

Photographic Encounters in the North: Rosemary Gilliat Eaton's 1960 Trip to the Eastern  
Canadian Arctic

by

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## **Abstract**

This thesis interrogates historic representations of gender, race, and landscape in the North through a case study of Canadian photojournalist Rosemary Gilliat's 1960 trip to the eastern Arctic. Considering photography as a social practice *and* material object, I investigate Gilliat's personal ritual of image-making, the encounter between photographer and Inuit subject, and the constitutive power of the resulting images. As a woman facing numerous gender biases, Gilliat empathized with her Indigenous subjects and created photographs that often reflect a collaborative space of interaction. Yet, she did not exist outside of colonialism's oppressive structures; thus her published images simultaneously supplement and support primitivizing views of the North and Inuit. Gilliat's photographs, therefore, are not unequivocal documents of history but *performative* objects with complex and multivalent meaning. Consequently, I argue for the archive as a productive site for the recuperation of women's professional histories and the excavation of narratives of intercultural encounter.

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## **Table of Contents**

<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Acknowledgments .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>List of Illustrations.....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter One: Landscape, Gender, and an “Idea of North” .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Chapter Two: The Photograph as “Contact Zone” .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Chapter Three: Picturing Inuit Women .....</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>Notes .....</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>Illustrations.....</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>References.....</b>	<b>154</b>



## List of Illustrations

**Figure Intro.1** “This Weekend and Next: Rosemary Travels,” *Weekend Magazine*, date unknown. Library and Archives Canada, Rosemary Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 3 file 5, ‘Arctic Trip Diary.’ Image Source: LAC.

**Figure Intro.2** “Women at Work,” *Weekend Magazine*, date unknown. Library and Archives Canada, Rosemary Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 1 file 29, ‘RGE notes on career/resume personal.’ Image Source: LAC.

**Figure 1.1** Rosemary Gilliat, *Camp at the freezer site in Kangiqsualujjuaq, Quebec*, July 16-August 9, 1960, 35 mm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010835807. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.

**Figure 1.2** Rosemary Gilliat, *Man canoeing, Kangiqsualujjuaq, Quebec*, July 16-August 9, 1960, 35 mm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010835962. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.

**Figure 1.3** Rosemary Gilliat, *Landscape near Cape Dorset*, ca. 1960 [June 17-October 20, 1960], 35 mm colour transparency. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010799875. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.

**Figure 1.4** Rosemary Gilliat, no title [Barbara Hinds et al. on a boat], no date [June 17-October 20, 1960], black and white gelatin silver print. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: Dalhousie University Archives, Barbara Hinds Papers, MS-2-130\_2009-003\_3\_38\_2\_003.

**Figure 1.5** Rosemary Gilliat, no title [Barbara Hinds and Pitsulak on a boat], no date [August 15-19, 1960], black and white gelatin silver print. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: Dalhousie University Archives, Barbara Hinds Papers, MS-2-130\_2009-003\_3\_38\_5\_001.

**Figure 1.6** Rosemary Gilliat, *Seal Hunt at Frobisher Bay*, no date [August 15-19, 1960], black and white gelatin silver contact print. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, MIKAN no. 4879523. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: Author.

**Figure 1.7** Moshah [?], *Rosemary Gilliat Eaton, Barbara Hinds, Sarpinak, Spyglassie, Mosesee and Pitsulak on "Spyglassie island," near Iqaluit (formerly Frobisher Bay), Nunavut*, August 18-19, 1960, black and white gelatin silver print. Library and Archives

Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010978037. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.

**Figure 2.1** Kananginak Pootoogook, *The First Tourist*, lithograph, 1992. The Canadian Museum of History, 1992-015, S93-5459. ©Dorset Fine Arts. Printed with the permission of Dorset Fine Arts (2016). Image source: CMH.

**Figure 2.2** Rosemary Gilliat, *Johnny holding up Arctic char, Kangiqsualujjuaq (George River), Quebec*, July 16-August 9, 1960, 35 mm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010835975. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.

**Figure 2.3** Rosemary Gilliat, *Keith Crowe (right) and Johnny (left) carrying arctic char to a walk-in freezer, Kangiqsualujjuaq, Quebec*, July 16-August 9, 1960, 35 mm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010835967. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.

**Figure 2.4** Rosemary Gilliat, *Two women cleaning Arctic char on an outdoor counter while a young girl looks, Kangiqsualujjuaq, Quebec*, July 16-August 9, 1960, 35 mm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010835974. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.

