opportunities to participate in the new economy and increasing their dependence on their male relatives. Guemple's (1995) arguments that the idea of gender traditionally did not exist and that at the same time there was a clear gendered division of labour in traditional Inuit society, certainly does not fit with the above story (see page 68). This could be because it was never like that in this region, or because gender relations had already changed a lot at the time of Sylvia's youth.

As mentioned at the start, Sylvia's home-community was influenced by the HBC, RCMP and missionaries relatively early, and Sylvia remembers how the 'wonderful nurses and doctors' influenced her life by providing her mother and other women in the camp with 'beautiful fabrics' which they made into nice dresses which she 'wouldn't have had otherwise.' This women's auxiliary clearly made quite an impression on Sylvia and it is easy to see how the mission became very influential in the lives of some Inuit. They shared products which were much appreciated (at least by Sylvia), they enabled Inuit women to improve their sewing abilities and to try out new patterns made possible by the new fabrics and provided Inuit women new opportunities for socialising, which was traditionally valuable.

Sylvia's final paragraph provides a number of examples of areas of female influence, such as community organisation, midwifery and passing on family histories. This indicates the important positions of power Inuit women had as managers of the camp and preservers of family traditions. Sylvia's mother's stories taught her about her family background and firmly embedded her within this family history, thus providing her with a sense of connection, identity and direction for her future. Sylvia's mother thus is a powerful agent in creating Sylvia's identity. She also guards the mealtimes with authority, decides what Sylvia can (observe her mother) and cannot do (roam outside) and when.

The authority of Sylvia's father cannot be ascertained with any certainty from this story. The preparation of a hearty meal does not necessarily indicate more authority but it does indicate a difference in perceived needs and rights. Again, different women have quite different experiences of power relations. Some women willingly conformed to the dominant ideology, whilst others were subjected to violence as a means of controlling their behaviour. In every case, individuals were subject to expectations according to their position in the family or the community. Thus we can see that the mother's central position in the family enables her to influence family life. But this centrality also means that she has to look after the husband and the family, resulting in her always being busy. Young women were submissive to their parents and also to community expectations. This chapter provides several examples of wives being in a less powerful position in relation to their husbands, and where this was not the case it was reversed through violence. Similarly this chapter provides an example of a daughter being quite powerless vis-à-vis her father. In relation to the expectations of skin preparation and sewing techniques there are strong community expectations, however, women have the power to challenge and negotiate these expectations. The outsiders in the community are a powerful influence on everyone's lives as traders, nurses and doctors, missionaries and teachers. Through all this women had a reasonable degree of power over community affairs, as they managed the camp and passed on family traditions (see also Kafarowski 2006:41).

Sylvia's memories support the idea that boys and girls subscribed to a different habitus in traditional Inuit society. The habitus has a prescribed area of operation: for females this is indoors, for males this is outdoors. It also has associated knowledge, Sylvia knows about this knowledge, but she emphasises that this is not her knowledge: she's not a man. Finally, with the different habitus come different rights: more hearty meals for the men, and later on the incoming culture limited the rights to enter the trading post to men. But we have also seen that Sylvia's experiences are not shared by

all other women I spoke to, and that despite Sylvia's belief that 'these things never change' there are quite diverse ideas even on the one subject of softening sealskins in preparation for sewing.

#### 6.4 CHALLENGING AND BROADENING IDEOLOGY AND HABITUS

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Igah was one of those people that you couldn't avoid whilst living in Iqaluit. She was very involved, very determined and very vocal and everybody knew her. Igah would be on stage at every community event, is a well known designer of sealskin clothes and a strong defender of the right of Inuit to hunt and trade in seal products. Whilst I was in Iqaluit, the European Union was reconsidering the ban on seal product imports, and Igah, together with a number of other Inuit, travelled to a number of European countries to share her views, but to no avail. Afterwards she told me she hadn't enjoyed her travels and that her visit to the Netherlands had caused her to start smoking again, because 'everyone in Holland smokes!'

I had spoken to Igah many times before, at community events, at dinner parties, at birthday parties and at chance encounters on the street and in the supermarket. One evening - after a wonderful meal, a mixture of traditional and contemporary cooking prepared by a mutual friend - a small group of us were playing guitar and singing songs and lounging on the sofa when Igah insisted that I should meet her for an interview one day soon. I rang her at her office the next day and we set up a meeting. We met in the court library, where we had a relaxed, but intense interview. We spoke about Igah's childhood and the challenges she had faced in her life, about marriage and childrearing and about her plans for the future:

I grew up in North Greenland, and it was at the time in the 60s very traditional household, meaning the husband was the breadwinner, the husband went to work and the woman was looking after the children. And at that time, women had many many children, and my father was working six days a week, teaching, and then on the seventh day he was preaching, so he was always working. My mother was making the food and looking after the children, I have two brothers and five sisters, I'm the younger one of the girls. Initially [I didn't have any responsibilities], when I was very small, until I was like 5 years old, it was just playing, and being a child. But when we had moved to a larger community when I was about 8, 9, 10 and 11, I had to go fishing on a row boat, to feed my siblings: my younger brother and my niece. I had to go to the stores to steal food, because my parents were too drunk to look after us. So I was mainly raising my siblings from very early on.

My older brother would go hunting, he would go fishing, but I think he was also being caught up in the same dysfunctional life that my parents were. And then at age 11 I was sent off to go to school in Denmark, so I was taken away from that whole system. It was a policy in Greenland in the 1960's that's called G60, it was to modernise and to assimilate Inuit into education, into the wage economy. People were being moved from small communities into large centres, very similar to what happened here in the North. And children who did well in school were then sent off to

go to school in Denmark, so they could learn more Danish, they could be better educated. I just ended up being in Denmark for seven years. I did come back maybe one summer, I don't remember how many times I got back, maybe a couple of times, and every time it became harder for me to adjust back to life in my home, because it was so dysfunctional. It was not a happy... but that's the only kind of life that I knew from home. That people were always drunk, that there was never any food, they were always fighting, it was quite dysfunctional. When I moved back to Greenland when I was 18, I couldn't function, I couldn't speak my own language, I was totally uprooted. I just couldn't function, I was being treated really bad because I couldn't speak my own language, because I was being told I was white, because I grew up in Denmark. I had a hard time adjusting back to life there.

When I first came [to Canada] I wanted to learn so much more about Inuit, I didn't know Inuit existed that were sort of very similar to Greenlandic Inuit. I started learning how to sew, I wanted to learn everything about the Inuit culture, and so I did. I got married and then I had my five kids. When I left my husband, I realised that I had been doing everything, so after I left my husband I realised that my children also needed to help out. [When I left my husband,] I was ostracised for a whole year. Yeah, I had absolutely no support whatsoever, because as a woman, it's your choice to leave a relationship. Back then it was very much like, you had to live under whatever conditions, and you just had to accept whatever was happening and just live with it. It was very unheard of that a woman would leave her husband, it was a big insult to the family, because it was a very famous, strong family from this area... It was considered like an insult, to the family and all their relations, because they're related to everybody. So no support, no absolutely nothing, because they thought that I would go back after a while of living in such a hardship, that I would be forced to go back... But they don't know who they're dealing with.

I was very very convinced that I had to do this, otherwise I would be mentally and physically imprisoned. That's how I was feeling, I had to make a choice. So in order for me to come at peace with my own mind, I just had to walk. It was a choice that I had made for me, because my whole life, people had made the choices, and all the decisions were being made, and I had no say in it. That day, it was September 8<sup>th</sup>, 1993, I made that choice. It was a choice that I had made for me. And I've made the choices ever since, and it's been really really empowering.

[My youngest son] doesn't like going to school very much, but we try, my boyfriend and I, we are separated now, but we try to get him to go to school as much as possible. But it's June now, it's the very last few weeks of school and it's a lost battle. Some people are more geared for academic life and we tend to think that that's the only way of life that we should lead, but I try to value his hunting and his other skills, but he's going through a lot of difficult time. It's such a battle [to force the youngest one to do his homework.] These days I'm just going: 'oh, what's the point?' But I try very hard not to give up, I'm always very tempted to just give up, because it's the easy way out. But also I think I'm very strict, I'm notorious for being very strict with the kids, but, pff, that's life. Because I think I demand so much from me, my day is so full and my year is so full of so many responsibilities that I tend to demand [a lot] ...and I refuse to listen to misery, like: 'I can't do this.' My ex-boyfriend has been very helpful and I need that support, because I can't do it by myself. Even after work I have still many many many things to do and I just don't have the time.

Last week I was taking the boys hunting, I had asked a hunter to take us out on the land and the younger one decided not to go, I didn't understand why. The older one went with me, we went hunting, but as it turned out the younger one stayed home, looked for alcohol in my home. He had taken [a bottle of vodka] and drunk it with another friend, and sold some of it. The bottle would be worth maybe a hundred dollars, but I want him to pay me back 500 dollars, because of the sentimental value, because of the fact that he dared even to go rooting through my room, which is my room, and without my knowledge doing all these things. I told him it was totally unacceptable, I want him to work 50 hours, just to pay me back. I want him to learn that there's consequences to what he has done. Maybe it's not the best approach, but at the moment I couldn't think of anything else.

[In September I'll be going down south for further education and] I'm taking the two youngest. And there's no choice, I'm forcing them, they're too young to live on their

own, and they just have no choice. I'll do everything to make it possible to be there, I'm not going to be stopped by any obstacle. And I have told the kids, even if they died right, even if they got sick and they died, there is nothing I can do about a person dying. All you can do is bury them and life goes on, right? It's just there's nothing that's going to happen that's going to stop it. It's as simple as that! (Igah, 45 justice sector worker, 07-06-07)

When Igah and her family moved to a bigger community as a result of government policy in Greenland, the family underwent a drastic transformation. Her father went from working seven days a week to unemployment and a total dependence on alcohol, her mother also became an alcoholic instead of the caring mother she once was. Igah's brother went to work at the fish plant, but rather than helping Igah financially to look after the younger children, Igah doesn't remember seeing him much and thinks he was probably also 'caught up in the same dysfunctional life that my parents were'. Igah herself therefore was the only one around to look after her younger brother and her niece and went from 'playing and just being a child' to 'fishing on a row boat...stealing food and raising [her] siblings'. Many women I spoke with remembered the move to the community. As mentioned in section 5.1, Akulliq's father and uncle were similarly affected when they first moved into the community, but through family support they were able to change their ways and family life resumed as before. For Olayuk the move to the community was accompanied by bullying at school, as her family was late to move and therefore was considered old-fashioned. Despite the problems she encountered at school she was determined to succeed and managed to get a college degree and now holds a good job. In contrast the move of Mary's father was instigated by his wish to be closer to his cousin, who was already in the community. Thus, for this family the move to the community meant some members of the extended family were reunited.

At age 11 Igah left her family - and its problems - behind and was sent to school. During the interview I got the distinct impression that this was a relief to her, and in a way it saved her and enabled her to do something useful with her life, but it was certainly not easy and this sudden separation from her life, her home and her family hurt her on a very deep level. She can't remember how often she came back to see her family whilst she was in school in Denmark, but she can remember how she was alienated further and further from her old life. Upon her return after graduation she couldn't find her feet in her old home: she couldn't function, she couldn't speak her language, she was treated badly by the ones that had stayed behind because she was considered 'white'. Thus Igah's move out of her familiar environment at once moved her outside of a dysfunctional family, which was the only kind of family that she had known and showed her alternative possibilities and provided her with the education that she

needed to leave that life behind. At the same time, upon her return the opportunities in her home-communities were still very limited, she was no longer part of her community and was not accepted as a member as a result of her education in a different language, preparing her for a different life.

The women I spoke with all have their own and diverse experiences with schooling, some were forced as part of government policies of the time, some had to travel south, others relocated to the nearest community. Tanii, who – at the age of ten -was sent from the care of her mother and grandmother, into strangers' houses down south to enrol in school there, also didn't learn her role in life as she was raised in a different cultural setting. According to her: 'a lot of us struggled with that for a long time. That probably has been part of some of the challenges that we're facing as we grow up'<sup>12</sup>. For Emily the move from a small community to Iqaluit for educational purposes also meant a loss of connection with traditional activities and the land. Meeka is from the next generation, but when she grew up, her community didn't yet have a high school and her parents considered Iqaluit a place of bad influences so the whole family moved to Ottawa for Meeka's education. This move was a big shock for her as the school that she went to was bigger than her whole home community. This experience is not unique, Sarah had the same shock when she decided to go to college in Ottawa, she soon felt she had to make a choice between her well-being or her education. She chose the former and moved back to her home community. Jane had initially moved to a school in Churchill and later moved to Ottawa for further education and remembers 'the trees were in the way.' Celina remembers that in the beginning she was finding it very hard to be with so many people who were so different from her, but after a while she started to feel like she could live down south for a while, she stayed for another course and came back to the Arctic after she had graduated from her program. Leah, in contrast to many people her age was quite positive about her schooling experience, she was interested in all the new things that she was learning. Several women I spoke with, such as Sylvia, Olayuk, Jeela and Celina in fact couldn't wait to go to school, although when Jeela was finally allowed by her parents to go she missed her parents and was very hot and uncomfortable. One summer after spending the summer home she didn't go back again because she needed to look after her little sister. In contrast to most of the women I spoke with who left their homes for a more urban setting to go to school, Aisha and her family temporarily left their home in the community so that her father was able to teach them how to survive out on the land.

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<sup>12</sup> It has been argued that Inuit in Alaska who had continued contact with traditional culture were happier (Chance, 1965)

After having returned home it became clear to Igah that she couldn't stay. She went to visit Canada and learnt there were other Inuit who were very similar to Greenlandic Inuit. Despite her negative experiences from her home, she wanted to learn more about her roots, and about what she had missed out on whilst being educated in Denmark. She learned how to sew and she learned about Inuit culture. She got married, had children, built a new life away from her family and created new relationships in this new life.

Naomi also left her home community, where the men resented her courage and ability to learn and develop herself. Her dad 'really believed the woman's place was in the home, getting pregnant, in the kitchen sort of thing, and my mum was that. I never wanted that for me. I had the courage to get out and get an education and do something for myself.' In Iqaluit she found more opportunities for personal development and fewer constraining relations. Nicole was in a situation which many of the women I spoke with were in. She was born into a mixed marriage and had spent part of her life in the United Kingdom, like Igah upon her return to her home in Greenland, Nicole was challenged about her Inuit-ness when she enrolled in a course which was designed specifically for Inuit students. Thus, whilst leaving homeland and family behind can provide new options, it also often causes pain and alienation from the home community, and in some cases challenges fundamental questions of identity and belonging.

This is also directly linked to the role expectations for women. Just as Igah experienced it was not acceptable for a woman to leave her husband, women are not expected to leave family and community behind for personal development. Igah married into a 'very famous, strong family' and this clearly influenced what was expected from her and what she could and could not do. Her role within this family was to be an obedient wife and support her husband in all circumstances. Because of the extensive networks of this family, she did not have anyone left to support her when she finally decided to leave her husband. But despite this, and despite her former husband's family's expectations, with time she got by and again built up her own life with her children and new friends to rely on.

Aisha's boyfriend, as mentioned in the previous section, violently enforced his control in the relationship and ensured Aisha no longer had an income or friends to go out with, but instead stayed home looking after the house, under close supervision of her boyfriend. When I met her, she had left the relationship and her role behind and was working on building up a new life, with a small income earned through 'sewing for survival'. Ditte moved to Iqaluit a while after she had left her alcoholic husband, who did not accept that she had left him and terrorised her, broke into her house, called her up

all the time and in short made her feel unsafe. Through her move away she was able to break the constraining bonds with her ex-husband and build up a new life in Iqaluit.

It becomes clear from Igah's story that making decisions had never been part of her prescribed role in early life. Others around her had always made the decisions, which she had no say in. But she can remember the exact day when she made her first decision, which was to escape 'mental and physical imprisonment' and has since made all her decisions for herself. The first decision Igah made, went against the ideology of the obedient wife and against her husband's and her husband's family's expectations. Ever since, she has not been afraid to make decisions that break with tradition, for example she tells me she 'forces' her son to do his homework and will 'force' her two youngest to come with her when she goes to get further education down south. This is in stark contrast to what has been described as the typical attitude towards children in Inuit society, where children 'are never punished' (Birket-Smith 1936 [1927]:154; see also Hall 1865:568; Boas 1964 [1888]:172; Honigmann and Honigmann 1965:175; Chance 1990:99), more specifically, the opinion that: 'there is no point in trying to force children to learn something', is expressed in Briggs (1991:268). Also, Igah will not let anything stop her, even if her children died, 'there is nothing I can do about a person dying', this is a harsh truth which I didn't expect in a society where family issues frequently determine an individual's actions. When I spoke to the Arctic College administrator she told me that students frequently drop out of their programs of study because of family issues. Valerie's choices are also influenced quite strongly by her brother's children (see section 5.4). On the other hand, Emily made the decision to leave her home community despite the fact that her family didn't expect her to be able to succeed in Iqaluit and Meeka decided she would move to Iqaluit, despite her father's aversion to the place and reservations about his grandchildren growing up there.

Igah, just like Kiuga, Mary and Pitsiulak, expresses very strongly the opinion that there are different kinds of learning and different kinds of knowledge that each lead to and are associated with a different way of life, but that are equally valuable. When schooling was first introduced to the Arctic its purpose was to assimilate Inuit into mainstream Canadian society and therefore all traditional knowledge and skills related to survival in the Arctic landscape were deemed unnecessary and indeed an impediment to learning what were considered the core academic needs of Inuit children. However, since the '70s something of an Inuit resistance movement has emerged (Mitchell 1996:xvi) revaluing the language, cultural knowledge and traditional practices. These women were concerned about males struggling in formal education, but at the same time recognised they were engaged in learning knowledge related to hunting and

surviving on the land, more suited to them than academic knowledge. Transfer of this kind of knowledge, however, does necessitate relationships with the older generation and experienced hunters and these contacts are lacking for many young males in Nunavut.

Igah's relationship with the hunter provided her with transport to get out of the community to the hunting grounds for her and her sons one weekend. To show her appreciation to the hunter, she shared out the catch with many people in the community and she wanted to present the hunter with a special bottle of Vodka. However, in many different ways, alcohol presents challenges to pretty much every individual in Iqaluit as is exemplified by Igah's life experiences. Her son and a friend deliberately planned to stay home and get drunk, and because bootlegging is a very lucrative business in Iqaluit - where alcohol can only be ordered from retailers down south by people holding a licence - the boys sold some to make some money. Igah struggled to think of appropriate punishment to teach him his behaviour had been unacceptable, and seems convinced her punishment was wrong, but is satisfied that at least he will learn about the consequences of such actions.

As we have seen, most people live their lives by the ideologies and expectations that are shared by people around them, but within these ideologies there is room for manoeuvre and negotiation, explaining the variation in women's lives. However, Igah seems to have gone well outside of expectations and ideologies and has chosen an altogether different life course. In her childhood her relationships with her family were strained by alcohol and the ensuing dysfunctionality. She was taken away from that and through her schooling was completely alienated from her home, her community and her family, so that she was unable to go back and build up a life there after she finished her schooling. She then visited Canada and decided to move there to build up a new life, she got married and had children, but felt physically and mentally imprisoned in her relationship and needed another drastic change. She had married into a 'strong and famous' family who were 'related to everybody' and by going against their expectations of how a good wife should behave, she lost all support in the community. But through all the difficulties that she had negotiated in her life, Igah had fostered an attitude that enabled her to do anything, and so again, she created a new life, for her and her children, with new friends and social networks. This leads me to conclude that it requires a drastic break with everything familiar to enable the negotiation of a drastically different lifecourse. In the case of Igah, alcohol caused the first break with normal family life, which, indirectly, instigated her move to Iqaluit and her break with her family. After

some time in Iqaluit she divorced and pursued further education and new career opportunities. One might expect high social costs to be associated with going against the grain. And indeed, initially Igah was ostracised and received no support whatsoever. However, possibly because of the severity of her husband's misconduct, and as a result of her working hard to be a good mother, Igah built up a new network of friends and today seems very well connected in the community. Also, she is seen as an inspiration to some women with similar difficult experiences, showing they can take their lives into their own hands and be successful in whatever they choose.

Tanii, like Igah, was sent away down south to get an education. Tanii's mother believed very strongly that she needed this education 'to become more than she was'. Although the break from her family was very difficult and had detrimental effects on her mental health, it also enabled her to choose a challenging career path, which saw her active in elective politics for many years. Whilst I have focussed here on women who have been able to turn a traumatic event in their childhood into a positive change in their lives, these very same traumas naturally also have the potential to severely damage a persons mental health and have seriously harmful effects on their life and career choices.

This section has shown that for women who do not want to, or are forced away from the expected role of daughter, mother and wife, life in contemporary Iqaluit provides other options. In negotiating a new path Igah might have alienated some people, but she also earned the respect of others, proving that the habitus has become expandable in this setting where many lifestyles and ideologies converge. To some extent, individuals can choose between the different options present depending on their position within social networks. In the case of Igah, the break with her family -which was potentially disempowering as it left her without social support - turned into an empowering situation - as it enabled her to get out of the negative influence of alcohol and addiction. She could then negotiate her own future without limiting obligations and expectations from her family.

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## 6.5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

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Throughout this chapter we have seen many examples of social change, and how this was experienced and dealt with by the women I spoke with. As a reflection and conclusion to the chapter, in this section I will tease out the topic of social change in more detail. I reflect on the different ways in which the individuals encountered in this chapter so far have experienced, and continue to experience, ongoing change in Nunavut,

and I also draw on the perspectives of some other women whose experiences are pertinent here.