**Figure 2.5** Rosemary Gilliat, *Maggie, the wife of Willy Eetok, cutting fish with her daughter Elizabeth on her back, George River [Kangiqsualujjuaq], Québec*, August 1960 [July 17, 1960], 6.0 x 6.0 cm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010975364. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.

**Figure 2.6** Rosemary Gilliat, *Joan Ryan ringing a school bell, Kangiqsualujjuaq, Quebec*, July 16-August 9, 1960, 35 mm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010835976. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.

**Figure 2.7** Rosemary Gilliat, *Children in a swimming hole, Kangiqsualujjuaq, Quebec*, July 16-August 9, 1960 [July 24, 1960], 35 mm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010835979. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.

**Figure 2.8** Photo story 277, “Ilkalupik: King of the Arctic,” January 24, 1961, photographs by Rosemary Gilliat. Library and Archives Canada, National Film Board of

Canada Fonds, R1196-0-7-E. ©Government of Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.

**Figures 2.9 a and 2.9 b** “Elle fait ses emplettes une fois l’an seulement,” words and photographs by Rosemary Gilliat, publication unknown, date unknown. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 1, file 29, ‘RGE notes on career/resume personal.’ Image source: LAC.

**Figure 2.10** Rosemary Gilliat, *Alma Houston Pinning a Medal onto Kingwatsiak’s Coat*, no date [September 4, 1960], black and white gelatin silver contact print. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, MIKAN no. 4877954. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: Author.

**Figure 2.11** Rosemary Gilliat, *Alma Houston and Kingwatsiak, Cape Dorset, Nunavut*, August 24-October 3, 1960 [September 4, 1960], 6.0 x 6.0 cm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010767680. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.

**Figure 3.1** Rosemary Gilliat, no title [likely Ikhalu, James and Alma Houston’s hired help, chewing the hide of *kamik* in Cape Dorset], no date [August 30-October 3, 1960], black and white gelatin silver print. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: Dalhousie University Archives, Barbara Hinds Papers, MS-2-130\_2009-003\_3\_38\_3\_002.

**Figure 3.2** Rosemary Gilliat, *Group of people gathered around a dead seal, Ungava, Nunavut*, July 13-August 9, 1960 [July 27, 1960], 35 mm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010799964. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.

**Figure 3.3** Rosemary Gilliat, *Group of people gathered around a dead seal, Ungava, Nunavut*, July 13-August 9, 1960 [July 27, 1960], 35 mm colour slide, archival crop. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010799964. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: Author.

**Figure 3.4** Rosemary Gilliat, *Cleaning the Station Wagon* [Helen Salkeld], August 1954, black and white gelatin silver print. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e011161198. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.

**Figure 3.5** Photo story 289, “Kenojuak—Poet of the Arctic,” July 11, 1961, photographs by Rosemary Gilliat. Library and Archives Canada, National Film Board Fonds.

©Government of Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.

**Figure 3.6** Rosemary Gilliat, *Artist Kenojuak drawing inside her tent, Cape Dorset, Nunavut*, August 24-Oct 3, 1960 [September 29, 1960], 35 mm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Rosemary Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010835887. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.

**Figure 3.7** Rosemary Gilliat, *Kenojuak and her husband, Johnnybo, with their children in their tent. Cape Dorset on Baffin Island, Eastern Arctic*, August 1960 [September 29, 1960], black and white gelatin silver print. Library and Archives Canada, National Film Board of Canada Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e002265671. Public Domain. Image source: LAC.

**Figure 3.8** Rosemary Gilliat, *Artist Kenojuak carrying an infant on her back and exiting a tent, Cape Dorset, Nunavut*, August 24-Oct 3, 1960 [September 29, 1960], 35 mm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Rosemary Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010835916. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.

**Figure 3.9** Kathleen Daly, *Povungnituk*, pencil on paper, 1960. Library and Archives Canada, Kathleen Daly Pepper Sous Fonds, R12301-2-X-E, e008300254. ©Ron Moore. Due diligence taken by author to obtain copyright permission. Image source: LAC.