Values have changed and diversified a lot over the last 50 years, with people increasingly subscribing to different value sets. According to Angmarlik (1999:281): 'It seemed as if our law was not being followed around 1967. When jobs were created the Sabbath day was not being followed and it seemed as if it was broken.' Thus, Angmarlik equates church values and the value of Sunday being a rest day with 'our law'. As mentioned previously, Leah tells me that divorce and family break up were not the way Inuit traditionally lived, again, this is closer to the biblical ideals than to what is considered in the literature the 'traditional Inuit way'. This clearly illustrates the power of the southern Canadian government and the church in promoting their ideals (for an interesting discussion on parousial movements among Inuit in Canada see Blaisel, Laugrand et al. 1999) and shaping people's ideas about life and their view of themselves in opposition to traditional Inuit culture and knowledge, which they portrayed as old-fashioned and ineffective. Just like in an abusive relationship, the victim, in this case the Inuit community, will become convinced of his or her own unfitness when repeatedly faced with the message that the incoming culture is superior to one's own culture (cf Freire and Macedo 1998:61). Currently there are a lot of young, educated, vocal Inuit who are working hard to unpack this dichotomy and help Inuit regain control over their own lives. I will investigate this idea and its consequences further in Chapter 8.

An often cited result of social change on families and family relations is the decrease in intergenerational communication, which according to Fienup-Riordan (2000:129) has caused many social problems for young people in the Arctic. Olayuk's father, as mentioned previously, tried to stop her from going to school as he didn't want her to lose the parental knowledge, skills and language and through their teachings, the connection between them and her. However, these days many families are single parent families, with varying degrees of involvement from the fathers and at the same time there is increasing participation of women on the labour market. This, in combination with schooling has limited the possibilities for parent-child interaction. As family members have become more and more dispersed - settling where they can get the best job-opportunities - relationships between extended family members have changed drastically. This decrease in interaction might be viewed negatively, but it can actually provide options and opportunities for continued support across long distances.

One example of family support with a distinctly contemporary character is Meeka's aunt ringing her up and requesting quite directly for Meeka to be present at the hospital where her cousin was about to give birth for the first time. The traditional unwillingness

for direct requests - which is perceived as an uncomfortable attempt to tell people what to do (Morrow 1990:151) – was here the only viable option in which support could be mustered over long distances. Similarly, the dispersal of Leah's family simultaneously created possibilities and limitations in what they could do when an elder from the family went hunting and didn't return on the expected day. Despite the distance between Leah and her family, she felt like she was 'part of them'. Although Leah was unable to be with her family in her home community, with modern technologies and communications, Leah could listen to the radio to keep informed, phone family members and pick up a member of the family from the airport on his return to Iqaluit so that she could be with him. Thus, the distance between family members in contemporary Inuit society has the potential to provide opportunities for offering certain types of support.

Changing family relations both resulted in and were the result of changing experiences and these in turn changed ideas about socialisation as it had to be adapted to fit the changing situation. For example, the HBC (Hudson Bay Company) influenced Sylvia's family's life and the activities of all family members considerably, her father was engaged in hunting and trapping and visited the HBC on a more or less regular basis to trade his products for ammunition, flour, sugar and tea. The Inuit became dependent on these products and thus on the trading posts to supply them, as a result, cultural values were changed and the spiritual relationship between the Inuit and the animals they hunted was altered (Nuttall 2000:383). Thus, despite living on the land in her early years Sylvia's life was already shaped around the needs of the traders. Martha's parents, who had settled in the community, decided that the distinct gender roles of camp life were no longer relevant in the town of Iqaluit, and they therefore didn't raise their children according to these traditional conventions. Schooling and specifically residential schooling, of which according to Ball (2009:32) 'most Indigenous men and women in Canada are either survivors or have suffered 'secondary trauma' as a result of being born to parents who lacked parenting role models,' further played their part in causing 'relationships [to] become strained across generations and between genders (Kral, Wiebe et al. 2009:297).'

People's views and perceptions about themselves and about their roles in family and society continue to change in Nunavut. As mentioned previously, the balance between husband and wife in the household has been changing drastically in the last 50 years and is continuing to change. For example, Jeannie, mentioned above is of the opinion that if the wife brings in half the money, then the husband should be taking on half the domestic duties. Instead, female employment has been linked to a male loss of purpose, and to identity crises in some cases leading to domestic violence (Billson 2006:74-75).

Men seem to have lost important aspects of their habitus, with the loss of the clear cut obligation of the male figure in Inuit family relations. However, at the time of Kanayok's youth (see section 5.2), her peers still had very well defined expectations of men's and women's roles. Because Kanayok's behaviour did not fit in this expectation, this challenged their ideas about men and women, and as such about themselves and their role in family and community. According to Burch (1975) the increase in the survival rate of children between 1940 and 1975 resulted in a changing mother role, with women becoming increasingly constrained by childcare duties. Monica tells me she feels guilty when she spends time away from her children whilst travelling for work. However, it appears from the literature (e.g.: Chance 1990; Ekho, Ottokie et al. 2000) that traditionally childcare duties were widely shared. The ideal of the stay-at-home mom, that Monica seems to aspire to, might originate from the Western ideal of the housewife and mother who stays at home to look after the child, suggesting Monica's feelings have become inculcated with Western values.

The role of the husband then, as viewed by the women I spoke with, is to be 'supportive'. This means helping to look after the children when their mothers had to travel for work or educational purposes, helping with the housework and being supportive of their wives' aspirations to advance their career prospects. Tracey suggests women also highly value men bringing in country-food for the family. According to Alicia, her husband earns a fair bit of money in the summer, but his financial contribution isn't as important as his happiness, which in turn enables the other members of the family to be happy. This leaves the role of the husband dispersed across many different avenues of activity, taking on domestic and socialisation roles, hunting and providing for the family, as well as a more or less important financial contribution. Taking on these roles would enable a husband to feel valued by the other members of the family, as he provides a meaningful contribution, thus promoting a healthy self-image. However, this diverse picture of male roles has been shaped in different era's of development in Nunavut. Whilst traditionally fathers were the main providers and had an important socialisation role within the family (Briggs 1974:278; Chance 1990:99; Boulton 2006:22; Ball 2009:34), after first contact many started working for wages for the whalers (Eber 1996:12) and later for construction companies that came up north (e.g. Freeman, Bogoslovskaya et al. 1998). However, country-food has never lost its importance in Inuit society. In fact, the reaffirmation of Inuit values as well as the decrease in perceived availability of country foods (due to increasing pressure of growing communities on

local resources and obligations related to wage work as well as the increasing cost associated with hunting equipment) seem to have led to an increase in their value.

Chance's (1960) study of Kaktovik in Alaska, showed the unusually positive path social change had taken in this community, owing to several factors including an emphasis on adaptability rather than conformity, the voluntary nature of change, the preservation of cultural balance and the maintenance of control over internal affairs. However, Chance only showed the impact of change on the male part of the population and didn't record the long term effects of this change on the population. In this chapter I have also shown that in some cases change, even traumatic change, can have positive outcomes. My goal is not to argue that change is always positive, and certainly I do not value a 'contemporary lifestyle' including wage work, a nuclear family and store bought food over a more 'traditional lifestyle' where the different family members each contribute to the resources necessary for survival, including food, clothing and housing. However, I do want to challenge certain stereotypes that have seeped into concepts such as 'social capital', 'social change' and 'culture'. Through the ethnography presented in this chapter, it is evident that social change is not always negative, social capital is not always positive and culture is dynamic rather than representing a static 'tradition', which may in itself be fictitious.

There is no question that the policies of colonisation have caused great disruption, traumatic experiences and social upheaval to Arctic peoples: the effects of these can still be felt strongly in Nunavut communities. But at the same time, new options were made available, new arrangements became visible in the communities, in a way, broadening the habitus. Whilst certain parts of the ideology Inuit had lived their lives by had become redundant, other ideologies (e.g. originating in the church, or the ideal of the stay-at-home-mother) were internalised and started to influence people's views on life. Thus, the tension between structure - controlling people's behaviour - and agency - the options available to people - is actually a simplistic version of the tensions present in the lives of Inuit women as they negotiate several different structures, each providing them with different options. One could say that the habitus of Inuit women is currently in flux, creating confusion and new options at the same time.

## 7. REDEFINING VALUES AND IDEOLOGIES IN THE CONTEXT OF WORK AND EDUCATION

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In the previous chapter we have seen how the women I spoke with experienced and negotiated changing notions of social capital, ideologies, power and habitus. Different women have had very different experiences of these issues, resulting in diverse ways of life. In this chapter I will focus on the concept of work, and how this fits in with traditional and modern notions of social relations, power and the habitus. In order to explore this, I will first assess some literature on work and education and the meaning of work as we can discern it, through different time periods. Next I will compare this with the opinions of the women with whom I spoke, who each have their own ways of giving meaning to their lives and work and adapting the lessons they learned in childhood - in particular parental values and dominant ideologies in society - to fit the current economic climate in the territory. Finally, I will analyse in more detail the ways in which gender issues are played out in this process of giving meaning and value to new livelihood strategies.

### 7.1 THE MEANING OF WORK AND EDUCATION IN TRADITIONAL AND MODERN INUIT SOCIETY

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In an influential article, Guemple (1986) views work as central to personal identity, gendered identity and indeed personhood in Inuit society. Relationships and interactions between people in society are mediated by the kinds of tasks the individuals are capable of performing for each other (see also Guemple 1995). Stern (1999:508) and Lantis (1946:245) similarly attest to the importance of work. The former sees hard work as the fundamental characteristic of a smart person in contemporary Holman, a Canadian Inuit community, whilst the latter writes about Nunivak Islanders in the 1940s that: 'No adult could be lazy. Regardless of status, lineage, age or physical condition, one had to work to the limit of one's capacity. Thus every able-bodied person was a primary and largely independent producer of wealth' (Lantis 1946:253). According to Rasmussen (1927), it was the women who worked particularly hard, 'sacrificing [their] womanly charm on the altar of domestic utility'. He expressed himself 'astonished at the amount of work which fell to their share' (ibid.:71-72). However, Briggs (1974:274) disputes the notion that women are 'servants to their male overlords' and instead suggests, somewhat surprisingly in my view, that 'few of

these [women's] tasks entail any time or labor' (ibid:273). Work and roles of men and women differed considerably, such that the two were seen by Briggs (ibid.) as having different lifestyles. Bourdieu claims that 'the awakening of consciousness of sexual identity and the incorporation of the dispositions associated with a determinate social definition of the social functions incumbent on men and women come hand in hand with the adoption of a socially defined vision of the sexual division of labour. The opposition between masculinity and femininity constitutes the fundamental principle of division of the social and symbolic world' (Bourdieu 2002 [1972]:93). However, as we have seen previously, the genders cannot be seen as two opposed categories in Inuit society. It is possible to change sex, children are sometimes socialised in opposition to their biological sex and gender role allocation is in accordance with the needs or the context and situation within which people find themselves. We have seen how these attitudes to gender socialisation resulted in varied practices in different families. In this chapter we shall see how -in the recent past and currently- work and education may or may not fit within the gender socialisation and gender role allocation.

Contact with outsiders - explorers, whalers, traders, missionaries, government representatives - resulted in drastic economic change and new opportunities for work and education. Stefánsson reports the Inuit he was amongst in 1908 would 'trap for the skins of various animals'. For example, the silverfox, would bring in as much as \$500 (Stefánsson 1922:65). Similarly, Jenness reported Inuit were 'learning to work for a daily wage' with some members of the family he was acquainted with working at 'unload[ing] ships and planes, driv[ing] motor-boats and caterpillar tractors, and show[ing] a competence equal to the white man's in operating civilisation's simpler machines' (Jenness 1961 [1928]:250). These new economic interactions resulted in the Inuit becoming to some extent dependent on southern products, and therefore on the representatives of the outside world who provided these products (Freeman, Bogoslovskaya et al. 1998:72). This dependency was strongly discouraged by the Canadian Government at the time, who wanted to ensure Inuit remained out on the land, able to depend on the resources it provided for their survival (McLean 1995:185; Damas 2002). Despite the Government's efforts, wage employment continued to increase in frequency of occurrence as well as in importance.

Government policy eventually turned a full 180 degrees in the 1950s, when they started to see Inuit as 'destined to pursue modern forms of employment and social life' (McLean 1995:189). Between 1940 and 1970 more and more men entered the wage economy, whilst the women remained at home and continued to be responsible for childcare and household duties (Minor 2002). From the 1970s onwards, women entered

the labour market (Bodenhorn 1990:61; Minor 2002), whilst in some cases, men returned to hunting. The wage economy disrupted many other aspects of life. For example, the egalitarian character of Inuit society was damaged when institutions chose certain individuals to be bosses, intermediaries, managers or contact agents (Mitchell 1996:xiv; Valaskakis 2005:104), thus securing them positions of status in Inuit society (Valaskakis 2005). Maintenance of proper relationships between animals and humans was endangered as a result of time constraints for hunters (Bodenhorn 1990:68). Relationships between men and women (Phillips November 29, 1996) changed as a result of decreased dependency on each other's skills in the context of community living (for a contrasting view in a contemporary Greenlandic community see Hovelsrud-Broda 2000). Population growth in the communities resulted in unemployment and further dependence on government hand-outs (van der Voort 1996:1058; Hicks and White 2000:24), which in turn could lead to social pathologies such as alcohol or drug dependency amongst others (Hicks and White 2000:24; Ball 2009:38). Instruction of children in traditional skills and hunting practices was impeded by the regular absence of parents during working hours and the limited time available to them to engage in these activities themselves (Chance 1960).

Chance (1990:106) reports the changes were more immediately felt by Iñupiat women and girls in Alaska, as a result of their increased work-load (see also Sprott 2002:92) and their loss of autonomy resulting from the incoming 'definition of womanhood' (see also Tester 2006:238), but Honigmann and Honigmann (1965:154) observed that in Iqaluit in 1963, 'girls in the 14-25 age group conspicuously outdistance their male peers in cultural sophistication', suggesting they were more at ease with dress, language and lifestyle of, and interactions with, Qallunaat. In the contemporary period Inuit women tend to surpass men in the wage economy (Minor 2002) - in fact this seems to have been the case since the 1970s (McElroy 1975:679) - whilst remaining mainly responsible for female domestic and traditional roles (Billson 2006:74; Boulton 2006; Williamson 2006:132). The economy has a decidedly mixed character, with monies and resources coming in from various sources, including wages, subsistence hunting, welfare transfers and arts and crafts production (Stabler and Howe 1990; Hamley 1991; Mitchell 1996; Hicks and White 2000; Ironside 2000; Duerden 2004; Mitchell 2005; Wenzel 2009). Unsurprisingly therefore, young people in Pond Inlet, northern Baffin Island, are reported as aspiring to combine wage work and traditional pursuits (Myers and Forrest 2001).

Employment in Nunavut, both in the past and today, has been affected by many critical issues, both practical and ideological. For example, certain conventions held by

Southern Canadians related to work and behaviour at the workplace clashed with Inuit principles of interaction. As a result of a highly valued individual autonomy (Riches 1990:83) and consequent unease at being told what to do, Inuit employees were reported to miss work (Tester 2006:238), come in late, and ask for days off to go hunting (Honigmann and Honigmann 1965:154). In addition, family obligations generally outway work obligations in importance (Rigby and Bainbridge 2005:110; Boulton 2006:26) again resulting in absenteeism (see section 6.2). Inuit are equally uncomfortable exercising authority over others, which in certain professional or political roles is unavoidable, causing further tensions for Inuit participating in the wage economy (Boulton 2006). On the practical side, a limited Inuit labour pool as a result of problems with education and training – notably availability and retention – has resulted in limited possibilities for gaining practical work experience. In addition, the working language in Nunavut is English (Dorais 2001), which enables well educated Southern Canadians to come up north and take up employment very easily, whilst unilingual Inuit need to both ‘acquire the skills needed for employment’ as well as ‘the second language skills needed to work effectively in an English speaking environment’ (Rigby and Bainbridge 2005:109). The Nunavut Land Claims Agreement outlined the goal of representative levels of Inuit employees in all occupational groups and at all grade levels (Hicks and White 2000; Rigby and Bainbridge 2005; Berger 2006). However, as opposed to a representative 85%, on November 12<sup>th</sup> 2007, Nunatsiaq News reported Inuit only made up 50% of government workers to date (Minogue November 12, 2007).

Men and women in Nunavut have different ideas of the meaning of wage work, and what constitutes meaningful work or a meaningful contribution. In some ways, wage work has been incorporated into social relations in the same way as traditional roles were. In other words, working is seen as a contribution to the community, and the wages are shared with the (extended) family. For example, both Chabot (2003:31) reporting on contemporary Nunavik and Wenzel (2000:73), who conducted his research in Clyde River, northern Baffin Island, report that employed individuals have social obligations to help others out (see also Angmarlik 1999; Hunt 2000). However, Wenzel asserts the pressures could be so strong as to place the (younger, in many cases female) employed individual at an economic disadvantage, thus emphasising the negative effects of these social obligations. In many cases, employed individuals provide the monetary resources to enable unemployed family members to purchase and maintain a hunting outfit, the products of which in turn benefit them (in most cases the financial contribution is provided by female members of the family, see for example Condon and Stern 1993; Pars and Bjerregaard 2001; Searles 2001). The ‘more traditional’ lifestyle of

subsistence hunting is favoured by many males in Inuit society (Matthiasson 1976). However, according to Williamson (2006:62), hunting has been devalued in contemporary Nunavut, and is seen as a leisure activity, rather than a career (see also Searles 2001:129). In contrast Bodenhorn (1993:68) reports that in Alaska hunting, or 'the work of maintaining proper animal/human relations,' is defined as 'real work' as opposed to wage work. Further, Wexler (2006:2943), also writing about Alaskan Iñupiat, reports on the importance of subsistence hunting, which is considered a valuable contribution of men to the family or community, whilst desk-jobs are considered more suitable for women.

Meeka provided me with a linguistic analysis of two Inuktitut words denoting work, which is very insightful. Rather than the word *sanajuq* which means 'he/she is making something', most people now refer to work as *iqqanaijuq*, a much newer term referring to wage work. However, the idea of work as an 'act of creating something' is still prevalent in many people's way of thinking about employment, especially amongst males. Going to school, the prerequisite for getting an office job, like working in an office, is not considered a valuable contribution by many people in Nunavut. However, one of the most important expectations of the organisers of the Akitsiraq Law School was that the students would 'do legal work for the benefit of Nunavut' (Wright 2005:120), thus framing modern schooling firmly within the traditional value of providing a contribution to wider society. Whilst the students were very committed to this, the pressure put upon them to succeed was felt very strongly by a number of the students (Matthijsse in preparation). There is thus a tension between being able to provide an immediate contribution through acquiring practical skills and performing immediately necessary and visible tasks, and obtaining a (theoretical) education, enabling one to obtain office based employment, which in many cases doesn't lead to immediately visible contributions, although the monetary returns could immediately benefit the family. As we shall see in this chapter, men and women often choose opposite strategies. Females are seen as more mature at an earlier age than males by youths in Holman (Condon 1995), whilst Kleinfeld and Andrews (2006a; 2006:433) report that in Alaska, males have internalised the gender role expectation of academic 'laziness' as opposed to young women, who leave the remote rural communities for education and employment (in fact the unequal ration of female-male education participation rates (4 to 1 in spring 1981) was noted as early as 1988 by Worl:321).

According to Bourdieu (1986:49), the unequal distribution of cultural capital, which leads directly to unequal power relations in society, results from an unequal distribution of economic and cultural means for ‘prolonging education beyond the minimum necessary for the reproduction of the labor-power least valorised at a given moment’. For that reason, only certain people are able, both financially and through means of encouragement and academic support, to provide their children with further education. Other children get only the minimum education necessary to enable them to live a standard of life similar to their parents. We shall see that in the context of Nunavut, parental encouragement and parental academic support can be problematic for parents with limited familiarity with the schooling system. Furthermore some parents in Nunavut have mixed feelings about the value of an education. Nuttall (2000) argues this is one of the reasons why it is important to base education on local knowledge, rather than on a foreign curriculum. In addition, competing worldviews and ideologies have resulted in disagreement about which ‘labor-power’ is the ‘least valorised’ in contemporary Nunavut society. The opposing strategies males and females choose with regards to employment and education become clear from this figure showing the numbers of male and female employees of the Government of Nunavut.<sup>13</sup>

### *Employees by Beneficiary Status and Gender*

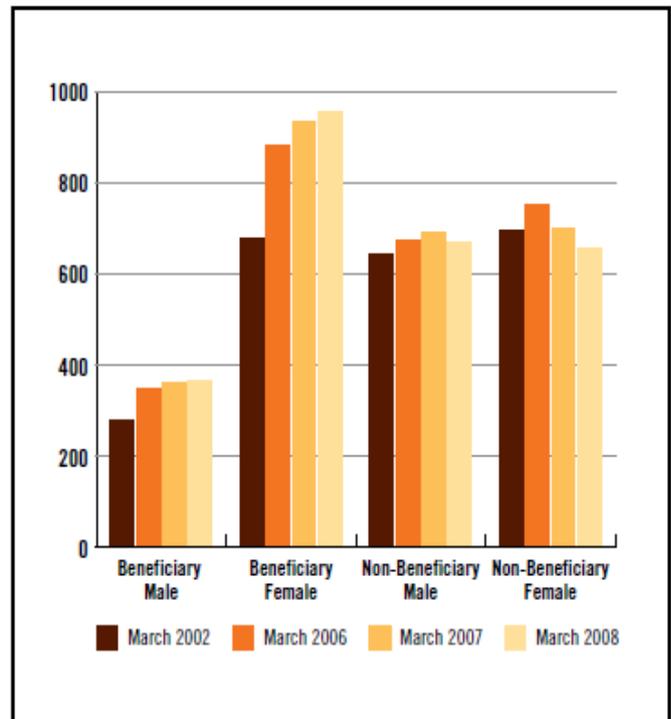


FIGURE 6: EMPLOYEES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF NUNAVUT BY GENDER AND BENEFICIARY STATUS

<sup>13</sup> Whilst this doesn't include all available jobs in Nunavut, the public sector provides well over half of the territory's jobs, whilst the private sector is very small (Hicks and White, 2000).

## 7.2 VALUES AND IDEOLOGIES OF WORK AND LEARNING

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The women I spoke with had their own ways of integrating Inuit values and ideologies into the current economic climate in the territory. The meaning of independence in a context of interdependency; questions of what constitutes a valuable contribution in a territory with an increasingly bureaucratic organisation; conflicting views of motherhood and a need to assert one's superiority over others in a bid for wage positions in a society characterised by egalitarianism all potentially create tensions for some and opportunities for others.

According to Boulton (2006:32), 'independence, innovation and patience are the most respected and important characteristics' for individuals in Inuit society. The importance of independence has also been acknowledged by Honigsmann and Honigsmann (1965:175) in Iqaluit and by Chance (1990:103) amongst the Iñupiat in Alaska. As can be expected, this independence might in some cases lead to children not following their parents' lead and choosing their own way, as Olayuk did when she was a teenager:

So even though my father didn't want me to go to school, but I didn't listen: I was 13! So my cousin was interpreting for me. We went to school to go see the principal and she was interpreting for me and behind my father's back, my mother didn't mind, he thought I was going to lose my language and my culture when I go to school, it was not Inuit school, you know. So he was so scared. So, but I didn't listen to my father, cause I really wanted to learn and I wanted to be the same as people [in the community]. Because we were kind of different, cause we were not from the community, 'cause we lived different from other people. Like using those kind of stuffs (pointing to *qulliq*). So anyways, that's why I went to school, and I was maybe 16 or something like that, I couldn't still speak English because I was so shy and kids were making fun of me, that's why I wasn't even trying to speak English. So I brought my cousin again one evening and I really wanted to work, because I wanted to have a new good clothes and have money so I brought my cousin, 'cause I heard there was a part-time job at the convenience store. So we knocked at the Northern manager's house, like his house! So we were knocking on his door, because I wanted to work! So I asked her to interpret for me, so she knew what she was going to say, because I already talked to her before we went to go see him. So we knock and she asked the manager that I was looking for part time job and he said to me "you can go see me in the office tomorrow", so I went, and my cousin was interpreting again at the Northern, cause she already had a part time job. And I knew numbers that time, even though I couldn't speak, maybe a little bit, I was like, sixteen or something like that, I couldn't, I had a hard time learning English. So, I got a job, because I knew numbers! So I was a cashier! (Olayuk, 35, justice sector worker, 15/10/07)

Olayuk's story tells us about the balance between independence and dependence. Olayuk independently decided she wanted to go to school, because she 'wanted to learn and be the same as people [in the community]'. However, because of her lack of English language skills, she was not able to get what she wanted on her own, therefore she depended on her cousin to help her to achieve her goals of both enrolling in school, and getting a job so she could get 'new good clothes'. Although she was brought up in a traditional context, her aspirations were embedded in the new opportunities

community life offered. She used the lessons from her upbringing and applied them in this new context.

The women I spoke with mentioned that learning independence was one of the most important lessons for them when they were little, as well as for their own children. The expectation of independence can be applied as effectively in the modern context of schooling and work as in the traditional context of small family camps out on the land. Jeela explains that there is really no difference in the basic understanding of independence in the Inuktitut and the English contexts. In both cases you need to be able to do things, so that you are not dependent on other people having to do things for you, for which you need education as a child, learning how to do things on your own:

For me, survival is important, either if you're on the land or in the settlement, able to do things on your own, without support by anybody else. And for that education is important, so that you can do stuff without worrying about you need someone to do something for you. And I think that's...you might do it differently in English or Inuktitut, but the thing is, you need to be independent from other people. Able to support yourself. And if you can do that, maybe you can start helping other people too. (Jeela, 45, education sector worker, 05/03/07)

Tracey expects her teenage children to do what they need to get done and to 'achieve on their own', without distinguishing between the traditional and the modern context. Getting training and getting educated to a certain level will enable her children to get a job and thus gain independence:

I just expect them to be able to get up in the mornings do part of whatever they need to get done, for their own day to day stuff. To be able to study hard or work hard on whatever assignments they have. To be able to get along with others and to be able to achieve on their own. (Tracey, 40, professional working in the media, 19/02/07)

The meaning of being independent in a society that greatly values sharing and individuals' contributions to the common good, needs some consideration. This contradiction is closely related to the central tension between structure and agency as mentioned in the previous chapters. Independence is limited to some extent by the structures of society, which prescribe certain roles and obligations for each individual. And these structures are changing, for example Condon and Stern (1993) argue that since the 1970s women especially have gained a 'greater degree of economic and social independence than in the past, largely due to their increased participation in the wage economy.' In contrast, Chabot (2003:31) asserts money and wages have not 'freed people from all social obligations and customary norms of behaviours, nor has it brought independence.' Wenzel (2000:70), as mentioned in the previous section, found waged relatives can be put under considerable pressure to contribute to extended family funds.

Acting independently, as Jeela pointed out, necessitates gaining skills and education; in Bourdieu's terms, one needs cultural, symbolic, economic and paradoxically, social capital. Thus, in order to be able to be independent, one needs to be able to depend on a network of people and relatives for support. As we saw above, Olayuk was able to gain some independence (gaining her cultural and economic capital) by relying on her social capital. However, in the modern context, with conflicting ideologies and habitus, the different capitals are not accessible to everyone, and 'traditional cultural capital' (for example, knowledge of the land and animal migrations), cannot easily be converted into 'modern symbolic capital' (such as a higher education diploma from a prestigious institution), just as 'modern cultural capital' (e.g. knowledge of electoral systems) cannot easily be converted into 'traditional symbolic capital' (being a respected elder based on life experience and good decision-making).

As Jeela says, once you have acquired the necessary skills to look after yourself independently, 'you can start helping other people too.' Making a valuable contribution is important (Lantis 1946; McElroy 1975:668; Rasing 1993:96; Dybbroe 1996:49; Hovelsrud-Broda 2000:198) both for community, family and individual health. We have already seen in the previous chapter how the need or perceived obligation to contribute could impede someone's chances of individual development. At the same time, as Bodenhorn (2000:38) points out, these contributions could earn you a share of the catch (for example in the whalehunt in Alaska, but also in the case of Siimiuni who would be given a tank of gas or could borrow a snowmobile in exchange for meat and fish (Searles 2001:128; see also Chabot 2003:29). What one is expected to contribute, and what is considered a valuable, meaningful contribution is embedded in the ideology of motherhood, fatherhood or personhood. As we saw in the previous chapter, for many mothers the reason to get an education and to progress on the labour market was to offer their children the best opportunities possible and to show what it was possible for them to achieve:

How I view my success is being able to balance working and being the best mother that I can be to my daughter. But as well showing her that, even though I come from a small community, I'm not originally from Iqaluit, you can do what you want to do as long as you set your mind to it and you're motivated, but as well, balancing your family. (Emily, 40 government worker 15-05-07)

I think it's great to go after education and I think...I sometimes think it's more the females stuck with their kids. So a lot of them turn to education to provide better for their kids. That could be part of the reason, they're single parents, they're females, they have kids, and they want something better for their kids. So they go after education. And it's a motherly instinct to want something better for your kids. (Kanayok, 40, education sector worker, 14/02/07)

This is a successful application of the traditional concept of contributing to the future of society in the modern context. However, the traditional role of the Inuit mother to raise her children and provide them with the best opportunities possible seems to be more readily adapted to the modern context of education and wage work than the traditional male role. Whilst girls take up wage employment frequently, they also continue to be 'socialised to contribute heavily to child care and other domestic chores [...and they are more] likely to make a valuable contribution to the household' (Condon and Stern 1993:391). On the other hand, men who 'traditionally were the caretakers of the family [...] no longer feel like they are caring for their families.' In an attempt to give meaning to their lives 'subsistence is really important for men to feel like they are contributing. It gives them a place' (Wexler 2006:2943). Monica explains that the need to care for their children is stronger for women than for men, because women are the 'immediate source of support'. In order to care for the children the women feel they need to get into the workforce or get an education:

I think it's a situation that a lot of women are in up here, where there's a tendency for women to be having children at a younger age. So they're the immediate source of support for the children, and so the sense of responsibility is a lot more prevalent in the women. I think there's a sense among men, not necessarily insecurity, but just unsure what their role is in their children's lives and they might not necessarily be with the mother of their children and so trying to establish how they can connect and provide support to their children may be more difficult. I don't think it's a lack of interest, but just the role of men here is changing and not very certain. As a mother there's an immediate response in caring for your children, there's no question about it. You carry your child, you're the source of food, nutrition, comfort. The immediate source, the fathers tend to be put into a secondary role, not necessarily by choice, but just by nature, how things play out. And I think that carries out into the feeling of need to get into the workforce or into education. It's just such a monetary world that you don't really have much of a choice but to do that. To be able to live healthily and provide enough for the children, there isn't any other option now. (Monica, 28, senior government official, 04/05/07)

Inevitably, some mothers have dreams and expectations for the future but feel incapable of attaining them, as all they have time for is making sure that their families are supported (see also section 6.2, and Briggs 2000):

My point here, a lot of people tell me to follow my dream, to follow my passion, but I can't, I need to make money! A lot of times I'm in a job that I hate, because I have to support my family, I have to pay the rent, whatever, I can't follow my dreams. (Naomi, 50, government advisory position, 03/04/07)

The traditional expectations of motherhood therefore can in some cases also limit women's possibilities in fulfilling their dreams, or progressing on to positions with more authority or responsibility.

These women feel like they are able to contribute meaningfully at work:

It's good to work in an area where you feel like you're contributing and that your role is appreciated. (Kristy, 34, government worker, 15/05/07)

As long as you are contributing, it's important to contribute (Louise, 35, government worker, 15/05/07)

However, this seemingly straightforward translation of a traditional concept into a modern situation can be obstructed when different definitions of the idea of a 'valuable contribution' are used. The two women quoted above work in a government office and although they do feel like they are contributing and they do feel appreciated, to many people it is hard to see the value of this type of job. To them a job involves creating something: at the end of the day they expect a visible product to have resulted from the effort that was put in. Therefore jobs that do not have this visible end-product, such as office jobs, are not considered to be as valuable a contribution as jobs that do, such as water truck drivers and garbage collectors:

There's a local radio and every so often I would hear people say thank the water truck drivers and the garbage men drivers who come and pick up all our stuff and make sure we've got water, and there's great value to that. And people see that as contributing. Whereas, when you go to the office, no one really knows what you're doing, you don't really seem to be doing anything. There's no visible product coming out. (Meeka, 32, senior government official, 07/07/07)

For those who consider sitting in the classroom, learning a profession and working in an office environment directly opposed to the idea of contributing meaningfully to the family or to society, there are a limited number of manual employment opportunities, whilst the government - the biggest employer in Nunavut - is still running on 80% capacity (Minogue November 12, 2007), leaving many positions unfilled.

Lauri, who was mainly looked after by her oldest sister, was expected to stay home and help with the chores at home instead of going to school. Lauri would have liked to go and get more education after grade 6, but was not able to do so. She did however teach herself English by reading lots of books; because of this she was able to get a job as a translator:

No, [my parents] didn't [have any expectations for my future]. Well...they expected us to be kind to other people. Show our respect to our elders, and help our Elders, or help anyone for that matter, when they are in need of help. When we started school - I was 7 years of age I think when we first started school - I used to want to become a nurse, because that's where I started working first time. But we didn't go to school anymore because everybody...when we finished grade 6 we had no other school, so...But we had a choice to go to Churchill and I would have loved to go to school, but my parents, well, my sister actually didn't want me to go, because...I was a helper. And then I got the job at the hospital interpreting. Yes as an interpreter, nurse's and doctor's aid. Now if I had a further education I would have probably become a nurse, but I was lucky to get a job even at grade 6! I taught myself English by reading a lot. (Lauri, 60, health sector worker, 08/02/07)

Similarly, I was told by Arctic College staff that most students who dropped out of their course, stated 'family problems' to be the reason for discontinuing. A promising student I knew did not finish her course for 'family reasons', but planned to continue a

year later. The concept of contributing seems to be tightly connected with social capital. According to McElroy (1975:666) children were expected to 'learn accomplishments which will bring recognition of [their] worth to the family'. Thus, providing a contribution is important to make people feel useful and give them a place in the family and society. Whilst it could potentially earn them the right to a share of the products of a hunt, Lauri's potential was clearly limited by her obligation to help her sister in the household.

In traditional Inuit society competitive individualism was discouraged, while supporting others and contributing whatever they could was encouraged (Gombay 2000). However, Mitchell (1996:441) questions whether traditional egalitarian relations ever existed as sharing was not selfless, and depended on the resources available. Within the social structure there were still differences in status and prestige which allowed certain people to make the most important decisions, and others to follow. According to Briggs (1974), this was mainly based on gender: whilst not denying women's influence, she asserts men took public responsibility for decisions and women followed. Relations within communities and families have subsequently changed as a result of political, economic and social transformations, so that status and prestige are now largely dependent on wage employment, with class distinctions starting to become visible (Condon 1995; Mitchell 1996; Hicks and White 2000).

Traditionally, individuals who felt better than others, or bragged about their abilities were shunned in order to maintain a society where everybody had an equally important role to play, which does not fit a modern concept as 'climbing ladders'. In the context of an egalitarian society the concept of self-development is meaningless. Akulliq does not work for personal gain; she works for a better future for her family, her community and society:

We don't see ourselves as progressing, or climbing the ladder, it's just one more task to do to make things better or to make things easier for our relatives, our kids, our future grandchildren or other Nunavummiut. So our self concept is very much like that. (Akulliq, 50, senior government official, 12/10/06)

However, she mentioned a younger Inuk she worked with did refer to herself as climbing ladders, she appeared to have been influenced by Southern Canadian concepts of career advancement through media such as the internet, magazines, television and school.

Thus we have a situation in which different people subscribe to different ideologies and corresponding worldviews, blurring concepts of status and prestige and leading to confused expectations and goals for youths. For example in contrast to the equality that was traditionally valued, in job applications, one is expected to show that one's skills

and experience are superior to someone else's. This boasting about one's abilities is against core Inuit values of equality:

Inuit aren't supposed to be like: 'oh, I'm so great at this, I'm so great at that,' because if you do say things like that, other people will say things. So you don't want to go off and boast about how well you can do this or that. And then I think sometimes, interviews are very intimidating. But it's not the nature I think, us Inuit were kind of brought up to be focussed on others, don't just think about you, don't say look at me, I'm so great, I'm such a great runner or I can bake cakes so well, so you don't talk about that so much. (Meeka, 32, senior government official, 07/07/07)

McElroy's (1975:671) main research participant agreed and told his son: 'I don't want you to be better than other people, don't think you are better.'

With limited access to some of the skills needed to become independent in contemporary Nunavut society, confusion about what is considered a valuable contribution, and mixed messages about skills and achievements necessary for status and prestige (cf Briggs 2000:114), it is difficult to plan for the future. In addition to this confusion, children in Inuit society are not pressured by adults, rather they are very much left to experiment with possibilities and opportunities, make mistakes and learn from them, and experience life on their own (McElroy 1975; Briggs 1991). Chance (1990), writing about young people in Alaska, observes that many were 'unsure of themselves and what they wanted to become.' Furthermore, he notes: 'few planned realistically'. What was important for them was to be able to make some money when they needed it; the type of job was not important (Chance, 1990:110).

This lack of specific guidance for Inuit children, evidenced by the stories of many of the women I spoke with, is characteristic of the Inuit way of raising children. But from Leah's story below it becomes clear how people's expectations and goals for the future gradually changed over time, as she went from living with her family on the land, to attending the school in a nearby community, to attending residential school in the South:

The only examples we had was our older brothers and sisters and the mother, maybe I expected to be a good mother, like my mother was and being able to sew, like she did. Because if you didn't know how to sew, you'll freeze your feet and you have no clothes, so I guess that was my expectation when I was still at home. But when I went to school I started to see other opportunities, like you can work at the store, that was one of our examples. You could work at Hudson Bay store as a clerk. That basically was our example. Then the teacher came, then you started to think, maybe I could be a teacher, but then you didn't know where to get this, and how you get there. Then later on, we had more other examples. Like when I went to school in Churchill, Manitoba, in residential school, there was more people that we could see that they were working that we could see that we could do the same thing as they were. At home we really had no examples. We had no idea that there was such a thing as a carpenter, or an electrical person, lab technician, x-ray technician, like, we had never seen them before, so we didn't know, until we started going to school, then I wanted to be a nurse, which I pursued and got. A nursing assistant, that's what I became, because I wanted to work in the hospital. (Leah, 50, senior government official, 27/06/07)

Pushing children and expecting more from them is becoming more common amongst the younger generations, for example for the children of the women I spoke with. For most women I spoke with, the main expectation they have of their children is for them to finish their education:

[For my children] to complete their education was the highest thing, and to be able to take care of themselves, be self-sufficient and have a balanced life. To be able to contribute to the community and be on their own comfortably, being self-sufficient I guess. I didn't expect each one of them to be in a certain, to go into a certain job, because a lot of the time they are in the High School and they're young, they are very individual. What I want them to do might not work for them, so I pretty well left it to them...(Jenny, 55, business-owner, 15/03/07)

Martha also reminds her son time and time again that he should finish his education. In addition, she reminds him of her high expectations of him, and of the opportunities that are out there:

And we've told him he has to finish school, and he can be whatever he wants to be. I've always told him as he gets older, right from early on, he's going to be our premier one day and if he doesn't want to, he could be an astronaut, he could be a doctor, he could be whatever he wants, so long he goes to school. (Martha, 45, senior government official, 03/07/07)

In section 6.4, we saw that there are different skillsets children can aspire to acquire, one being the traditional skillset, geared towards knowledge of the land and animals, the other the contemporary skillset, academic skills, learned in school. Kiuga, even though she maintains education is very important, is happy for her son to have traditional skills, even if he does not have a formal education, because not everyone is suited to being in school. The two different skillsets could help give those struggling in one, the opportunity to excel in the other. The mothers I spoke with all agree that both getting a formal education and learning traditional language and culture are important skills. From this it seems that both are needed in order to be successful, one or the other on its own does not seem to be sufficient. Thus, Pitsiulak recognises the importance of formal education, but she wants her children to take full benefit of the amalgamation of cultures that they experience in Iqaluit. Thus, she wants them to take advantage of the formal education on offer as well as immersing themselves in the culture of their parents and grandparents, and to use the knowledge, beliefs and values that are most useful from each culture:

I guess I want them to have a formal education, but also know the culture. My expectation is for them to speak the language, to know the culture, but also combine both cultures; take advantage of both worlds that they're experiencing. (Pitsiulak, 50, health sector worker, 22/03/07)

Thus in some instances the expectations parents have for their children contrast quite markedly with traditional expectations, in other instances there is a double expectation in that children are expected to follow some Southern Canadian values as

well as some Inuit ones. Tapea's expectations of her children are in stark contrast to the stories above. She communicates very clearly with her daughters that she is saving money for them to go to university, and if they do not go, then they will not get the money. She hopes that with a degree, her daughters will have the ability to choose what they want to do, rather than getting stuck in a job that they don't enjoy, just because they need to earn a living:

I would like them to finish their education and also go to college and university and get their degrees. And I want them to have choices, like, what kind of jobs they want to have, like I don't want them to work just to have financial stability, I want them to have a choice in what they really like to do. Give them choice in what they like to do and their career. I want them to be happy of what they're doing, and what they like to do. I want them to experience, I guess in university, experience to have fun at the same time, they can choose what they want to do in life.

I have told them from when they were little kids that they have to go to university after high school. And I've been telling them ever since. I told them I'm saving money for their university and if they don't go to university, they're not going to get the money! So that's almost like a bribe (laughs)! (Tapea, 35, support staff government advice service, 09/01/07)

Monica, whose father was a professor and who had high educational and job expectations of his children, is aiming for a 'healthy level' of high expectations. She is mindful that education and studying are not for everyone, as long as her children achieve their potential and are not 'lazy about trying things':

Yes, I try to have a healthy level of high expectations for my children, I want them to see that they can achieve whatever they want and so I expect myself to be a good role model, to show them that they don't really have any excuses to be lazy about things, or to have excuses to not try something different. I think I carry on the high expectations of education to my children, just to expand their minds and to have them willing to try new things. (Monica, 28, senior government official, 04/05/07)

Crago et al (1993:217) found that young mothers in Nunavik spoke some English to their children, to prepare them for behavioural conventions at school. Most importantly, they taught their children politeness words not used in the Inuktitut language, so that their children would make a good impression on their white teachers at school.