## Introduction

**“A power of photographs is that, in their silence and stillness, they propose so much, and reveal nothing.”—Hugh Brody, *Imaging the Arctic*.<sup>1</sup>**

As I sat in Library and Archives Canada (LAC) reading through one of the many diary entries written by British born photographer Rosemary Gilliat, I stumbled across a small newspaper clipping flattened between two thin paper pages. Carefully unfolding the delicate newsprint, I discovered a short editorial about the photographer published in the widely distributed Canadian newspaper supplement *Weekend Magazine* [Figure Intro.1]. The feature, entitled “Rosemary Travels,” includes a photograph of Gilliat pictured behind a large rock with her camera perched atop the uneven surface. Her gaze and the camera’s lens point outside of the frame to a subject she is presumably creeping up on, most likely a small animal or a bird. The caption reads, “Rosemary Gilliat—she gets around.” While directly referencing Gilliat’s world travels, the colloquial phrase also alludes to a woman’s promiscuity, underscoring Gilliat’s gender and social status as a single woman. The image itself lacks any signifiers of travel or place, yet the caption, coupled with the representation of Gilliat working in nature, frames her as an exceptional woman—an active and professional female photographer. The brief story accompanying the photograph details Gilliat’s travels in South Africa and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and her treks across Canada. It also emphasizes Gilliat’s alien status: “One thing we have noticed about the newcomers to Canada who have had photos or articles published in WEEKEND: they usually have travelled far more widely in this country than those of us who have been here a great deal longer.” While suggesting that travel is necessary to get to know Canada, the uncredited journalist uses the plural pronoun ‘us’ to identify with his

or her Canadian readers and to underscore the nationalistic overtones of *Weekend Magazine*.

A number of other news articles similarly framed Gilliat as a successful female British photographer. In another published by *Weekend Magazine*, Gilliat crouches among tall grass and points her lens beyond the image's frame [Figure Intro.2]. Here the photograph is cropped to focus on Gilliat's face only: her perfectly coiffed hair, her squinted eyes, and her index finger poised to take a 'snap.' Yet, the focus is not on Gilliat's travels but her success as a woman. The article, entitled "Women at Work," pairs Gilliat's portrait with another of golfer Sandra Post. The uncredited author asserts that Gilliat is a "fine photographer, not just a good woman photographer," implying that professional women were usually seen as inferior and that gender is not correlated to aesthetic merit or success. But, in trying to shift focus from Gilliat *as* woman to Gilliat *as* photographer, the writer simultaneously draws attention to her femininity. The caption under her portrait reads, "Successful, but feminine." Although the article holds Gilliat up as a "successful" professional she is still reduced to her gender; her modernity and professionalism are rendered acceptable by conformity to recognizable codes of Western femininity.

In introducing these published accounts of Gilliat, my point is not to argue for her or any female photographer's exceptionalism. It is well known that women have been involved in photography in various capacities since the early days of its invention and popularization.<sup>2</sup> What the *Weekend Magazine* articles do make clear, however, is that Gilliat regularly confronted stereotypes based on her gender and immigrant status and, in turn, used the camera to assert her identity as both a woman and newcomer to Canada. I

am informed here by scholars who conceive of photography as a social practice—that is to say, that in this thesis I do not accept the photographic image as an unequivocal historical record but instead consider how it mediates lived experience. Photo historian Susan Close, for example, argues that women in the early twentieth century “used photography to explore identity and personal narrative, to situate themselves or to examine the relationship between self and other.”<sup>3</sup> Although arguably marginalized within her professional milieu, I suggest that Gilliat, like the early photographers Close discusses, used the camera to construct, reproduce, and define identity. She photographed people and places in Canada as both a way of getting to know the country and staking claim to it. In other words, visualizing Canada was, for Gilliat, a way of embodying a new national identity. Thus, this thesis seeks to complicate such brief and reductive historical representations of Gilliat by arguing instead for the complexity of her photographic practice and her importance to Canadian visual histories

In her most active freelancing years (1952-64) Gilliat was a prolific photographer, yet she has remained an obscure figure in the history of Canadian photography. While in part an effect of the general curtailment of women’s professional histories, Gilliat’s absence is also related to photojournalism’s subordinate position in the photographic canon.<sup>4</sup> Ostensibly corrupt by its pairing with commercial advertisements and the promotion of Western middle class values, photojournalism is generally considered outside of the realms of both ‘art’ photography and the social documentary.<sup>5</sup> In this thesis, however, I consider photojournalism as a serious genre deserving of scholarly attention and I examine the ways in which Gilliat negotiated between the demands and ideologies of her clients and her personal experiences and desires.

More specifically, this thesis addresses Gilliat's photography of the eastern Canadian Arctic, where, in the summer of 1960, she shot thousands of images for professional assignments and personal use. This body of work provides a rich case study for interrogations of landscape, gender, and racial constructions in photographic representations of the North. The term "North" is exceedingly complex and ambiguous, referring to both geographical space and the projected image of southern imaginings. Positing the North as a "discursive formation," Sherrill Grace argues that ideas of North are in flux and persist over time, making themselves apparent in a diverse set of representational forms, including photography.<sup>6</sup> Gilliat, who was long fascinated by the North, was undeniably influenced by stereotypical characterizations of its vast, mysterious, and exhilarating character. Her landscape photographs, in turn, reflect a long imaging tradition in the Arctic that attempted to capture the North's otherworldly beauty while simultaneously dispossessing Indigenous peoples of their land and territory and rendering space available for exploration and resource extraction. But, while Gilliat loved to photograph landscapes, the archive of this trip is primarily dedicated to the documentation of Inuit. This is in large part because her clients, including the National Film Board of Canada's Still Photography Division (hereafter NFB), desired 'human interest' stories. While Gilliat expressed trepidation about objectifying Indigenous peoples—a point to which I will return in Chapters Two and Three—she also felt a closeness to many of the people she met. Her photographs and personal writing at once conform to conventional views of the Arctic and sub-Arctic and of Inuit as 'primitive,' childlike, and in need of paternal care, while simultaneously offering moments of ambivalence, complexity, and resistance.<sup>7</sup>



While it is important to critically assess public narratives of the North that have contributed to a national mythologizing, it is equally valuable to examine personal narratives—those individual experiences that both conform to and trouble nationalistic views. In this thesis I compare Gilliat’s archival material with images she published in mass circulation journals, such as *Weekend Magazine*. Her published work often reproduced an ethnographic gaze, infantilizing the Indigenous Other and reinforcing settler power. Yet, Gilliat’s archival collections, which include personal writing and unpublished (or what I will refer to as archival) images, often challenge those typical narratives and tell us more about her practice, about the Inuit she photographed, and about the sociopolitical context of the time. By turning to the archive, I found evidence of an empathetic woman, who worked within the confines of colonial and gender politics, yet was critical in her thinking and professional practice. Moreover, I observed signs of Inuit subjects’ performative participation in their photographic representation, at times, even resistance. As photo scholar Jane Lydon has argued, the “archive reveals substantial evidence for a more contested, complex interaction.”<sup>8</sup> While photography has historically been used by the colonizer to represent and control difference, if we insist on reading such images only as unequivocal evidence of colonial power, we risk exploiting Indigenous subjects once again.

### **Rosemary Gilliat: Biographical Notes**

Rosemary Gilliat was born on August 20, 1919 in Hove, near Brighton on the south coast of England. Gilliat, whose mother appears to have been absent from the young girl’s life, spent much of her childhood in British Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) where her father, Lionel Gilliat, owned a tea plantation. Growing up, she attended boarding

school in Switzerland where she was trained in English and French, later learning German in Freiburg. In addition to her own family, most of Gilliat's school friends had British or European parents working abroad, thus her cosmopolitanism and love for travel developed at a young age. It was also during her school days that Gilliat began taking pictures. The Gilliat Eaton Fonds at Library and Archives Canada include multiple files of photographs from her youth in England, Ceylon, and Switzerland as well as seven handmade photo albums containing images and writing from as early as 1930.<sup>9</sup>

Upon returning to Britain after grade school, Gilliat received darkroom training from a private instructor and apprenticed with a commercial photographer. In 1940 Gilliat worked for the Women's Royal Naval Service, spending time in Dover, England where, according to her own account, she used her German language skills to listen in on communications between E-boats (enemy motor torpedo boats) in the English Channel.<sup>10</sup> During the war, Gilliat also supplemented her income with press photography. Once back in London, Gilliat took a course in commercial photography and worked in the studio of renowned British photojournalist Bill Brandt. Under Brandt's guidance, she shot photographs for such publications as the *Sunday Observer*, *Strand Magazine*, and *Lilliput* as well as for history and architecture books. Between 1949 and 1951 Gilliat spent time with her brother, Peter Gilliat, in Ceylon where she photographed for her own interest and on assignment for *The Times* educational supplement. The photographs from this period are incredibly rich. Taken during British colonial rule in Sri Lanka, most of Gilliat's images are of the country's Indigenous peoples—an interest that continued throughout her career in Canada.

In October 1952, Gilliat immigrated to Canada. In part compelled by a curiosity about the North, Gilliat hoped that moving to Canada would allow her to travel and photograph throughout the Arctic.<sup>11</sup> She soon secured employment with Ottawa's Capital Press and within a year began publishing photographs (and some written texts) in a number of mass circulation journals, including *Weekend Magazine*, its French language counterpart *Perspectives*, *Maclean's*, and the Hudson's Bay Company's magazine *The Beaver*. Gilliat also worked on assignment for the NFB's Still Photography Division, Canadian Wildlife Service, and Canada's Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources (DNANR). Obsessed with seeing and photographing as much of the country as possible, Gilliat travelled extensively on both professional assignment and personal vacation. An early and particularly noteworthy trip began on July 31, 1954 when Gilliat and three female friends drove across the Trans-Canada Highway.<sup>12</sup> Along the way, Gilliat took hundreds of photographs and kept a daily diary, which details her early adventures through the country's vast land—a trip very few Canadians would have taken at that time.