The unequal distribution of cultural and economic capital affects the educational attainment of children in a society. Because many parents in Nunavut have not had the experience of going through the full education system from a young age, it is hard for them to encourage their children to do so, and to fully understand the importance of this for their children's future. Akulliq recognises this problem in relation to the newness of the concept of choosing a career. Over the last 60 years the number of opportunities and choices has increased significantly and even if parents might want to help their children make a decision, some might not have a full understanding of all the opportunities presented to youths at the end of it. Thus, for those parents it is very hard to provide that kind of guidance:

I think for younger women, because work is a relatively new concept ... the concept of the career, not having that in mind [is a problem] because there are still many Inuit who have not completed schooling and so they don't have a history or a family memory of what it means to go to school and finish school and have a goal in life to think of in terms of careers. That's a problem because people don't have a mindset when they come into a job. I have a five year old and when I knew I was pregnant there was no question in my mind, that I would expect him or her to go to school, and complete school, then go on to secondary school and find a job and a career, that's already in my mind. [You need] to earn that money to provide for your family, and in order to do that you need these skills, and these skills will get you a job in order to do that. So that kind of mindset has to be there. But many young parents don't have that mindset, because it was not expected of them. (Akulliq, 50, senior government official, 12/10/06)

Mary stresses the importance of telling children to go to school, not to skip classes and not to drop out:

We are learning, we are learning, learning, how to go to school, and how to stay in school. And most importantly, we as parents and grandparents, we have to encourage our young ones to stay in school. When I was going to school I had no one to encourage me to stay in school, because my people had never been in the classroom setting education, so it was natural for me to finish when I started to menstruate, which is the indication of maturity in women. And that means I'm ready to have a husband and raise children. And that was the way of life, but today it's different. In order to compete with people from other places, or even within our own people, we need to be educated to survive. (Mary, 60, senior government official, 24/11/06)

Despite the fact that Tapea did not know what kind of job she wanted, she left her community in order to attend High School in Iqaluit, both because she thought it was 'cool' and because she did not want to be a teenage mother like others she saw in the community, she criticises her brothers for not having any goals:

I was seeing all the teenagers get pregnant, and I was saying to myself, I'm not going to be like that, I'm gonna go to high school, and finish high school and get a job. But I didn't know what kind of job I wanted, I liked the people who worked in an office, which I...I should have gone into something more physical and not an office job. Well, office job is ok, but I would have been...I guess more happy with a physical job. My brothers just stay in Clyde River, but there are no jobs there, they could go to school, move to another community and get a job there, but they don't. There is even an Arctic College in Clyde now, why don't they think about those things? They just sit there, they don't think about the future, they don't have any future goals and they don't plan anything. Even though they might have a family, but they don't think about what they can do to help their family. (Tapea 35 support staff government advice service 09/01/07)

This section has shown the different meanings attached to work historically and in the present day, and between and to a certain extent within genders. It has become clear that the confusion about what is meaningful, what is respectful and what is prestigious behaviour in contemporary Nunavut society, creates both limitations and opportunities. According to Tester and Irniq (2008:57), most young Inuit pursue what could be seen as a 'modern future'. However, this can create problems when their cultural background clashes with different kinds of social relations, goals and objectives as found in southern

culture. On a more upbeat note, Kulchyski, McCaskill et al (1999:xxiv) focus not on the problems, but on the possibilities which having a 'bi-cultural identity' might bring. According to them, Inuit are able through this bi-cultural identity to pursue the goals of both cultures, which as we have seen, could indeed provide some people with opportunities and choices. However, we have also seen how social obligations might impede opportunities and how a lack of parental support might limit educational success.

### 7.3 CONFORMING AND CONFRONTING THE CULTURAL ARBITRARY

Bourdieu suggests that the habitus doesn't change easily (e.g. Bourdieu 2003), but in the case of Inuit society it has changed considerably and become very confusing in the last 50 years. What is happening in the territory of Nunavut now is that Inuit are trying to create and reclaim their own habitus. This is a conscious attempt to recreate and reclaim an unconscious view of the world and way of life. Some of the women I spoke with have taken on the role of confronting the orthodoxy based on incorporating and manipulating the incoming norms and values. They campaign for change in a broad set of issues and at different levels of society. For example, Tapea and Jeela each work to promote women's rights and address women's issues in their broadest sense. Olayuk and Akulliq both work on the promotion of traditional culture and language. Sylvia, Anne and Martha work on community and social issues each in their own way. Igah works on aboriginal rights and government responsibilities with respect to the land claims agreement and Tanii works on aboriginal rights in the global context. The typical picture that the women painted of their male counterparts was that they were less involved in community meetings, less successful in the education system and less successful on the job market.

This view is supported by Searles' (2001:125-129) case study of Siimiuni, who was adopted by his uncle-in-law and aunt after his biological father had died. 'Siimiuni was a product of the streets of Iqaluit. He described himself as a "little criminal", he had been arrested a number of times, had dropped out of school, and was much more interested in having fun with his friends and getting into trouble than in hunting.' However, when his adoptive family moved to an outpost camp 160 miles outside of Iqaluit, he 'developed a passion for hunting, a passion that was nurtured through the teachings of his father and older brothers. Learning how to hunt and how to take care of the outpost camp gave his life a new direction and meaning.' Thus, after a shaky start, Siimiuni - with the help of his adoptive family and through their teachings - managed to turn his life around away from the influences of Iqaluit streetlife. In this new setting, he developed

into something of a leader, he was always busy, always the first one up and the first one ready to go out hunting. He was also able to improve his social status through making decisions about where to hunt, his success in hunting and through helping and providing others what they needed (Ibid.). Thus whilst Siimiuni was unable to find a suitable role for himself in Iqaluit, by turning away from this environment, he was able to give meaning and direction to his life. However, in doing so he limited his options for engagement in the community through a lack of money, which was partially alleviated by his social networks in town. He also estranged some of his family members, who didn't understand his choice of lifestyle, didn't understand why he 'could not just look for a job in town' (ibid.:128) and who saw hunting as a recreational activity with little prestige.

It is fair to say that when Inuit children were first sent to school, this institution provided children with one kind of habitus, whilst life in the home with parents and family required a different kind of habitus. These two lifestyles were not totally compatible. As we have seen, the traditional dislike of excessive bragging contrasted sharply with the Western job application process, in which it is necessary to highlight skills and abilities, and the traditional ideal of non-interference contrasted sharply with the authority of bosses over the activities of their work-crew (cf. Boulton 2006). Because women had traditionally been more used to constant work, being indoors for most of the day, and being sociable and talkative, the new habitus promoted by the school was more compatible with the habitus women possessed. For this reason, I argue many women felt better able to conform to this new way of life, a state of affairs which continues today.

In the following abstract, it becomes clear that working for the government - sitting all day on 'nice furry chairs', where all you have to do is think - is more suited for females. Working in construction, even though it is being outside, might mean working for a stranger from outside the territory, or working for someone who is much younger than you, which does not make men feel good about what they are doing:

Is it because they have to sit the whole day, they just have to think and move their fingers and a keyboard, is that a good thing for a man? Or do they feel that this is a useless thing? I don't know. I've been always looking for why, because MLAs [Members of the Legislative Assembly] have nice furry chairs<sup>14</sup>, they're nice and warm, you sit there all day, you just have to think and your lips work and your mind, nothing else. Is that good for an Inuk man? Traditionally long time ago...long time ago, my father was born in early nineteen hundreds, he didn't do that, I don't think he could do that. I know there's men they just hate to be in the office. I know there's other jobs, outdoor jobs, like construction and that sort of thing, but again, a person that's from...I don't know where...Nova Scotia, is your boss. You don't know this

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<sup>14</sup> The chairs in the Legislative Assembly in Iqaluit have seal fur seats.

person, and I think some men feel out of place. When your boss might be young enough to be your son, do you feel good in that situation? (Leah, 50, senior government official, 27/06/07)

This change in the balance between men and women in Inuit society has clearly had a major effect on relations in the family and in society as a whole. Jeannie has seen husbands react in a great variety of ways when their wives moved into employment. The difficulty in accepting this change in roles can result in marriage break-up or even suicide by the husband because having his wife supporting the family is an insult to his sense of self and purpose. In other cases, men might be resentful at first, but then come round to the idea that their wives are doing a good job both at work and in providing the family with an income:

I've seen some changes, you know the women go out to the workforce. I've seen the husbands don't support it, the families break down and mum and dad go their separate ways, I've seen that happen. I've also seen suicide in a relationship, because the female partner was strong enough to be able to go out to work and still handle the stress that her non-cooperative partner was providing. He committed suicide, because he couldn't handle the fact that his wife was working, he took it as an insult to his manliness I guess. He felt she should have stayed home. I've also seen that negativity at first, with a friend of mine who went to work and her husband was so that against her working, he did not want her working outside the home. And it took her quite a few years but he came around, to where he supports her now and you know, they have a better life style then they did before and once he started seeing that, I think he realised her going out to work is not such a big nasty evil thing you know! (Jeannie, 50, education sector worker, 07/11/06)

In contrast, men were used to being alone or in pairs, outdoors, subject only to the weather, not restricted by other people's opinions, but working to fulfil their family's needs. Many men for that reason confronted this new way of life by limiting their participation as much as possible (Siimiuni, mentioned above, even moved out of the community altogether, turning his back to (the problems of) community life). The working environment is seen as unsuitable for Inuit men, because it means being inside most of the day, although according to Kiuga practical, hands-on employment could be more suited:

The environment up here is that men don't want to be inside. So as long as we're going to be in the North, I think it's always going to be like that. Males grow up wanting to be out on the land, if they have been exposed to it most of their life, they'll have trouble wanting to be inside. Unless they have a job making things, like if they were in carpentry or something, or outside job. (Kiuga, 55, senior government official, 07/05/07)

This view is shared by Mary, who says: 'our men are seeking the opportunity to feed people, it is natural for the men to be out hunting, to be outside, out on the land (Mary, 60, senior government official, 24/11/06). Wage work, apart from being indoors, also often means being subjected to authority, as we have seen, this is against traditional Inuit values. Donna says: 'men were more used to being in charge of themselves, it's

harder for them to go and work in an entry-level position. Women can go there and work their way up, they don't seem to be so intimidated by having a boss or having little authority (Donna, 60, government worker, 24/01/07) (this was also found by McElroy 1975:678). Schooling similarly is seen as unsuitable to males, whereas 'women tend to be more chatty anyway and are probably better at reading and writing and you need to have those kind of skills in the workplace. Many males dropped out of school sooner than women. [Now it's] mostly women who hold more permanent jobs' (Akulliq, 50, senior government official, 12/10/06).

These women's opinions support the view that men and women in Inuit society did not share the same habitus. This gender differentiation is something that is not sufficiently recognised in Bourdieu's writing (McCall 1992; Moi 2000). Further, with the new incoming forces in the Arctic, yet another habitus was imported, to which most women have now adapted more successfully than many men. In this situation we have (at least) three different kinds of habitus that are ascribed to by different people in the same society, which are successfully negotiated by some people, less successfully by others. Successful negotiation depends on the habitus becoming fully conscious as people attempt to switch from one to the other depending on the context. This is in contrast to Bourdieu's ideas of the habitus as something largely unconscious and naturalised (1988:783-784; 1989:18; 2002 [1972]:78-79). It becomes clear that Bourdieu's concepts are not easily applicable to a situation of change, where people are inevitably forced to reflect on their own behaviour as a result of exposure to difference.

Education in this new system helps Inuit women not only to do what needs to be done - which has become going to school, earning money and looking after the family financially: thus conforming to the status quo - it has also enabled them to challenge the cultural arbitrary and consciously work to reshape the habitus through the acquisition of the necessary cultural capital: thus confronting the status quo. We shall see a number of examples of this in the next chapter. As we have seen in the previous section, some women carefully maintain an equilibrium in the home, thus limiting their potential for altering the status-quo. To get more training in order to advance in the job-market, or to accrue more responsibilities, which might mean working late, or taking work home, or travel for meetings and conferences would upset this equilibrium, and would not be appreciated by some husbands:

Women get into a position and they just seem to stabilise there and not advance...I think that the role of the woman inside the family and inside the workplace is that they bring home that paycheque. It's almost like they achieve a balance and when they get to that balance they don't want to upset it, so to advance, which would require additional training that upsets it. So within the family it basically stabilises and stays that way. If a woman starts accumulating more responsibilities at work, she is likely to

go and do new things which her husband may not be very happy about. She may need to travel, and when she's travelling who's going to look after the kids? The husband will refuse to do that and that makes the woman turn down these positions, because why would you advance into something that you can't handle, because your husband's going to rip things up at home. Some women might be able to circle that, but ultimately it's their downfall. They advance to a level that they can't sustain and then something falls off the bridge, usually with very serious consequences for the women. (Paul, 60, education sector worker 24/01/07)

On the other hand, when a woman does advance on the job market, it might change her expectations of family life and of her husband's qualities, which might result in a break in the relationship. Donna believes that when women advance to higher positions it changes the balance in the family:

I think there's lots of women getting to be managers. Competent women and women with training, a lot of them got their training as teachers...When a woman is in a powerful job, she's going to have a different attitude at home. She might not put up with a guy quite as readily as she would have. Some women are getting... because there's opportunities now if you have those skills, you can be leaping up the ladder. And now how would that affect the family, well, as a clerk you might be quite happy with buddy [husband], but as an assistant deputy minister you may not be quite so satisfied, so it's changed the balance in the family. (Donna, 60, government worker, 24/01/07)

This is one cause of the existing societal tensions in the territory; in turn resulting in alcoholism and drug abuse and violence. Jeela says: 'men used to be the main providers. Since they don't do that anymore it causes anger on men' (Jeela, 45, education sector worker, 05/03/07). Similarly Akulliq opines: 'When Inuit women started to be more successful because they were able to get jobs, the men tended to become more abusive' (Akulliq, 50, senior government official, 12/10/06). Emma was aware of a couple who were combining wage work and subsistence activities, and was told by the woman that she saw her husband turning into an alcoholic. Thus according to her: 'The concept up here of women earning and the men doing carving and traditional things, is a great one, but they really need a lot more support to make that work' (Emma, 35, education sector worker, 04/10/06). Employment is one of the most powerful tools to remedy social ills but, as we have seen, not all types of employment are suited to and perceived as meaningful by different individuals in society. Emma therefore suggests there is also an immediate need for training, education and employment that will be attractive to males:

[The government needs to] work at ways to promote and get more men into the workforce. Positioning the work so that it looks attractive, or offering training, education. I heard the adult learning strategy that they're a just putting together is targeted at men. (Emma, 35, education sector worker, 04/10/06)

Akulliq similarly thinks the numbers of females in the workforce are a positive development, however, because of the difficulties men are having in obtaining employment it is not always easy for women to be working. She hopes that reinforcing male employment will help make society more balanced again.

Bourdieu has been criticised for his limited acknowledgement of gender relations in society and the way in which men and women experience the status quo differently (McCall 1992; Moi 2000; Jenkins 2003). He has also been criticized for his limited acknowledgement of the role of agency (Frow 2000; Joppke 2000): according to Bourdieu people are limited by the habitus to such an extent that they rarely question orthodoxy, let alone challenge it. The situation in Nunavut shows the importance of considering the gender dimension – in that cultural capital is acquired mostly by women and they have adapted with more success to the new, Southern habitus than most men – and the role of agency – in that through the acquisition of cultural capital, these women are now able to challenge or confront the status quo and create a more culturally sensitive society for their families, and both men and women. Women are thus challenging the limits of their habitus and recreating it to fit with the new reality of life in Nunavut, with its governance of large numbers of people, its links to the world economy and its system of formal education that they consider vital to the quest to ‘become somebody’. We shall see some examples of how they do this in the next chapter.

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#### 7.4 CONCLUSION

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This chapter has shown how, in traditional Inuit society, work was central to what it meant to be human. A person gained recognition as a person, as a man, as a woman, through performing useful tasks. Foreign influences changed people’s perceptions of suitable male and female roles, and wage-work came to be seen mostly as a male pursuit. However, from the 1970s onwards, women started to enter the labour market more frequently, and they were often seen by employers as more reliable workers than men. Currently, office-based wage employment is seen by the women I spoke with as more suited to women than men, because it requires being indoors for long periods of time and because it means being subjected to rules and authority.

The women I spoke with had their own ways of integrating Inuit values and ideologies, such as independence, the importance of making a contribution, the ideal of egalitarianism and hard work, into the current economic climate in the territory. Wage work is seen by these women as the most effective way of looking after their children and their families through the financial contribution it provides. It offers children the best opportunities and shows them the opportunities that are available in the territory. In this way women contribute to family and the future of the territory. Men however, don’t see sitting in the classroom and working in an office (or *iqqanaijuq*) as a valuable contribution, as in many cases there is no immediate, visible return. For that reason they find manual labour or subsistence activities (or *sanajuq*) more satisfying.

Through education and participation in wage employment, women have gained considerable cultural capital, which in many cases they use to actively try to affect change in the territory through various institutions and organisations. We will see a number of examples of women's possibilities to contribute to the betterment of society in the next chapter. This contrasts with the case of Siimiuni, taken from Searles (2001), who turned his back on community life and found meaning and direction in life in an outpost camp. However, doing this limited his prestige in the eyes of some of his town dwelling relatives and therefore also his ability to generate change in the community he left behind.

Traditionally, Inuit society was in balance with natural and supernatural beings and powers. Within the family a balance between husband and wife made for a stable economic and social unit. Currently, this balance within the family has been lost in many cases because of economic, social and cultural changes and another balance has become a primary focus in people's lives and narratives, namely a personal balance as a prerequisite for balance in the family and beyond. This personal balance consists of feeling comfortable as a person, comfortable with and proud of your cultural heritage; and maintaining traditional skills and values whilst embracing the opportunities that the context of current-day Nunavut offers. This personal balance, which can be seen as personal well-being, is the necessary precursor to healthier families and a healthier society. Following Freire (1998:106), people need to discover themselves, their place in society and the reasons for their situation before they can set about making changes for the better. A belief in personal worth and the right to a better life and well-being can be the start to becoming engaged in society and directing change, in other words to becoming empowered. The next chapter will consider how this is happening in the lives of many of the women with whom I worked.

## 8. WOMEN AND EDUCATION, POWER AND GOVERNANCE IN NUNAVUT SOCIETY TODAY

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This chapter will assess the continuing legacy of the Arctic history presented in chapter 2, and its effects on the people in the North. Whilst not denying the deleterious effects of colonisation on Inuit, I focus on the ways in which women in particular have empowered themselves to work at changing their situation, rather than portraying Inuit as powerless victims of this process (which Jenness (e.g. 1957:214) had a tendency to do, for a more recent example see Savard 1998:86-87). Personal pride and self-reliance were greatly influenced by policies of the Canadian government, leading both to a need for Inuit men and women to empower themselves, as well as to challenges Inuit society faces in this empowerment process. However, a number of the women I spoke with have, and continue to work on, recreating new institutions and structures to fit into an Inuit conceptual framework.

First I will focus on educational issues and how they have impacted on individuals, families and society and how people are now working on adapting education to the Inuit cultural context. I will use Friere's ideas of 'conscientisation' to frame understanding of the impacts of education on Inuit in Nunavut. Then I will investigate notions of power and governance and how these have been appropriated and reshaped in the context of the new territory of Nunavut. I will do this by presenting a number of portraits of the women I spoke with that illustrate their role in influencing and shaping this process. I suggest that the women concerned are actively creating a new habitus, using different forms of capital available to some women but not, or only to a smaller extent, to others. I suggest that some women possess certain forms of power which enable them to make these changes. Theories of empowerment are useful in providing a framework for understanding how these women have gained this power, and how they aspire for their work to effect change in their families, communities and the territory as a whole.

### 8.1 CREATING AN EDUCATIONAL HABITUS

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When schools were first introduced in what is now known as Nunavut, the Canadian government strongly influenced the Inuit to send their children to school by cutting the family allowance – only recently introduced – for families who did not comply with government wishes (Stabler and Howe 1990:266; Damas 2002). The introduction of schooling affected Inuit by disrupting family life, language and by creating an awareness of another world of dubious relevance to life experience in the North. Crago et al.

(1993:206) describe going to school as ‘a form of secondary socialisation’ which conflicts with the home environment. They further argue: ‘non-mainstream children have been expected to adapt their communicative patterns to the ways of the dominant culture’(Ibid.:220). Meeka (who was introduced in section 5.2) told me how she heard the story of a woman who was sent to school and did not understand why her father just turned his back on her. Much later she had come to understand that her father had turned away to hide his tears. Meeka’s father was also sent away to school, and she believes that this is the reason why he was inadequate in some aspects of his parenting towards her (see also Ball 2009:32). The pain he felt was passed on to Meeka, who now lives with and tries to understand her painful memories.

The language issue is one aspect of education that has had a profound and lasting effect on Inuit society. Martha remembers how her parents did not understand her homework and therefore were not able to share with her her feelings of accomplishment and pride of what she had done:

I used to be so proud but my parents...the schoolwork I was bringing home, it might as well have been in French, because they didn’t read or write English. (Martha, 45, senior government official, 03/07/07)

Leah puts the school experience for Inuit children and parents into a particularly telling perspective:

How can you support your child to be in school the whole time? When they come home they speak in English, you don’t speak English. It would be like a white person go to Chinese [school], and Chinese people tells them, your children has to be educated only in Chinese. Your children go to school and they come home speaking Chinese and you don’t understand your own children. (Leah, 50, senior government official, 27/06/07)

In addition to the language spoken in the schools, the curriculum used was taken directly from British Columbia and Alberta schools and as such was not at all relevant to life in the North. Jane remembers reading ‘Dick and Jane’ books, an American series, adopted by the Canadians, used to teach children how to read from the 1930s through to the 1960s.

In those years, the government started what you call federal day schools. And they had everybody, different age groups, all of young Inuit, like young people, all in one big classroom, like, we didn’t have grades or anything like that. They taught us how to read Dick and Jane. Have you ever heard of that Dick and Jane book? That’s what they taught us. (Jane, 50, health sector worker, 20/02/07)

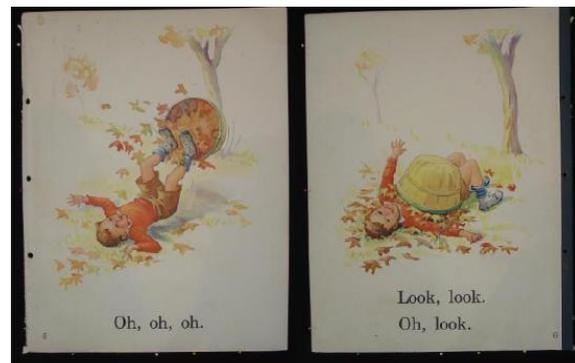


Figure 7: Dick and Jane

The series was about an American middle class family with three children, their dog, their cat and their adventures. There were no characters from other races and cultures in the series until 1965, which would have been after Jane learnt how to read. The illustration above, taken from the 1930s series of Dick and Jane books ([www.juliascollectibles.com/djpics40.htm](http://www.juliascollectibles.com/djpics40.htm)), shows Dick collecting leaves in the garden, a story which would have been unintelligible to Inuit children who grew up without trees and with no concept of ownership to land, and thus no idea of what a garden might be.

Recently, the problems associated with the schooling system have been officially recognised, and the institutions responsible have formally apologised. On March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1996 Nunatsiaq News featured the following newspaper article:

#### **RC bishop apologizes for abuses against Inuit students**

IGLOOLIK--Bishop Reynald Rouleau apologized this Tuesday to Inuit who were physically and sexually abused at the Joseph Bernier School in Chesterfield Inlet between 1952 and 1969. The bishop of the Churchill-Hudson's Bay diocese told about 70 former students gathered in Igloolik this week that he is "ashamed and outraged" at the conduct of people then working for the church. "By taking advantage of the trust that you and your families had given to the personnel of the school, the abusers perpetrated a profound violation against you, physically, emotionally and spiritually, but sexually as well," Rouleau said. "As bishop of this diocese I am ashamed and outraged that this happened to you. I apologize with all my heart for the role that members of the church took in all that."

Students praised the bishop for his courage and sincerity: "We applaud the church for taking this what we think is an important step in correcting the horrific crimes committed against the Inuit children," said Peter Ernerk, a former student who helped the bishop draft the apology. "It takes courage to admit that what the church stands for, and what they actually did were two different things."

But students also spoke out sharply against those who expected them to heal overnight, "instead of understanding, they always come back with the same old rhetoric--forget the past and go on with their lives," said Nick Arnatsiaq. "They don't understand how much we want to forget the past and go on with our lives like normal people." Another former student says he wants to forget his days of being sexually abused, but says sometimes the memories of his abuse are triggered by certain smells. He says sometimes when he is in an igloo, "I can actually smell the brother that abused me. It's not that easy to forgive and forget."

An 18-month RCMP investigation that ended in June 1995 found there was widespread physical and sexual abuse at the school. But the RCMP didn't press charges because the worst offenders--two priests who

would have faced 45 charges--were already dead. "There is no doubt in our mind that what was disclosed by the former students of the Chesterfield Inlet School during the police investigation was a serious case of child abuse," Rousseau said (Todd Phillips, *Nunatsiaq News*, March 1, 1996).

Two years later, in an apology to First Nations from the United Church of Canada the Right Rev. Bill Phipps said:

'We are aware of some of the damage that this cruel and ill-conceived system of assimilation has perpetrated on Canada's First Nations peoples. For this we are truly and most humbly sorry. [...] We reflect on the cries that we did not or would not hear, and how we have behaved as a church, we will never again use our power as a church to hurt others with attitudes of racial and spiritual superiority.' (Right Rev. Bill Phipps, Moderator of The United Church of Canada, 1998)

And on the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 2008, Prime Minister Stephen Harper apologised for the role the Canadian government played in the residential school programmes for Aboriginal children in Canada:

Two primary objectives of the residential schools system were to remove and isolate children from the influence of their homes, families, traditions and cultures, and to assimilate them into the dominant culture. These objectives were based on the assumption aboriginal cultures and spiritual beliefs were inferior and unequal. Today, we recognize that this policy of assimilation was wrong, has caused great harm, and has no place in our country.

The Government of Canada built an educational system in which very young children were often forcibly removed from their homes, often taken far from their communities. Many were inadequately fed, clothed and housed. All were deprived of the care and nurturing of their parents, grandparents and communities.

While some former students have spoken positively about their experiences at residential schools these stories are far overshadowed by tragic accounts of the emotional, physical and sexual abuse and neglect of helpless children and their separation from powerless families and communities.

We now recognize that, far too often, these institutions gave rise to abuse or neglect and were inadequately controlled, and we apologize for failing to protect you.

Not only did you suffer these abuses as children, but as you became parents, you were powerless to protect your own children from suffering the same experience, and for this we are sorry. (CBCNews.ca 11 June 2008)

These statements indicate the distress that was caused by the introduction of formal education. Jenny feels Inuit need to be able both to learn their own culture and use it in every day lives, and at work, rather than basing knowledge, life and work on Southern concepts. As a starting point this new society would thus require a review of the education system:

Educating Inuit people on their own culture, and go beyond: using their culture and language as part of their assets in promoting work, promoting cultural awareness, especially here in Iqaluit, where it's such a transient place and there are a lot of outsiders. Our young people are thirsty, they are hungry to find out about their culture. But where do they get that if they are living in their own apartments and living in their own homes as young adults, where they are not as involved as much, probably

because they don't have elders, relatives living anymore. I think having a learning institution, learning environment, more opportunities to find out and experience the skills that you need. We are still very much immersed in our environmental desires, like being outside, enjoying our own environment, as Inuit people, as we have always been. That is still very strong within us, even though we are not living to the same extent on the land anymore. We feel there is something missing, we feel that there is: 'there is something else there, what is it?' I think to some degree it is still that connection to our environment, and we enjoy going out on the land, enjoying the outdoors and so on. So there really needs to be more a balanced opportunity for our culture to be taught both the Western culture, Western culture meaning education, of course and going beyond, going global, we need to go global. But at the same time having strong pride in who you are. When you have a pride in who you are, anything is possible. (Jenny, 55, business-owner, 15/03/07)

Akulliq has had a long employment history in the educational sector and was responsible for creating culturally sensitive teaching materials as well as a northern curriculum:

When I first started teaching grade one in 1981 I could have been teaching a lot more about things more relevant for my students. Even though as Inuit we were still very much practicing the traditional naming and how we related to people by kinship terms, I wasn't bringing that enough into my classroom because I was using social studies curriculum that was developed in the west, based on qallunaat, I didn't know any better. So in a way I was taught to teach the *qallunaatitut* way of teaching, the *qallunaat* concept of family and or affirming the *qallunaat* family model.

The Baffin divisional Board of education had been established in '85 and I was asked in 1990 if I would consider applying for a supervisor school position and I told that person you're crazy! I have never been a school principal, how I am expected to supervise principals when I haven't? After a lot of consideration I thought to myself after all these years of challenges in education as an Inuk educator I really felt that I could help establish some things that Inuit educators needed within the system and that's why I took on that role to see if I could help lay some groundwork. Because Inuit education had only started in the mid '70s there really wasn't any teaching material, so when I was a classroom assistant, I had to make a lot of my own material, adapt material, adapt programs in our own time with demanding parents and sometimes Qallunaat colleagues and or the public who looked down upon Inuit, because things were very much in the developmental stages.

We had to address the staff turnover, lack of Inuit teachers, yet at the same time it was very stimulating and exciting to work with teachers who wanted to be there and develop programs with them. I wanted to organise a conference where you only had Inuit talking about teaching, pedagogy and education in Inuktitut. I really thought there was a need for Inuit educators to get together. We met for three days and it was a powerful powerful experience it was extremely empowering. It was all in Inuktitut, it was very uplifting and inspiring for all of us, just three days of meetings, just speaking in Inuktitut. We just wanted to think in Inuktitut, speak in Inuktitut, create in Inuktitut.

[After that I was offered a job where] I brought Inuit educators in twice a year and we held development workshops and readings and we were creating material and books and the other aspect of my responsibility was to look after the teaching and learning centre which was responsible for upgrading Inuktitut teaching material. Three Inuit were supposed to create material and publish books, Inuktitut books, yet at the same time expected to support schools in their Inuktitut programming and with what little resources we had, the dual role made it so challenging. And expectations were too great, so you know, it was just a system created to fail. The education system kept getting dumped on by the public, parents and DEA's and educators saying 'Inuktitut education is not worth it, it is taking away from the academics of what the kids need for today's world', so there were always clashes because of the academic expectations and the southern world imposing on those standards, so as Inuit

educators we were caught between a rock and a hard place. Like up to today, so that part during my career in education was the most frustrating and it still is frustrating. I was approached by the department of education in Yellowknife and the Baffin Board supervisor of school if I wanted to be involved in helping to set up an Inuktitut curriculum and so we set up a committee and I was co-chair and the members were comprised of Inuit educators from across what is now Nunavut, or the Eastern Arctic. So instead of becoming a language arts curriculum, our curriculum planning evolved into something that all schools could use, that all teachers could use, not just Inuit teachers. And as we started to define what topics should be in the curriculum we realised that we need to go out and interview the Elders, and we brought information back to our curriculum planning meetings. And it started to take shape, and throughout that whole process, we as a committee, I guess we were starting to address issues that had been put against us during our schooling and during the time that we started to live in the communities: the socialisation, the cultural change... We were addressing issues from when our parents and us had been colonised so it was like a cleansing process. Like the Qallunaat unintentionally were imposing themselves, and we didn't realise how much hurt that was making us feel. It helped us get back in touch with our older people, because we interviewed them, so our relationship with them, with our parents and grandmothers, the traditional knowledge that we had learned from them. Yet at the same time it also helped us to come terms with, and accept some of the ills that were put on us as a society. [We realised] that this curriculum would hopefully help the educators to be more culturally sensitive to the students that go to our schools. And the importance for the kids seeing themselves in the curriculum; in books; in the programs; seeing their language. So that was the way we introduced the curriculum and it was a powerful experience. But there were tremendous frictions at times too, because some of the southern teachers, took what was said personally and they saw their culture as being blamed and or pointed fingers at through this process and they just didn't realise the impact that colonisation has had on society. (Akulliq, 50 senior government official, 12-10-06)

Mary pioneered setting up education committees in order to support Inuktitut classes in school in the early 1970s and created a teacher training programme for Inuktitut teachers in the early 1980s, because 'our young ones were not keeping up with the Inuktitut. [They] were speaking Qallunaatit all the time, in school and at home.' (Mary, 60, senior government official, 24/11/06). However, Akulliq's memories point to the limitations of Inuit teachers working in a southern institution with a southern structure in a southern curriculum. Early on Akulliq never considered questioning the way in which children were educated. Traditional knowledge had been devalued by powerful incoming forces and the superiority of southern ways was not questioned, as they were firmly entrenched in this new power structure.

Furthermore, having been given the opportunity to teach Inuktitut to children in schools, the limited resources available for the delivery of the classes resulted in Inuit teaching assistants creating their own teaching resources in their spare time, thus adding considerably to their workload. Kiuga experienced this when she worked as Inuit teaching assistant. She wanted to ensure that children valued Inuktitut as equal to English, and struggled to make the materials attractive and age-appropriate:

It's just that it's never really had full support in the schools, even though they say, Inuktitut is important. We can't have the same reading materials for the kids from K to 12! We need to have constant new things for our kids. As Inuit teachers, we always

had to make our own materials. And in order for kids to value Inuktitut, especially at High School level, it was a challenge, because the kids needed to see English and Inuktitut equally. Because, if they start to see them...over the years they had seen Inuktitut being less than the other. We really had to make them shift their thinking that Inuktitut is just as important, just as equal as English. So a lot of our material we had to make them attractive, for them to really want to learn. (Kiuga, 55, senior government official, 07/05/07)

Akulliq wanted to work on improving this situation. Through her work as a supervisor of school principals, through the conference she organised and through the creation of a new curriculum she and others started to question the superiority of southern knowledge and the English language and different kinds of cultural capital started to become more recognised. Akulliq's work was instrumental in enabling people to revalue language and Inuktitut knowledge. Through her work, she succeeded in bringing people together and the realisation of their shared goal of challenging the status quo in education was empowering and more effective than doing this as individuals. By basing teaching, the curriculum and knowledge on culturally appropriate concepts and traditional ways of life, southern power structures were questioned.

Akulliq recalls the criticism from different levels in society, who were concerned because schools and teaching materials needed to address learning of academic skills as well as improve knowledge of culturally relevant history and knowledge at the same time. Some also questioned the value of Inuktitut knowledge and language and how applicable it is in contemporary Nunavut society and the world. This is a clear example of a clash between different cultural and symbolic capitals. However, Martha is very happy with the current schooling system in Iqaluit, and the culturally appropriate features that are included in it:

Yes, actually with the little ones, I'm very envious of how they can be taught throat singing and drum dancing and those kinds of things, because when I was going to school it was all about learning English, all English. So it's really a nice change to see little ones learning those things, because I know when I was growing up those things weren't stressed, it was all about learning English. (Martha, 45, senior government official, 03/07/07)

Alicia (a southern Canadian woman with Inuk husband) also tells me how pleased she is to see her children participate in culturally relevant activities:

Things that my daughter did last year (she was in the English stream of Kindergarten) there was an awful lot of culturally relevant activities that she did and that she was taught. And that made me really thrilled, since my spouse is Inuk, my children are Inuk, to be able to see that in there. (Alicia, 50, education sector worker, 03/11/06)

Thus, partly through Akulliq's work, Nunavut now has a Northern curriculum, which is hoped to make schools more culturally sensitive (cf Aylward 2007) and to establish pride in children. At the same time, schools can't afford neglecting academic skills that

will be recognised worldwide, they are thus still working on creating an educational habitus in which northern and southern knowledge are combined and valued equally.

One of the women I spoke with is currently working on language and culture issues in a government advisory position. She is of the opinion that education in Nunavut today is still not sufficiently based on Inuit culture or language. This shows that the creation of an Inuit educational habitus is far from over:

My job is realising that Inuit language and culture will be entrenched in education and society. [But] not only is the opposition doing everything they can to not make it happen, but there's also obstacles within the organisation that are making it difficult to happen. With this position, I've just learned so much from it, so I've enjoyed that part because there's been so much personal growth in my learning, in my abilities and that kind of thing. But it's been so frustrating at the same time, to realise how poor the education system is here and I mean no wonder we don't have very good leaders, with an education like that! That's based on not their culture, not their language, that creates really bad identity crises I'm sure. Drinking problems and drug problems and I don't know... a lot of the MLA's have committed crime in the past, all that kind of stuff. I really like Nunavut, I really like living here. I would love to just stay here, for the rest of my life, with my family, because I'm comfortable with how much stronger the culture is here in Nunavut. I love that they wear *amautiq* and that I can wear *amautiq*, as opposed to in Greenland, where I'm originally from. They don't do that, they don't even use *ulu's* anymore. The *ulu's* I've given them as presents are hanging on the wall. And I tell them: 'I didn't give you that as an ornament, you have to use it!' 'But what do you use it for?' 'To cut food and you know, whatever, it doesn't have to be traditional food, you can cut your vegetables with it, I don't know.' But I really like that about here, it's just that I'm scared for my *panik*. I feel I had a better education, based on Greenlandic language... So I'm finding myself not really being sure about whether my *panik* should grow up here. While I can see really good things about growing up here, like academically it's pretty bad. (Ivalu, 28, government advisory position, 03/04/07)

The education system in Nunavut has been from the start and remains a problematic issue. Primary schools struggle with the inclusion of Inuit culture and language, which is important for the children to feel secure in their identity and proud of their heritage; however, teaching resources are still limited and relatively expensive. In addition, there is still a shortage of Inuit educators who would be qualified to teach using Inuit culture and language as the basis for the curriculum. The schooling system being a colonial structure, it is always going to be a struggle to make it fit traditional pedagogical structures. As such the cultural capital possessed by the schooling system itself clearly out-weighs the cultural capital of traditional learning structures. The power possessed by the schooling institution has forced the Inuit to recreate the institution and make it more culturally appropriate, rather than taking the traditional pedagogy as the starting point and incorporating southern academic skills. This underlines the power and the value of southern cultural and symbolic capital in contemporary Nunavut society.

High Schools have only recently opened their doors in all the small communities in Nunavut and this has meant that more Inuit now graduate from High School<sup>15</sup>. However, the drop-out rates are still much higher than in Southern Canada. College and University education probably remains the most challenging sector in the territory. The college provides a selection of vocational courses in various communities, which means many students now can take courses relatively close to home. However, there are still obstacles for many, due to some unique characteristics of the territory of Nunavut. First, the lack of infrastructure means the only travel available between the communities is by air, and the fares are prohibitively expensive. Therefore, for someone with family responsibilities, the only real option is to go to college in the home community, and Arctic College cannot possibly open campuses in each community in Nunavut. Secondly, there are high rates of teenage pregnancies in Nunavut. Whilst for many women parenthood is part of the drive to get an education and provide the child with the best possible opportunities in life, for those without access to reliable childcare, parenthood is a serious impediment to educational success. Finally, the funding requirements of the Arctic College to the government are another problem, which in some cases might lead to students 'being helped too much' and courses being made too easy to be of any real value.

Nowadays, Iqaluit offers a selection of vocational college programmes, two running university degrees in collaboration with universities in Southern Canada (teacher education and nursing), in addition a law degree ran from September 2001 - June 2005, and plans are underway to repeat this very successful 'educational experiment'. The Arctic College aims 'to strengthen the people and communities of Nunavut by advancing the life-long learning of Northern adults through high quality career programmes, and by making the benefits of traditional and southern science more available' (Glendenning and Cowan 2005:7). The college has three main campuses in Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay, in addition to 24 community learning centres, distributed across the 26 communities, and offers basic adult education and literacy programming, career oriented certificates, diplomas, job-readiness, pre-trades as well as general interest, personal, professional and development courses.

The law degree was offered by the Akitsiraq Law Society in collaboration with the University of Victoria. The students took all the requirements of a law degree and in

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<sup>15</sup> Berger reports a 25% graduation rate for 2005 (Berger, 2006), whilst the census of 2006 shows a 31% graduation rate (Statistics Canada (Released March 13, 2007). Nunavut (table) 2006 Community Profiles. 2006 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 92-591-XWE Ottawa, <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/data/profiles/community/Index.cfm?Lang=E.>)

addition took Inuktitut language training, cultural awareness programmes, an advanced course on the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and worked with elders to bridge the gap between Inuit and Canadian law. The ten women and one man who graduated from the programme after four years, are all committed to using the knowledge and skills learned to work with and for the people in Nunavut (Wright 2005:116).

The population of Nunavut is too small to grant the creation of a university in the territory. However, collaborations with Southern universities have been successful in providing Inuit students access to a university degree. Still, these programmes to date are only offered in Iqaluit, and the choice is very limited, as only two programmes are offered yearly and one has to date only been offered once. The two courses offered in Iqaluit in collaboration with Southern Universities, namely the Teacher Education Programme and the Nursing programme can both be seen as extensions of the traditional female role of raising the children and caring for the family. For that reason, it is perhaps to be expected that the large majority of students who graduate from these are females. For male students and other students with different interests and academic ambitions, the territory has nothing to offer, and the only way they can achieve their goals is by leaving Nunavut, family, friends and everything familiar, and applying to a University in Southern Canada.

## 8.2 CONTEMPORARY CONFLICTS OVER INUIT POWER AND GOVERNANCE

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According to Bourdieu, the power structure in society does not enter the consciousness of people who live in that society, it is considered to be natural, and therefore goes unnoticed: 'There exist objective structures independent of the consciousness and will of agents, which are capable of guiding and constraining their practices or their representations' (Bourdieu 1989:14). However, in the context of colonization in the Arctic, the power structure that was introduced was perceived by Inuit as very forceful; it was unknown and therefore very noticeable. This power structure took over in all major decisions regarding Inuit lands and lives and reaffirmed its own power through the introduction of new policy, whilst Inuit were considered to be 'benefit[ing] from its generosity' (Chabot and Duhaime 1998:445). Government officials (usually from Ottawa), who were the representatives of this new power, didn't always 'display an understanding of Northern lifestyles and native cultures' (Minor 2002:76). But to Inuit moving into the communities it soon became clear that there was a clear ethnic division

between the Qallunaat with power and the Inuit without (Mitchell 1996:117; Emberley 2001).

Within the communities however, new internal divisions started to appear within the Inuit population. These were between those Inuit who worked for the Qallunaat and became 'contact agents', and those who did not<sup>16</sup> (Mitchell 1996:299; Valaskakis 2005:104). These contact agents not only increased their material wealth considerably, they also gained respect from the Qallunaat and gained the power (in the eyes of the Qallunaat) to speak on behalf of other Inuit, something that traditionally was never done. In Bourdieu's terms, these people gained economic capital, in the form of material possessions and money; social capital, in the form of their relations with Qallunaat; cultural capital in the form of knowledge of the English language and Qallunaat organisational and lifestyle practices, whilst at the same time still possessing Inuit knowledge and status as a result of access to Qallunaat hunting technology (Valaskakis 2005:105). They also, crucially, acquired symbolic capital, in that they were recognised as official spokespersons for the Inuit community by the people in power. This made them much more powerful than other Inuit, but their power vis-à-vis the Qallunaat was obviously still limited as a result of the unequal distribution of volume and structure of capitals between Inuit and Qallunaat at that time. Despite this, Inuit were very conscious of both the power of the structure and the divisions which it had created and this resulted in a desire for change amongst these people with both Qallunaat knowledge and Inuit prestige. They thus started the long negotiations of the Nunavut Land Claims agreement, the outcome of which has shown that 'major change in the situations of aboriginal peoples can indeed occur if sufficient will exists – both political will and determination on the part of Aboriginal people and good will and flexibility on the part of those in positions of political authority' (Hicks and White 2000:2).

However, this agreement didn't signify the end of foreign influence on governance in Nunavut, nor of Inuit challenging authority of the state. Inuit are still fighting to increase their control over resource development and management (see Bloom 1999 describing Inuit influence in the Arctic Council; Nuttall 2000:406). In fact, it seems to have generated a more general challenging of authority and the authoritarian structure of government which is currently in place in the Territory. This is mainly because the

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<sup>16</sup> Igah argued Inuit who were less successful in providing for their families moved to the communities first, took the first employment opportunities, the best housing and took on representative roles, thus moving into powerful positions whilst traditionally they would not have been respected. Abraham Okpik also writes 'the bum boys' acquired the prestige and 'left the old houses' for the traditionally respected successful hunters (Okpik 2005:289).

Nunavut Government is moulded to the model of southern bureaucracies and governments, rather than to the 'traditional' model of Inuit authority (Tester and Irniq 2008:57). For this reason in order to be successful in this model, one needs to have southern skills, obtained from an educational institution moulded to a southern model. Because there is a shortage of Inuit in the territory who possess these skills, a large percentage of people working for the Government of Nunavut are actually Southern Canadians (see figure 1, Chapter 7). Thus even today, 'Qallunaat control many of the important positions in the community' (Searles 2001:123). Therefore there is still a need to 'challenge the vestiges of colonialism' (Mitchell 2005:93) and for reform which will incorporate different cultural knowledge including the 'powerful ideology' of subsistence to structure 'social relations, community leadership and moral authority' (Duhaime, Searles et al. 2004:313)

This raises interesting questions, because whilst a 'plurality of visions of the world provides a base for symbolic struggles over the power to produce and to impose the legitimate vision of the world' (Bourdieu 1989:20), at the same time 'symbolic relations of power tend to reproduce and to reinforce the power relation that constitutes the structure of social space, [because] holders of large amounts of symbolic capital hold a monopoly over institutions which officially determine and guarantee rank' (ibid. :21). In other words, according to Bourdieu, the powerful maintain their position, by declaring whatever cultural and symbolic capital they possess as the most valued in society. However, in the case of Nunavut, through recreating and revaluing 'traditional knowledge', is the government, comprising individuals who gained their positions through their formal, southern education, working at devaluing their own knowledge and with that their own position in society? In a way, the construction of the Government of Nunavut is an interesting case study of what happens when 'genesis is reconstruct[ed]', showing all 'the conflicts and confrontations of the early beginnings' and 'question[ing] the possible' (Bourdieu, Wacquant et al. 1994:4). Selected material from a group discussion with four government advisory workers shows some of the conflicts and confrontations that Inuit women in these positions deal with in their lives and in their work on a daily basis.

During a discussion with four women working in government advisory positions, we spoke about obstacles to success in their working lives:

I think we need a younger crowd get into leadership, because they're usually the ones with actual technical experience and maybe even more education. But there's been so many Elders and people in general, talking against having young leaders, which I find...I do appreciate that younger people are inexperienced, but they still have valuable information and contributions that they could make. Working here it's been frustrating dealing with the supposed to be leaders of Nunavut, but also the top

people, even Inuit women, the top people at the government that just disappoint the crap out of me. Because they are supposed to be for Inuit language, for Inuit culture, but they're so short-sighted! Trying to work within the four walls I'm not really able to accomplish the things.

When you say young people, I think you need to clarify, even people my age, sort of like, forty, anyone under forty is considered too young for most boards. But yet, when I look at the current leadership like the Tagak Curleys [an Inuk leader, politician and businessman who played a prominent role in NLCA negotiations] they were around as political leaders in their twenties! And so they've been allowed to be in the political arena, and it's as if they just keep setting the age barrier higher and higher and they act as the benchmark. So I look at some of the people on our board and they were on regional boards at my age, but yet now... I think they have a vested interest in holding on to those positions of power and they have no interest whatsoever in opening it up and letting younger men on the board, forget women on the board. So it's generational and its gender.

I think another one of the obstacles I find at work here, is that you're going to meeting after meeting after meeting and not having any time to do anything but go to meetings. I get a sense that Nunavut is more about, the look: the meeting and the talking. It looks as if that is almost a result rather than the required actions. I mean, it's just so ridiculous. I do understand the value of some meetings, but it's just to provide the thoughts, and then you say: 'OK, let's go away and do some work.' Maybe those meetings are to hide the fact that nobody really wants to accomplish the goal.

I'd rather be doing work than going to meetings all the time. I grew up with a family of politicians to begin with, and I've always hated meetings. When I go into a meeting my mind starts wandering. I have a hard time listening and contributing to meetings. Well, I would say it depends on the meeting, because I would say 90% of them are in fact like that, they are too slow. But it's kind of fun when you go to one where you just roll up the sleeves and let's scrum. But the worst ones I always find are the ones that are the most formal, whether it be an AGM or a board meeting, where the formality, it becomes like, the process just kind of disconnects, you have to go through the chair or if you're not at the table you have no voice. (discussion 4 women, government advisory positions 03-04-07)

The very existence of the Government of Nunavut is in direct opposition to traditional Inuit values of egalitarianism. At the same time, the Government of Nunavut exists precisely to preserve Inuit culture and provide the inhabitants of Nunavut with culturally appropriate services. In a focus group with three students ideas of status and prestige related to different employment opportunities were discussed, they found it very difficult to rank jobs from high to low prestige, however according to them: 'we know that the Leg [people working at the Legislative Assembly] is way up top, that's all we know!' (focus group, 3 students, 18/10/06). According to Tester and Irniq (2008:57), within this government structure, 'recognition, promotion and power are related to merit, defined not by age and experience with Inuit lands and culture, but by recognised educational and academic credentials.' This is exactly what Anne told me:

I think the process in obtaining employment, the process is quite foreign. It's very process oriented, and because a lot of Inuit are not taught to sell themselves, I think that becomes a barrier to a lot of Inuit. And I think the credentials, the requirement for credentials only focuses on technical training, and not so much on skill development through experience. (Anne, 50, business owner, 30/01/07)

This is interesting in the light of the above discussion, because the women I spoke with in contrast said that the leaders were lacking technical experience and education,

and that this was one of the reasons why they were disappointed in their leadership. Thus, rather than acknowledging the importance of knowledge other than technical experience (in bureaucratic processes) and education (in the southern curriculum), the women in the above discussion were looking to their leaders for exactly these kinds of skills, so they would feel more capable of working with them. They were disappointed to find that elders and other people in the community were not supportive of young people in leadership, because elders are considered to hold more valuable knowledge based on their life experience. At the same time, they were working hard to get other 'more traditional' skills and Inuktitut knowledges recognised, but were not getting the support from the people in top positions (despite official documentation which seems to suggest the contrary e.g.: Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated 2007).

When analysing this aspect of the discussion critically, it appears to me that the success of current leaders might have been based on more traditional authority of experience and knowledge of the land. The women who participated in this discussion, had all been educated in Southern Canada and spent time living outside the territory, but speak Inuktitut fluently and, in the case of my two 'sewing friends' are to some extent learning traditional Inuit skills. They feel they cannot work with the current leaders because they are conservative, they don't understand how the system works, they don't know what work the bureaucrats are doing. I suggest the miscommunication might be related to the fact that these women now consider their knowledge as more important, more valuable - or at least more suitable for running a government - than the knowledge held by the leaders of the territory. But then again, this might only be because, as mentioned above, the government is based on a Southern Canadian governance model, rather than a newly created structure based on Inuit values.

However, this is not where the conflicts end, because these women not only value their own education, they also greatly value Inuit knowledge, culture and language, and work on revaluing this knowledge, not only in their own lives, through learning traditional skills, but also officially, in work, government and society. Their positions in bureaucracy are secured because they possess southern knowledge and education. Thus it seems like they might be chopping away at their own foundations. Further, they are aware that the leaders of today have a vested interest in staying in power, and therefore closing access to their positions as much as possible. This seems to indicate that they are to some extent successful in determining 'the legitimate vision of the world', in that they are supported by the elders in Nunavut society, who in turn possess large amounts of cultural capital. In this sense Nunavut might be seen as a victim of its own success in that it was in the spotlights worldwide as the most comprehensive land claim to date.

Maybe this was seen by some people, and especially by the leaders of Nunavut as a goal in itself. Thus, Nunavut might indeed be about 'looking good', or even just about having come into existence, rather than about making things better in reality for Inuit in the territory.

The dilemma faced by Inuit in Nunavut then, is how to merge this traditional knowledge into the context of modern governance structures. This traditional knowledge has been termed Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (see also Chapter 5), described by McGrath (2005:166) as 'all aspects of traditional Inuit culture including values, world view, language, social organisation, knowledge, life skills, perceptions and expectations. It is the Inuit way of doing things: the past, present and future knowledge, experience and values of Inuit society'. Arnakak sees IQ as a tool to perpetuate and advance Inuit culture and society (Arnakak 2005:177). According to Ukallianuk, this knowledge is largely generated and maintained by elders (2005:181). In order to incorporate this knowledge in modern governance structures, it would have to be converted to fit Euro-Canadian structures and values. Aboriginal people and their knowledge are empowered only to the degree to which they conform to these structures and values. They are thus empowered not on their own terms but largely upon terms set by Euro-Canadian society (Ellis 2005:74-75; see also Sejersen 2005; and Barker 2008 amongst Indian peoples in Canada). Using IQ to create government policy on Inuit terms would mean to oppose the practices of Euro-Canadian institutions, which would limit their power and legitimacy. A letter to the editor of Nunatsiaq News on March 5<sup>th</sup> 2004 expresses precisely this concern:

You see, we don't want to change the world - we just want our rightful place in it. And the easiest part is that we simply want it back. But it seems we need to assimilate non-Inuit ways to assert ourselves as a people within a system that might not do anything about it for us otherwise (Name Withheld March 5 , 2004).

To give Elders a voice in modern governance, there are twelve chairs in the Legislative assembly set aside for them. An Elder can take a seat any time and they are allowed to address the speaker directly. However, McGrath (2005:165) notes that the seats remain empty, indicating the incompatible differences between the traditional Inuit ways and the modern Western-style government. More importantly, he notes that there is some confusion and uncertainty about what the Inuit way is, and as Leah points out IQ is 'the way you think and the way you live, sometimes you cannot write it down' (Leah, 50, senior government official, 27/06/07 cf Mariano Aupilaarjuk, quoted in Loukacheva 2007:81)). Moreover, traditionally Inuit lived in very small, sometimes very isolated camps; therefore, beliefs and customs were not necessarily shared across regions or even families (cf Wenzel 1999:117). As a result the idea of local knowledge as

homogenous for the whole Territory of Nunavut, clearly decontextualises this knowledge and does not do justice to the diversity of knowledge as possessed by different people in different areas (Sejersen 2005:69). This is precisely the mistake the Canadian government made when they relocated people between vastly different Arctic regions, because they considered conditions and thus knowledge to be the same across the whole region (McGrath 2007).

### 8.3 EMPOWERING PROCESSES: CREATING MEANINGFUL SELVES

In an article on Inuit principles of healing and working together, Qamanirq and Kinnon (2006:v and 6) translate the Inuktitut word '*pilimmaksarniq*' as 'empowerment'. According to them 'Inuit can and should use all sources of appropriate information, gathering it and using it to right social and spiritual wrongs, and to work toward a balanced and strong Inuit society.' In a recently launched website from the Inuit Heritage Trust (website launched October 16, 2009) 'moving forward' is included as one of the Inuit values that 'underpin the social structure of Inuit culture,' something that can only be achieved when people find pride and balance in who they are and where they have come from.



FIGURE 8: MOVING FORWARD

The internalised oppression that resulted from colonisation is illustrated very clearly from an incident Akulliq remembered. She told me that her father once asked her if, during her travels for work, she was accompanied by a Qallunaq to supervise her. The question shocked her, because it made her realise that he believed that Qallunaat are the only ones capable of making decisions:

And my father asked me one time: 'is there somebody that goes with you when you travel, do you have a Qallunaat supervisor that you go with?' and that question said a lot! Like, it said that he still relies on Qallunaat, that they are where the buck stops, so I don't think he really realised how much my jobs were different now. So it was interesting later on, trying to understand where he was coming from. Realising my

parents generation comes from a different mindset and that they will see Qallunaat as 'the father' or the major decision maker. (Akulliq, 50, senior government official, 12/10/06)

Given their history, the headway made by contemporary Inuit is incredible. With the creation of the territory of Nunavut, other people in the territory also realised things could be different. The women I spoke with all felt very strongly that they were responsible for making change happen. They themselves termed this development 'empowerment'. They felt able to empower themselves and free themselves from an unhealthy relationship. They saw the need to empower themselves from the 'internalised oppression' of the colonial regime and they became aware of the oppressing structures that still persist in Nunavut society today. New values and new ways of dealing with conflict have been incorporated into community life and organisation and as argued in the previous section this has created a desire for change in many levels of Nunavut society. Many Inuit still struggle with the legacy of colonisation; the loss of language and culture, the loss of pride in who they are, the loss of purpose for those unable to earn a living. Just as Batliwala (2007:560) proposes, some of these women seem to be engaged in a collective struggle against oppression, against societal perceptions of who should have access to certain resources and who should not, and against the structures that reinforce these perceptions in order to remain in power.

One of the women advocating change, raising awareness of indigenous rights worldwide, is Tanii, who I met for the first time in the museum in Iqaluit, where we both attended a talk on environmental preservation. Not long after that she was planning on going abroad for a few days to attend a meeting and she asked me to look after her house whilst she was away. Her house was situated on the edge of town, big windows overlooked the tundra stretching out in front and Frobisher Bay down below. While I was there, on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November, I wrote in my diary: *'I'm sitting here on the floor of Tanii's house, in front of the sliding doors opening out to the deck out the back. It's 12:45, the sun is already getting low, but it has been bright today. The barbeque on the deck, that Tanii asked me to cover when I got here a few days ago, is now covered in a layer of snow. Icicles are hanging down the side of it, where the sun has melted the snow, but the air froze it again before it reached the ground.*

*The snow is sparkling, little humps formed by rocks - visible until two days ago - throw blue shadows on the snow. Here and there a few brave little plants and grasses still stick their heads out of the snow. An airplane breaks the quiet and draws white lines across the bright blue sky. Ahead lies the bay, so calm and still, patches of ice are slowly forming in the cold Arctic winter, a few little islands are dotted around.*

*In the distance the white hills are veiled in a line of fluffy cloud, coloured red only a few hours ago, when the sun rose, and painted everything pink.'*

It wasn't until July that Tanii found some time in her busy schedule for me to interview her. The landscape had transformed drastically and we went for a walk across the spongy tundra towards Apex, where we briefly stopped at her son-in-law's for a banana, as Tanii was getting low on energy. As we walked we talked about life, love and stress, Tanii told me how she could feel the tundra soaking up the stress with every step. On the way back we sat down and talked about her life, her experiences and her view of the future, until we got too cold and had to move on:

Do people feel like they are part of the system? Do they feel part of it and can they get engaged in it? Do they feel a sense of connection and engagement? They don't feel a real connection or that it's making some kind of effect on their daily lives or on the community. What kind of Inuit society are we trying to create in this new world order of globalisation that has hit us so quickly? So that everybody feels like, 'Oh here's my strength, I can offer this kind of situation to this work,' so that they feel like they fit in that role and they have things to offer. And that's for everyone, that's not just for bilingual or trilingual, but how about the unilingual and everybody, the young and the old. So I think the big fundamental questions have not been asked, in terms of what kind of Inuit society are we trying to create?

Really, for me I think, if our young people are committing suicide, obviously there's a huge dispiritedness and a lack of life skills to be able to cope with stress, and to be able to cope with all kinds of things. Why would we not be thinking in terms of what is it that we could be building as a society to build the spirits of people? Is it going to be just jobs? We shouldn't just be in the business of developing resources and developing institutions, but we should be in the business of building back the people. So that they can be whoever they want to be and do what they want to do. But from a position of strength and really knowing who they are and doing what they want to do that feeds their soul, rather than it's just going to be the quick buck. And historically, has mining and resource development solved our problems in other parts of the world? And apparently not, so those are my concerns...And at the end of the day, how will they feel about the very land that they have cherished and revered through our ancient culture if they're digging it up? I don't know. Those are more questions I have then answers.

I think if we can be innovative and creative, to really think about what we could do to build this Arctic as the paradise of the world, that can create wealth and health and abundance, I don't mean millionaires, because we don't all want to be millionaires, abundance in the best of ways, not just with money, but with spirit and culturally and all of that. I think we have it in us. If we could really just start to create that and be innovative. (Tanii, 55, retired, 16/07/07)

Tanii recognises the importance for the people to feel like they are a 'part of the system' and to feel 'connected and engaged' with it. However, she is cautious about economic development through mining that could make the territory a large amount of money very quickly and would likely bring opportunities for male employment, but that would destroy the environment, which is at the very core of Inuit culture and identity. Importantly, one of the pillars of IQ (Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit – Inuit Traditional Knowledge) is *avatimik kamatiarniq*, which is the responsibility to leave the

environment as natural and intact as possible for future generations (Arnakak 2005:178).

Tanii talks about 'building the spirits of people', the reappropriation of Inuit values, laws and culture is seen as a key means of making the people of Nunavut healthy again, and proud of who they are: thus building their spirits. This is also recognised by Igah:

We really need to go through the process of cleansing. For us to become proud and healthy again, and to take on all the positions and to raise our children well, we have to be proud of who we are as a people. We can't keep on wishing, 'oh, I wish I was a white person, and I wish I had the DM's (Deputy Minister) position and I wish I had all this education.' No, it's a distorted value, it's a distorted view of how the world should be. It's presented to us from a Southern viewpoint, from a Southern perspective: 'these are the values and this is the life and this is the kind of person that you should be.' And where are those images coming from? They're all coming from a different culture, different people. It's not good, it's not healthy. And you want people to be healthy. It cannot become healthy, until we as a people are healthy again, and happy with who we are as a people. (Igah, 45, justice sector worker, 07/06/07)

The private journey Jeela made in her life provides a good illustration of how this pride of cultural knowledge is being revived and is changing people's perspectives. Whilst Jeela used to be embarrassed about the fact that she did not go to school until she was 15, she now is proud to say her parents taught her and were good teachers and believes that it might have helped her in attaining the high levels of education that she did at a later age:

I used to be embarrassed that I never got to kindergarten. Now I'm really proud of that, that I stayed home with my parents, until I was 15, I'm proud to say that now. I don't think I missed anything, because I still have a BA degree, and some other diploma's and I don't think...sometimes I think, what would have happened if I had gone to school when I was 5 years old, like my younger sister did. When a child is born before January, they normally go to school when they're 5 years old. And I always thought, will I still have a BEd, if I had got to kindergarten? I always wondered, because most of my friends and my relatives in my age group who had gone to school, most of them don't have degrees. I know that in the bottom of my heart, if you raise your children the way you want to raise them, the way you want to educate them, parents are the best teachers. I think my parents were good teachers. (Jeela, 45, education sector worker, 05/03/07)

Akulliq believes the creation of Nunavut has already created a much stronger sense of pride in the culture than there was previously. Young children - boys and girls - are now able to celebrate their culture, to perform traditional skills like drum dancing and throat singing, and valuing the symbolic role this culture plays. However, she regrets that this symbolic value that is now attached to cultural celebration and performance is somewhat removed from the reality of actually living the culture (cf a discussion of the changing symbolic meaning of dogs by Lantis 1990):

But there is more pride now, since Nunavut, there's been more celebration of culture. What were once customs are now seen as some things that you can perform with, like throat singing, drum dances, the traditional forms of celebration and what used to be entertaining in the past, it has become more symbolic. And because our schooling has mainly been in English in High School til now - there is more Inuktitut in the

elementary grades, primary grades – I think culturally the younger generation, my daughter's generation, are romanticising and symbolising cultural customs and aspects more than we are and that is becoming a way of looking at our culture, because they never lived it and never practiced it. (Akulliq, 50, senior government official, 12/10/06)

But, as Tanii recognises, there is a 'huge despiritedness', which is partly due to what other women termed 'victimisation'. Naomi admits that she used to see herself as a victim, and blamed others for her situation. At that time she was a heavy alcoholic. However, once she realised that she was able to do something about her situation she stopped drinking. Sometimes, however, when facing too much opposition to reaching her ideals, she can see that it is much easier and more comfortable to blame others and wait for help. This view results in people passively waiting for others to make life better for them, since they are not the decision makers. Naomi is also concerned with the way many Inuit see themselves as victims, because only if people realise they have the power to change their own situation will they be able to make a better life for themselves:

I have been to pretty much every community in Nunavut, and in every community everybody they all identify themselves as victims. And people want to stay as victims, they don't see anything beyond that. And I was one of them, for a long time, until I got sick of myself. Decided to do something about it, I let everybody else take care of everything else. But I took back my power, did something about it, stopped being a victim. Everywhere you go, everybody is a victim. Very few people don't identify themselves as victim, like everybody else did something wrong to them. It's about getting rid of being a victim, realising that you are a victim and doing something about it, getting out of victim mode and finding out who you really are. Becoming empowered. (Naomi, 50, government advisory position, 03/04/07)

Naomi's concerns are shared by Ditte, she says this attitude will result in a loss of self-reliance and responsibility, whilst the only person that can make someone happy is that person him or herself:

And also I think this thing that Inuit think that this new society is going to solve all their problems, there's this expectation, so they give up their self-reliance. Wow, that comes in a bad circle, because then there's this rescue, blaming... the responsibility for the well-being is misplaced. Ultimately, no matter what happens, we have responsibility for our own happiness, and that we must never give up. And just remember we have the power to make ourselves happy. (Ditte, 45, business owner, 07/06/07)

Rannva, who employs seamstresses from the women's shelter, has found that this employment can help change someone's perspective:

She told me that he had stole the money and harassed her and basically acting like a pimp. And then, two months later, which is a few days ago, she had moved away from her boyfriend and then she moved back and she told him: 'the remote control is broken, you can't control me anymore and if you try to charge the battery, I'm out of here!' So I said: 'Wow! Yes, big, big change!' And I think the fact that we can talk about it and just acknowledge it, that provides options for some. And I think, really, there's lots of talk about: 'oh, they should stop being abusive, blablabla', but I think as much, the only thing that the women really can do is build their own self-respect and say: stop. Because there are two sides to it, there is the side that is being bullies, and those that are victims, and the victims have to stop being victims and say: stop. Get

out of the situation. But of course, they have to know that they are worth it. And that's what's really wonderful with my work, because I pay them cash, so they can see that it's really worth it! They do! Plus they're being creative, so they can see that that's their own, a place in themselves. That's theirs, that is beautiful and valuable. 'yeah, poor you, but you've got power.' You've got to build that power. Put the focus there. View and build the power, the self respect and self-value. (Rannva, 45, business owner, 22/06/07)

Education is also a powerful means enabling empowerment. One of the students from the law school programme felt empowered by what she had learned and come to understand about her own situation:

Law school also taught me how to be more assertive. How to fight for myself. I have rights, I have a right to a quiet house, I have a right to rest. Like I said, I was very traditional, so I was always saying yes to my husband even if I didn't feel like doing anything, so law school has taught me that a person has a right to say no. And if I say no, that person I said no to has an obligation to respect my right. So that's when I started to think that I'm not a steppingstone, I'm not a mat, I'm not a maid (quoted in Matthijsse in preparation).

Once personal empowerment has been achieved, the processual character of empowerment becomes clear as children, other family members and friends are influenced. Again, this can be illustrated by the experiences of the students from the law school program:

[My children] were learning so much about law and it was benefiting them in their intellectual world, what their rights are and what the issues are, because everything ultimately is related to law. (ibid.)

And the benefits of the education of these students also reached further as several of the students saw it as their obligation to their community and the territory, to apply their new knowledge. This fits both with the idea of empowerment as a process and working in order to contribute to society, these students wanted to use their acquired knowledge to affect change in the territory of Nunavut:

It has helped me soo much in every aspect of my life, of my children's life, of the life of the community of the life of all of Nunavut, because we have become role models. The law school has given me a sense of ability. That I have a right as a person to steer my future, or to choose a career or to choose a way of life.

I've always been a bit of a social activist and feeling more empowered to try and achieve those goals. Just trying to change the social dynamics, the hangover from the colonial era and the impacts that it had. Whether its poverty and social issues. Just trying to empower a nation I guess. We can't wait any longer, because knowledge is power. We cannot be kept in the dark anymore, we need to start taking part in developing policies and legislation that affect Nunavut and Nunavummiut. This is one way we can take part. (ibid.)

As argued by Freire, education helps people understand the world and the situation which they are in and can be the start of change through 'conscientisation' (Freire 1998:106). However, at the same time, schools are tools used to impose values and beliefs by those in power, which, as also argued by Bourdieu (Bourdieu 1986:48;

Lamaison and Bourdieu 1986:119; Bourdieu 1988:783; Bourdieu 1989:23; Bourdieu, Wacquant et al. 1994:15), often results in the oppression of less privileged persons. Nonetheless, relevant and appropriate education can lead to a process of 'conscientisation', creating opportunities for empowerment, and an understanding of the structures one is in and how they can be made better and less oppressive (Freire and Macedo 1998:55). One of the students of the law school programme clearly supported this idea when she said:

In order for you to make something better, you need to find out how it functions, where does it come from and how come it is the way it is. And I think the law programme did that very well. (quoted in Matthijsse in preparation)

Igah, who we got to know in Chapter 5, not only challenged expectations of Inuit women and their roles in society, she also planned to challenge the Federal Government and their breach of conduct with respect to the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.

I plan to secure Canadian sovereignty over the Arctic and that's the plan I have. In the near future I plan to take countries to the International Court for not following their conventions with Nunavut. I plan to take the federal government to court for many things, such as not implementing the land claims agreement. I'm looking at much broader rights, not just individual rights of people. I think where I could be of real assistance is when it comes to securing more rights for Inuit when it comes to fishing, when it comes to sealing. Fighting against Greenland, Greenland has too much of the quota for fish, compared to Nunavut. I want to secure the mineral rights and other revenue rights that Nunavut is entitled to, when you look at the gas, all the minerals, everything that will be happening in the future. I plan to devote as much of my time and education for Nunavummiut as much as possible. I don't think that I would accept anything less. (Igah, 45, justice sector worker, 07/06/07)

Igah continues to say that having the territory of Nunavut, instead of the province of Nunavut, works to maintain the inequality between Nunavut and the rest of Canada. According to her, it is proof that the people of Nunavut are still colonised and still do not have the same rights as people in southern Canada:

The territory of Nunavut, why on earth don't we have the province of Nunavut? Why are we not given the same kind of powers? Because we are still a colony, we are still treated like a colony. That's unacceptable. Why couldn't we be treated like the province of Newfoundland? They have very similar landscape, they don't have all the trees, they live on sealing and fishing, why don't we get accorded the same status? What would be the answer to all the problems that we have today? The answer is: the process of decolonisation. It's as simple as that. It's not a bad word. The fact is that we were colonised. All these values, laws, everything was imposed. We led a beautiful life, it was harsh, it was very tough, but that's the life we led. (Igah, 45, justice sector worker, 07/06/07)

Just as we saw with governance structures in the previous section however, empowerment similarly is dependent on striking a balance in life between the different gendered and cultured influences in the territory. Women globally are often seen as more capable of solving conflict and reconciliation (e.g.: d'Estrée and Babbitt 1998; Lazarus and Taylor 1999) because of certain characteristics generally attributed to

women. For example, d'Estrée and Babbitt (1998) identify a relational emphasis, a moral focus on care and responsibility and empathy for the other's position, as important ways to break down mistrust and polarisation between opposing groups. They also argue that women are more comfortable with the expression of emotion, and since this is an important component of conflict, it needs to be acknowledged and expressed in order to bring negotiation forward. Lazarus and Taylor (1999) argue that the position of women in caring professions places them at the centre of community and at the beginning of building a society. These experiences seem to be shared by the Inuit women I spoke with.

#### 8.4 FROM CULTURAL HEGEMONY TO CULTURAL PLURALISM

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The long term residency of Southern Canadians in the territory led to many mixed marriages. Especially for those women in mixed marriages, and for those children with parents with different cultural backgrounds, the importance of connecting to both cultures is stressed by many parents. But even for someone with two Inuit parents, Southern culture and values are vital in obtaining an education and career and thus being able to be independent, at the same time, Inuit culture and values are vital for a healthy personal identity and self esteem. Thus balancing the two cultures is important to be able to cope with the sometimes contradicting messages sent out by two different cultures.

Emily (an Inuit government worker) talks about the importance for her personally to balance the two cultures in her life, one the culture of her heritage, and the other the culture in which she is working. She says that when she takes what is good from Inuit culture and what is good from Western culture, she is balanced as a person:

And that's what I see as my success is balancing my culture, but also what I see is right from non-Inuit cultures. It can be challenging, but I think actually, how I see it is that I take what's good from Western culture, and what's good from Inuit culture, and that's what balances me. (Emily, 40, government worker, 15/05/07)

Pitsiulak worries about transferring her culture to her children, her problem is that she has been through the formal education system and for that reason she lost some cultural knowledge and is not able to transfer it to her children. However, through her work at the friendship centre (see Chapter 2), where traditional skills workshops are held on a regular basis, she is still able to expose her children to the traditional way of life including the diet. Pitsiulak, wants her children 'to take advantage of both worlds that they are experiencing:'

Because I was already exposed to the Western culture, the formal education system and losing my culture, because I was losing that I couldn't really transfer it to them.

But I made a commitment to myself that I would speak Inuktitut to them. At least give them that. But they're still exposed to the traditional way of life, hunting, the diet. I guess I want them to have a formal education, but also know the culture. My expectation is for them to speak the language, to know the culture, but also combine both cultures to take advantage of both worlds that they're experiencing. (Pitsiulak, 50, health sector worker, 22/03/07)

Anne is also in a mixed marriage and she agrees with Jeela that her children should marry the two cultures the best they can:

I expect [my children] to respect the balanced life. Because I am from an Inuit background and I know I'm in a mixed marriage, what I have always valued is that my principles and beliefs, Inuit principles, be honoured and respected by my children. That my children respect both cultures and try and marry the two cultures, the best way they can. That has been first and foremost...because I have felt it...I have felt it since becoming a mother, how little reinforcement there has been for Inuktitut outside the home. And I think if anything that has to be my strongest advocate, you know, that's what I have always fought for. Because I have always wanted my children to be able to communicate with my parents, that was most important to me. (Anne, 50, business owner, 30/01/07)

Julie, a Southern Canadian married to an Inuk man, talks about the importance of being able to role model skills from their Inuit heritage. She also wants her children to have 'the best of both worlds' and wants to make sure that they understand that they can learn their heritage at any time, just as she is still learning about Inuit culture as a adult:

But to do the more cultural things that I want my children to learn...that's kind of always in my mind, trying to role model for my kids, so they will have the best of both worlds. So that, even if they don't know how to do something from their culture, their Northern culture, their Inuit heritage, that they can still learn, the same as I can still learn. So that's the challenge for me, role modelling. (Julie, 50, government worker, 15/05/07)

Jeela, married to a Qallunaaq, has picked the best things from her culture, and the best things from her husband's culture in order to create the family's own culture:

When I was raising my children, I tried to get the best things for them, and I pick out my own culture the things I treasure and also the things I know they work for anybody and I use them to raise my children. And I also take out some of my husband's culture and best things from him to raise my children and we create our own culture, because it's a mixed marriage, and we create our own culture within our family. (Jeela, 45, education sector worker, 05/03/07)

Balancing these two cultures makes it possible for the women I spoke with to cope with the reality around them. However, men seem to be less successful at this balancing act. In balancing different cultures, women are able to start with the recreation or reinvention of a personal, cultural and community identity. However, in the case of Nunavut, this recreation and reinvention of an Inuit identity might actually reinforce the sense of loss for Inuit males. Whilst traditional female roles are relatively easy to reconstruct and apply in the modern context and others can be pursued alongside wage employment, references to traditional male roles seem rather to emphasize the

difficulties of combining the traditional with the modern for men in present-day Nunavut.

This disjuncture has contributed to the very serious problem of male suicide in Nunavut (see for example Harvald and the late Jens Peder Hart Hansen 2000:316; Tagornak 2003:7; Haggarty, Cernovsky et al. 2008; Kral, Wiebe et al. 2009), indicating the great distress that is felt by many individuals. Akulliq links cultural change with the high rates of suicide:

For survival you needed to have a positive outlook in the past, and you still do. But with all these changes the suicides have been one of the most negative aspects of the cultural change. (Akulliq, 50, senior government official, 12/10/06)

The disproportionate occurrence of suicides in Nunavut is clearly shown by this figure, taken from a presentation by Hicks and Bjerregaard:

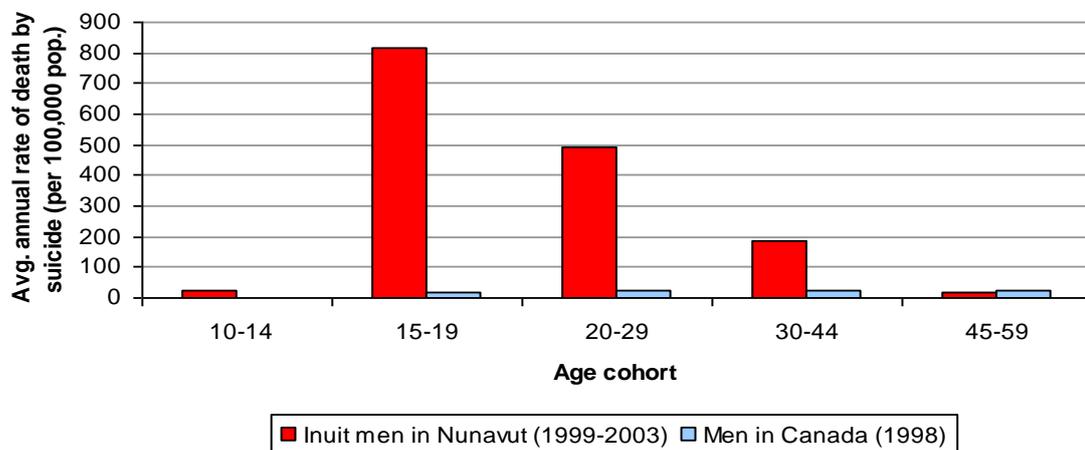


FIGURE 9: RATES OF DEATH BY SUICIDE BY INUIT MEN IN NUNAVUT AND ALL MEN IN CANADA

(SOURCE: HICKS AND BJERREGAARD MARCH 2006)

Arnakak (2005:180) puts suicide in context as follows:

Try to imagine being born in a world where your parents are grossly dependent on a system. As you grow up, you realise that they do not even speak the language of the system. By the time you reach 15, you realise that the education that you received is useless. Then, you realise that your parents are making fun of the way you speak and you are yourself not speaking English very well. It is this state of being that I am trying to address, because I see suicides happening every month. Death is a constant companion. And that is not normal. I am trying to create the right environment for a fully functional human being, psychologically integrated and in possession of the tools needed to participate fully in his or her existence.

The figure below shows suicide in Nunavut is a gendered as well as a cultural issue:

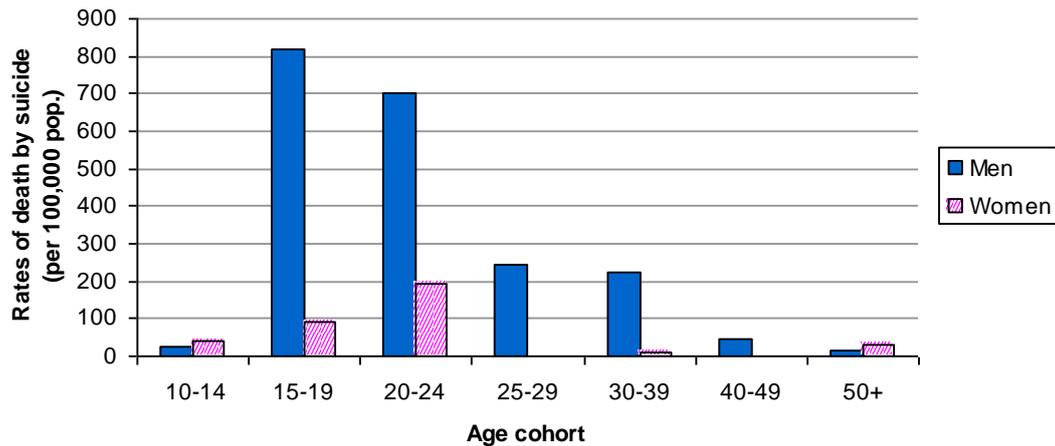


FIGURE 10: RATES OF DEATH BY SUICIDE BY NUNAVUT INUIT, BY SEX AND AGE COHORT, 1999-2003

(SOURCE: HICKS AND BJERREGAARD MARCH 2006)

But despite the challenges and serious problems that people in Nunavut are currently coping with, Martha has great expectations of the future for today's young Inuit. She considers the journey that her parents and grandparents made amazing and their accomplishments impressive, and now that the younger generation is encouraged to graduate from High School and College or University, their accomplishments are going to be even greater:

The next generation I think is going to be unbelievable...in all possible ways. I grew up with parents that had seen...that had gone from living on the land to settling into a small community. When they first started settling in my father was an RCMP guide by dog team! And when I look at today, in a short life span, today, [the schoolwork] my child is bringing home is much more advanced at that age, grade level, compared to myself, from what I remember. So that's another thing that I have to remind people, I know that sometimes they're feeling that our school system is behind...compared to when I was going to school, it's much more advanced, I like to remind people that. And also I'm a product of some formal schooling, I hadn't finished and that's why I'm saying, imagine the next generation, who have parents who encourage High School graduation, but not just High School graduation, but to go off to University and College. That's why I said, they're just going to be amazing and accomplish...We've accomplished so much in such a short period, I think, when you think about it. We settled into communities not so long ago and here we are, we have our own government and there's challenges of course, but realistically I think we've accomplished quite a lot in a short period. (Martha, 45, senior government official, 03/07/07)

The following newspaper article from June 29<sup>th</sup> is a good illustration of how different influences and cultures are mixed in everyday life in Nunavut. The article relates the story of an elder from Igloodik, who went out hunting, but got caught when the ice started melting. After extensive searches the elder was finally found after having been gone from the community for a month:

**June 29, 2007: Igloolik holds out hope for lost hunter  
“He’s knowledgeable and he can survive.”**

CHRIS WINDEYER

Searchers in Igloolik aren't giving up hope for Enoki Kunuk, the 81-year-old elder who hasn't been seen since he went caribou hunting June 1.

But even though a long-awaited stretch of clear weather allowed the aircraft to search 80 per cent of a targeted area north of Gifford Fiord between June 23 and June 25, no trace of the elder was found. The airplane has now left the community, Quassa said.

Local volunteers had been searching the area by land, but the land is no longer passable by snowmobile, the mayor said. A few parties of searchers remain on the land and will continue to

"The community is still very hopeful to find him," he said, adding the elder was born in the Gifford Fiord area where the search is concentrated and is very much at home on the land. Kunuk was also travelling with a kamotiq loaded with supplies.

"He's knowledgeable and he can survive," Quassa said.

On that same day, the CBC reported:

**Missing for a month, Igloolik elder found alive**

Last Updated: Friday, June 29, 2007 | 3:21 PM CT CBC News

An 81-year-old elder and hunter from Igloolik was found alive Thursday, after four weeks of air and ground searches.

"We found his KAMOTIQ and snowmobile first, and then we found him beside his tent," Kunuk's son, Mathusalah Kunuk, told CBC News late Thursday.

Kunuk said his father waved up at the plane, looking healthy. A helicopter with medical staff picked the elder up later that evening. Enoki Kunuk left Igloolik on June 1 to embark on a caribou hunting trip about 100 kilometres north of the hamlet. When he hadn't returned home four or five days later as expected, family and friends began searching for him.

Two air searches failed to locate Kunuk, including an official search involving military aircraft that was called off last week.

"It's been a month, and for an elder to survive that long all alone, that [tells] us that's how Inuit survived without any assistance from the outside world," Quassa said.

Quassa said he believes Kunuk was stranded as the snow and ice melted during his trip and it was too far for him to walk home.

"One particular dream did tell us that he's in a valley, his snowmobile is there," he said.

"Nobody can see him, and we had flown over that area quite a few times. But this time around we went back to that same area, and sure enough, he's there."

This story combines many threads of tradition and modernity. First, the elder went caribou hunting, a traditional pursuit. He travelled by skidoo and *qamutiq*, a mix of modern and traditional technology. When he didn't return, the search included planes and helicopters, the news was aired on the radio and it was reported on in newspapers and on television, all aspects of the modern world. But while all this was happening in the communities, the elder was faced with rapidly melting ice, which made travelling

conditions very difficult, something that Inuit families have dealt with for centuries when moving from their spring camps to their summer camps. And while he was surviving using his knowledge of the land, he waited for modern technologies to bail him out, as his old legs could no longer be relied upon to bring him all the way back to the community. His location was communicated to a family member in a dream, when the modern technologies had failed several times to spot the elder in that very location. Upon Enoki Kunuk's return to the community, many were filled with pride that traditional knowledge of the land is not forgotten, and a traditional community feast was held to commemorate his return.

Whilst this is a unique story, it provides a clear illustration of the current situation in Nunavut where two cultures co-exist. At times this coexistence is harmonious, at other times it is uncomfortable and at other times still the two cultures are in direct conflict with each other.

We have seen that the effects of colonisation in Nunavut include disempowerment, stress and trauma. Many women in Nunavut do not feel able or capable to change their situation; they feel victims of a foreign system and blame others for their problems. This discourse, as pointed out above, is not conducive to action and change. Putting the focus on the strength and abilities people possess, as advocated by Ditte, 'has the potential to facilitate positive transformation and social change' (Bartlett, Iwasaki et al. 2007:2372-2373).

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## 8.5 CONCLUSION

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This chapter has shown how some of the women I spoke with have taken a lead in creating a new, modern Inuit society. The creation of an educational habitus is hindered in many different ways, not least by the power inherent in the education system itself, which forces Inuit to adapt their pedagogy to fit the modern education system, rather than adapt Southern pedagogy to fit Inuit educational structures. Women working within the governance structure are experiencing the same challenge in the context of Nunavut governance. Again, the foreign structures are adapted and restructured by the inclusion of IQ, rather than taking IQ as the starting point and fitting Southern governance structures within this framework as appropriate.

According to Bourdieu, 'the different types of capital can be derived from economic capital, but only at the cost of a more or less great effort of transformation, which is needed to produce the type of power effective in the field in question' (Bourdieu 1986:53-54). Instead, leaders in the territory of Nunavut might have had to give up a lot of traditional prestige in order to fit in the contemporary power structure. This power

structure was initially imposed on Inuit, without their input and Inuit 'perceived it as natural and accepted it' (Bourdieu 1989:18), as they perceived the incoming forces as more powerful, more capable of making decisions and therefore naturally deserving of authority. However, although initially education was aimed at assimilation into Canadian mainstream culture, this education also made some Inuit aware of certain 'obstacles to change and their 'raison d'etre" (Freire 1998:55). Thus, although education is always aimed at reproducing the dominant ideology (cf Aylward 2007), it also acts at unmasking it (ibid.:91). Some of the women I spoke with realised that the structures within which they were educated and working -the power to produce and to impose the legitimate vision of the world - were themselves socially constructed. Furthermore, they based their struggles to change the status quo on their realisation that in their lives they had been influenced by various visions of the world (cf Bourdieu 1989:18-20), which provided them with knowledge of viable alternatives.

However, whilst different ways of life and ideologies are represented in contemporary Iqaluit, it is not just a case of choosing one or the other. The real challenge is to incorporate different visions of the world to create one workable vision, in which new educational structures, governance structures and family and identity structures are sensitive and meaningful to all different people represented in this 'cultural and ethnic crossroad' (Searles 2001:123).

## 9. CONCLUSIONS

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This thesis has presented a snapshot in time of women in Iqaluit; a vibrant, multi-cultural (if relatively small) capital city, in which many different lifestyles and backgrounds are represented, addressing female employment - a topic of global concern. I believe the stories of the women I spoke with clearly show that generalising about 'Inuit women' is hardly useful. These women have hugely varying experiences and lifestyles and, as mentioned in Chapter 3, they do not fit neatly into an overarching theory. Using a grounded theory approach, the stories of the women have taken the lead in my search to increase my understanding of their lives in the Territory of Nunavut. The narratives of Inuit women, women of mixed ethnic descent and women in mixed marriages are included in this thesis, reflecting the changing population dynamics and thus presenting new information, about a location which perhaps would traditionally not have been considered suitable for anthropological research.

The ways in which women ordered their lives, the options and opportunities available to them and their relations to others were all, in some way, related to power and authority. I therefore used a number of Bourdieu's theories (or tools as he calls them), which were designed to tease out the tension between structure and agency in any society. To my knowledge, the tools used in this thesis have not been extensively applied in Arctic research before, but they did provide me with a greater insight and understanding of social and political interactions in these women's lives. However, after critically engaging with them, I found they were not capable of explaining all the subtleties of lives lived in this new territory. I have argued in this thesis that the tools created by Bourdieu are not fully compatible with situations of social and cultural change, nor do they take gender into account sufficiently. I am not alone in this belief (see e.g.: McCall 1992; Frow 2000; Joppke 2000; Moi 2000; Throop and Murphy 2002; Webb, Schirato et al. 2002; Jenkins 2003), but as Bourdieu argued his theories could be applied anywhere in the world, any concise analysis of research material using his theories further helps to advance social scientific knowledge.

Perhaps it is important to explain that using grounded theory does not imply approaching the field with a clean slate. Every researcher is influenced in many ways through childhood, education, relationships with people both outside and inside the field, the institution which supports their work intellectually and the funding bodies financially supporting the research. My education was ground in a Western society, where I was taught according to a Western curriculum and where Western conventions

and ideologies were instilled on me. Although I'd like to believe I am quite open-minded, I had to learn appropriate behaviour in Inuit society. For example, I never quite felt comfortable about walking into someone's house without knocking, even when I was invited.

When analysing the capitals in Inuit society it becomes clear that there are no straightforward shared ideas about what constitutes social, cultural and symbolic capital, and which types of each are the most valuable (Chapter 7). This is because there are different ideologies working side by side in contemporary Nunavut society and I would argue that the Government of Nunavut has not yet created a dominant ideology which everyone shares and abides by. The mixed economy which characterises Nunavut society has resulted in a situation where 'traditional cultural capital' on its own is not enough to be successful; 'modern cultural capital' is needed in addition. And vice versa, 'modern cultural capital' is not enough on its own. I have argued that, because of the southern basis of many institutions in the territory, 'modern cultural capital' is more useful in gaining financial capital, but not for attaining other goals such as respect and status in Inuit society. There are also different types of social capital in contemporary Inuit society, namely relations which enable connections with traditional institutions, let's say 'traditional social capital'. And relations which enable connections with bureaucracy and organisational institutions in the territory, or 'modern social capital'. I would argue that 'traditional cultural capital' is more dominant in Nunavut than is modern social capital. I believe this to be true because people who are well connected in the modern world, still put family needs above anything else. In addition, 'traditional cultural capital' connects people with resources that are at the core of their identity, such as family histories and country food<sup>17</sup>. Finally, it appears that 'traditional cultural capital' enables unwaged family members to put pressure on waged individuals for support, which the latter, despite their 'modern social capital' seem to be unable, or unwilling, to refuse.

This is of course a simplification, as there are many positions on the scale between traditional and modern, and those with footholds in both are possibly best off in terms of access to financial, cultural and symbolic capital. In this light, it is interesting to note that many successful women are actively learning traditional skills, and through them they give meaning to these skills and create their importance, possibly also for others, who view these women as role-models. The different types of capitals can also provide some people with limited or no access to one certain type of capital, to find a niche in

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<sup>17</sup> For a discussion of food and identity in Nunavut see Searles 2002

which they are able to act. Amongst these one may count southern Canadian transitory workers who possess 'modern' types of capital, which enable them to work and earn a living in the territory, but have no 'traditional' connections, which would enable them to befriend locals and earn their respect. Another example would be unilingual or uneducated Inuit, who lack 'modern' connections, but are able to rely on family relations for survival.

This same story to some extent also applies to the idea of the habitus (discussed in Chapter 6 and 8). Because of the many different influences, people can choose which rules and ideologies to follow. As a result there are many different ways in which people organise and make sense of their lives; thus the habitus is not widely shared between different people in Iqaluit. This also means that the habitus is more confrontational, as people are constantly reminded that other people have different opinions and ways of doing things, and the habitus is not unconscious for that reason. For example, I have shown how men and women have adapted to change differently, in that women are more likely to initially conform to incoming structures by going to school and participating in the wage economy, resulting in their ability to confront the authority structure; whilst men are more likely to initially confront the incoming structure by rejecting formal education and limiting participation in the wage economy. Not only is this the result of their previous habitus, it also resulted in a radically different habitus in contemporary Inuit society. This doesn't however mean that Inuit women are in no way restrained by ideology and power relations. Their agency is still constrained by their family, the expectations society as a whole and relatives have of them, as daughters, mothers or wives and what they themselves consider to be appropriate behaviour, which is mediated by different ideologies. Thus, Tracey and Ruth look after their families financially, as a matter of course, because mothers do what's best for their family, and that means providing for them financially. Monica on the other hand believes mothers should spend their time with their children and therefore feels guilty when leaving her children in the care of others when she has to travel for work-meetings.

The confusion about the value of the different capitals and the conscious and particularized character of the habitus feeds into a weak cultural arbitrary in Nunavut society, which becomes apparent from the ways in which women challenge different aspects of structure and authority (Chapter 8). I have used empowerment theory in this thesis to explain areas of women's lives and experience that other theories don't achieve as effectively. Some of the women have been able to challenge the cultural arbitrary, they gained knowledge and used this knowledge to empower themselves and change the

situation for others. In this way they both helped individuals by passing on knowledge, by being a role model and by changing society.

Inuit women are more likely to have a combination of both traditional and modern types of capital. This is because they are more likely than males to be successful at school and in the wage economy, and at the same time they are committed to learning traditional skills such as sewing. This combination of capitals enables them to move successfully in the mixed character of Nunavut society and economy. The possession of this combination of capitals also presupposes possession of different types of knowledges and a realisation that the different knowledges they possess are not considered equal, not just in the world, but not even in their home territory. For this reason, they advocate change in the form of decolonisation of people, of bureaucratic structures, of the education system, the relationship between the territory and the federal government and the rest of the world.

This thesis began by asking whether it is possible to reconcile post-modern and environmental determinist paradigms, or to discern where the two might meet. The environment provided a constant backdrop to the lives of the women interviewed. Initial reasons for contact between the Inuit and outsiders were a result of the Arctic environment being rich in resources, and this was one of the reasons why the Arctic, and the Inuit living there, were colonised. Also, the realisation that these resources were part of the land that the Inuit had occupied for thousands of years, and that therefore the Inuit should have rights to control these resources led to political development of the Inuit, which in the long run resulted in the negotiation of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. Thus, initially the environment, which had sustained the livelihoods of generations of Inuit, caused them to lose their influence over their own lives and futures and the future of their land, it also created an awareness of power inequalities. The connection of Inuit with the land however, became the basis for the land claim, and through this, this connection also became the symbolic backbone of people's identity, thus the environment was the basis for empowerment. Nowadays, the loss of this connection is seen as one source of many social problems in the territory. Therefore, reconnecting people, most notably young Inuit with the environment is seen as having important healing properties and is seen as a means for personal empowerment. The environment has thus always affected change and possibilities for Inuit living in Nunavut.

The role and actions of the researcher makes it impossible for research to be disengaged (see also Bourdieu 1988:784), however, engagement often has the tendency to be partial as a result of unequal power relations between the researcher and the

researched. As a result the researcher and their knowledge are generally considered as the ultimate authority, thus limiting the researched and their knowledge in their input and influence (e.g. Hampshire, Hills et al. 2005). True engagement therefore is only possible when rethinking the source of knowledge and the power structures inherent in them. My analysis, for that reason, has not just centred on the stories of the women with whom I spoke, but also included analysis of historical sources, previous ethnographies and the political history of Nunavut, as well as the position of my home country (which discussed and again chose to ban the import of seal products during my stay in the field), my institution's country (with its early and continuing influence on Canada) and my discipline (with its history as coloniser's informants).

Upon reflection, the sewing lessons, the elders who provided guidance and the women with whom I went to the classes, are what remains most vividly in my memories of my stay in Iqaluit. As with working sealskins, this thesis came about after many different stages of hard work; scraping away layers of outer skin, that prevented me from seeing what was underneath; chewing over my material to soften it up, make it pliable and help me understand the messages conveyed inside. This thesis is the product of sustained engagement with women, their activities and their lives. It has taught me traditional Inuit skills, contemporary Nunavut struggles, and it has taught me about myself.



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## APPENDIX I: GLOSSARY

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*Aajiiqatigiingniq* - consulting those who are more knowledgeable

*Amauti* – hooded women’s parka, with space in the back for carrying a baby

*Aqausiit* – singing loving, playful chants to children

*Arnaugavit* – you’re a woman

*Attaqi* – scraping the oil of dried skins

*Aupilattunnguat* - Purple saxifrage

*Avatimik kamatiarniq* - responsibility to leave the environment as natural and intact as possible for future generations

*Illumiug* – play house

*Inuit Quajimajatuqangit or IQ*– Inuit traditional Knowledge (literally knowledge that has been known for a long time, but that is still relevant today)

*Inuk, Inuuq, Inuit* – person, two people, people

*Iqqanaijaq* – to work

*Kamik, Kamiik* – skin boots (sealskin or caribou skin) (*kamiks* – these days a lot of people use the English plural instead of the Inuktitut one)

*Panik* – daughter (*Panikkulu* – dear daughter)

*Pijutsirniq* - responsibility or social obligation to someone or the community.

*Pilimmaksarnik* - learning by doing, acquiring skill or knowledge, a child learns best by observing and imitating, therefore this is a family element.

*Piliriqatigiingniq* - learning by feeling and testing out ideas, through interaction and partnerships, this is thus a social aspect of learning

*Qallunaaq, Qallunaat* – white person, white people

*Qammutik* – long sled with crossbars

*Qanuqtuurunnarniq* - learning by reflecting and experiencing

*Qimmiq, Qimmiit* – dog, dogs

*Quammaq* – sod house

*Qulliq* – seal oil lamp

*Qunguliit* – Mountain sorrel

*Sana, Sanajaqtaqtunga* – to make/create, I am making/creating

*Sinainga* – flow-edge

*Ulu* – crescent shaped women's knife

## APPENDIX II: PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT

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English Version:

### **Inuit career women, experiences and perceptions**

The research will look into the effects of women's entry into the labour market on relations in the household, between kin and in the community. With women in the Arctic becoming more active in wage employment and more interested in further education unavailable in Nunavut, society will need to adapt its expectations of women, of families and of relations in the household.

The results of the study will be shared with other researchers, local organisations and the Government of Nunavut, presentations outlining the results will be held in the community, which all interested individuals are welcome to attend. Participants will be asked to share experiences, opinions and feelings about female employment and any issues that are related to it. Because I would like the research to effectively address those issues that are of concern to the local community, participants will be asked which concerns related to female employment should be investigated, how these should be investigated and the most appropriate analyses of findings.

Though every effort will be made to ensure protection of the identity of participants and statements made by them, in small communities it is hard to anonymise individuals completely, but outside the territory anonymity will be assured. All participants will be asked to comment on transcripts of interviews and analyses of raw data, so as to reflect their personal right to access, amend and obliterate any (parts of) the materials offered to the researcher. Any comments made in confidentiality, or comments that have the potential to harm the participants will not be used in communicating the results.

Although the research findings will be shared with government officials, changes in government policy in response to research findings cannot be assured. However, the research will raise awareness amongst those people who are interested in the issues under review.

*"I have been fully informed of the objectives of the project being conducted. I understand these objectives and consent to being interviewed for the project. I understand that steps will be undertaken to ensure that this interview will remain confidential unless I consent to being identified. I also understand that, if I wish to withdraw from the study, I may do so without any repercussions."*

Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness' signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of consent: \_\_\_\_\_

If you wish to discuss this form or any part of the research at any time, please do not hesitate to contact me by e-mail on [mathilde.matthijsse@durham.ac.uk](mailto:mathilde.matthijsse@durham.ac.uk)

Thank you very much for your interest in this study,

Kind Regards, Mathilde Matthijsse



## APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW GUIDES

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### 1. Issues related to female employment

Through this interview I would like to get a more complete picture of your career and career path. The way you combine you career with childcare. Issues relating to employment in Iqaluit in general and female employment in Iqaluit in particular.

We will start with some questions about you career.

You are currently working for ..., what is your role?

Could you briefly describe your career path up 'til now?

Opportunities  
Decisions,  
Motivations  
Goals

How do you manage to combine your career with childcare?

In what ways does your employer support and or help you?

I would now like to move on to a few questions about employment in Iqaluit.

Could you describe typical male and typical female professions available in Iqaluit?

What is your opinion of the distribution of male and female employment opportunities in Iqaluit?

Finally I would like to move on to issues related to female employment in Iqaluit

Which issues related to female employment do you think need investigation?

In workplace  
In home  
In society

What are the immediate problems/obstacles working women in Iqaluit face?

### 2. Family histories

Through this interview I would like to get some information about the roles of different members of a family in the recent past and in the present, so that I will get an understanding of changes or continuation in gender roles in the family.

Could you tell me something about your family when you were growing up? Where did you live? Who did you live with? Did you have brothers or sisters? Contact with other members of the family?

When you are thinking back, what chores were your responsibility?

When thinking of all the different things that need to be done on a regular basis in a household, which other chores were done by the different members of your family?

What expectations did your parents have for your future?

What did you imagine your future to be like?

Let's switch to your family situation right now. Again, would you tell me who your family consists of, who you live with and regular contacts you have with others?

When thinking of all the regular chores that need to be done in and around the house, could you tell me who is responsible for each of them?

Could you take me through the last week, duties, chores, irregularities?

What expectations do you have of the future for yourself and for your family members?

It seems like currently a lot more females get an education and a career, what are your feelings about this development?

What do you think are the most immediate problems for employment in Iqaluit?

### **3. Group discussions**

What is success?

What are the obstacles in reaching success?

What do (could) you do to overcome these obstacles?

## APPENDIX IV: GOVERNMENT AND BUREAUCRACY IN NUNAVUT

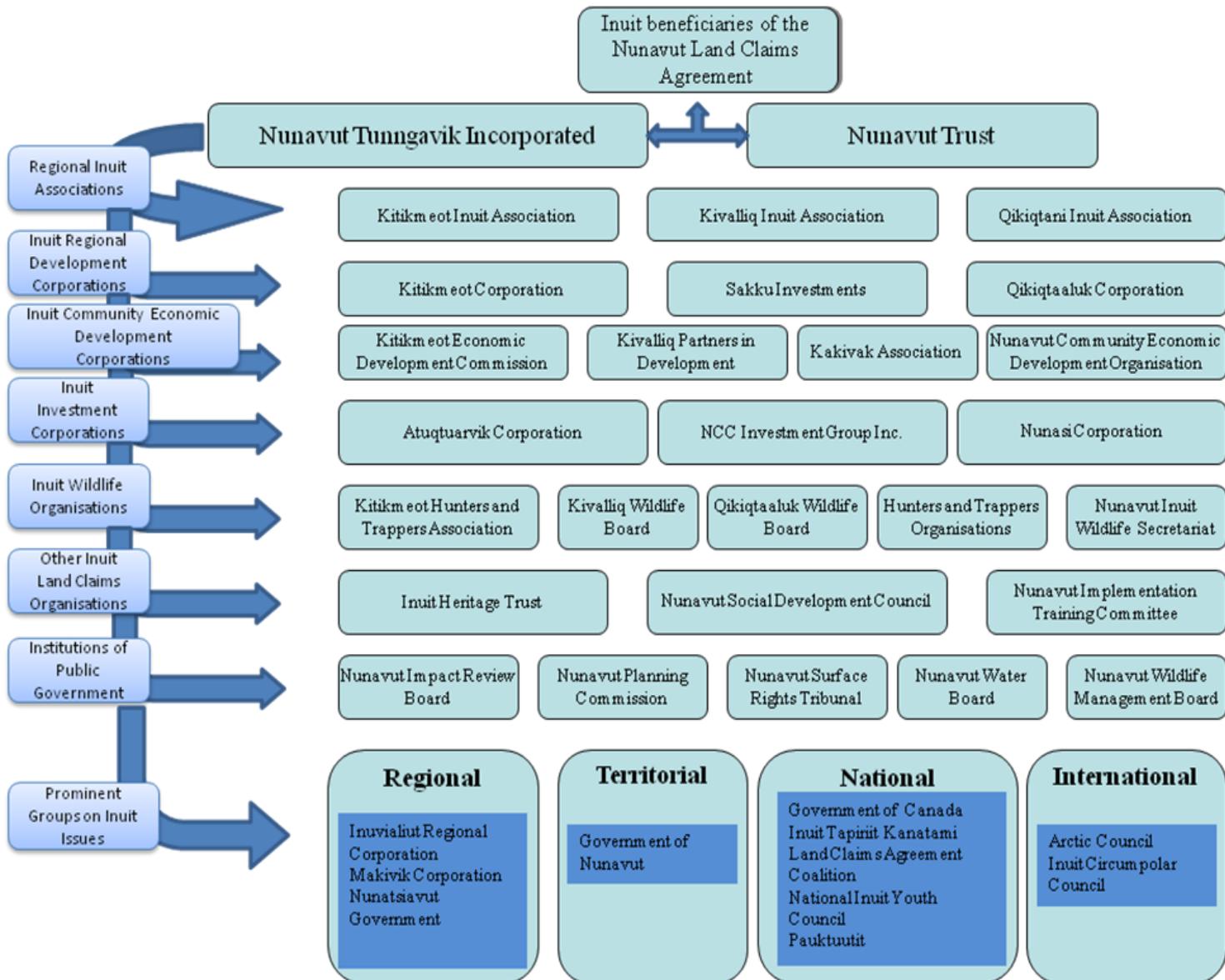


FIGURE 11: NUNAVUT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Source: Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated

## APPENDIX V: TIMELINE

From 1500s:	sporadic and later more frequent visits by explorers in search of the Northwest Passage (Wachowich 2001)
1670:	Hudson's Bay Company requires trading monopoly of much of what is now known as the Canadian Arctic (Hicks and White 2000)
1800s-1915:	whaling period (Wachowich 2001, Alia 2007, J&I Honigmann 1965, Purich 1992, Freeman et al 1998)
1855:	syllabic writing system is introduced (Alia 2007)
1876:	Gospel is translated in Inuktitut Syllabics (ibid)
1940s:	Canada and USA build weather stations, signal stations and air defence posts in Canadian Arctic (ibid)
1950:	Hudson Bay Company established in Frobisher Bay (what is now called Iqaluit) (J&I Honigmann 1965), establishment of communities, people encouraged to move into communities (Alia 2007)
1955-1957	Distant Early Warning line (DEW line) construction
Beginning 1970s	Almost all Inuit now live in communities year round (Wachowich 2001)
1973:	Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC) initiates study on Inuit land use, the base for Inuit land rights and aboriginal title (Alia 2007, Hicks and White 2000)
1976:	ITC proposes comprehensive settlement of Inuit land claims including the creation of Nunavut (Alia 2007, Hicks and White 2000)
1980:	resolution calling for the creation of Nunavut passed in meeting of the ITC (Hicks and White 2000)
1983:	European Economic Community institutes an embargo on importing sealskins, subsistence hunting no longer economically viable (Wachowich 2001)
April 1990:	Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut, federal government and North West Territories government sign Nunavut land claims agreement in principle (Hicks and White 2000, Alia 2007)
1992:	May: boundaries for Nunavut are approved in vote. October: Political Accord is signed, date for creation Nunavut set for April 1 <sup>st</sup> 1999 November: Inuit of Nunavut ratify the Nunavut Land Claims agreement. (Hicks and White 2000, Alia 2007)
1993:	May: Nunavut Land Claims Agreement is signed November: Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Act and Nunavut Act adopted by Parliament (ibid)
1995:	Iqaluit chosen as capital after winning 60% of votes of Nunavut Inuit (Hicks and White 2000)
1999:	February: first election for members of the Legislative Assembly. (ibid) March: Paul Okalik Nunavut's first Premier. April 1 <sup>st</sup> : Nunavut territory and Government of Nunavut inaugurated (ibid).