Shortly after marrying in 1963, Gilliat and her husband, Arctic oceanographer Michael Eaton, moved to Cole Harbour, Nova Scotia, where she lived until her passing in 2004.<sup>13</sup> Poor health curtailed Gilliat's ability to travel and, as a result, the rest of her photographic output largely depicts her immediate surroundings on Canada's east coast. During the latter part of her life, Gilliat dedicated herself to environmental and cultural activism. She worked tirelessly to protect the Cole Harbour Salt Marsh and was a founding member of the Cole Harbour Heritage Farm Museum.<sup>14</sup>

A close examination of the Gilliat archival collections reveals the photographer's growing fascination with the North American Arctic. In 1953, for example, Gilliat went on a trip to Alaska, visiting Whitehorse and Dawson City and in 1957 she travelled to the Western Arctic, spending time in Aklavik, Fort Simpson (*Liidli Kue* in the Dene language of the Slavey First Nation), and Tuktoyaktuk. These trips were primarily completed under various work assignments, including a story for *The Beaver* titled "Nurse in the Yukon," which followed Public Health Nurse Joyce Driver as she trekked around the Yukon Territory administering health care.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, in 1956 Gilliat accompanied British writer Ritchie Calder to Buffalo Narrows in northern Saskatchewan where she photographed members of the Denesuline First Nation.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to her travels, Gilliat collected textual material on the North in order to broaden her knowledge and likely prepare for a future journey. One document Gilliat kept in her collection—and a source for a visual tradition of imaging the North—is *People of the High Arctic*, an NFB Still Photography Division publication comprised of thirty-one captioned photographs of the Far North.<sup>17</sup> This particular project, produced in collaboration with the DNANR, contributed to the widespread dissemination of images of the North as potent symbols of Canada.<sup>18</sup> Another important document Gilliat kept, is the transcript from a speech given by politician Jean Lesage (Minister for the DNANR from 1953 to 1957 and Premier of Quebec, 1960-66) to the Women's Canadian Club of Montreal on October 25, 1954 entitled "The Eskimo Family." In the middle of the speech Lesage pronounced, "We have new interests in the regions of the north and the people who inhabit them because we are aware of ourselves as Canadians and of the fact that they are Canadians too."<sup>19</sup> The longer speech from which this brief passage is extracted,

reveals the social and political context of the time, including a developing interest in Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic, increased resource extraction, and a belief in the need for the inclusion (read, assimilation) of Inuit into mainstream Canadian society. As a newcomer to Canada, Gilliat was interested in the multiple and varied identities of Canadians, including those of the country's Indigenous peoples. Attending public events and reading articles in publications such as *The Beaver* spurred Gilliat's interest in the North as both a place of notable national interest and a potential site for the making of saleable images.<sup>20</sup> Thus, it was in the summer of 1960 that Gilliat would finally take her most ambitious trip to the North with her travelling companion Barbara Hinds.<sup>21</sup>

Hinds (1925-2014), a British born journalist who lived in Halifax, Nova Scotia, wrote columns for Halifax newspapers *The Chronicle Herald* and the *Mail Star*, eventually joining Dalhousie University's medical school as a public relations expert until her retirement in 1988. According to an obituary written in *The Chronicle Herald*, Hinds shared Gilliat's passion for adventure; from spelunking in England to solo birding expeditions in the backwoods of Nova Scotia, Hinds was well known as an engaged and adventurous Halifax resident.<sup>22</sup> Gilliat and Hinds met in Montreal in 1959 at the triennial meeting of the Canadian Women's Press Club where they realized they shared a common interest in the Canadian Arctic. They quickly began planning a trip for the following summer as a photographer-writer team. The women were denied any funding from the Canada Council for the Arts and instead were supported primarily by the DNANR. On the one hand, freelancing gave Gilliat and Hinds a certain amount of creative and professional freedom but it also meant they had to work even harder to secure assignments. In a letter addressed to Gilliat prior to their departure, Hinds (humorously)

expressed her insistence on journeying northward as well as her simultaneous feelings of excitement and trepidation:

Be consoled. I realise you are neck-deep in horrid debt, but we ARE going...for some odd reason, I feel we will win through. The trip will be a wonderful experience...It was no surprise to me that Canada Council sent its regrets. But, I had great hopes for you, because after all, you are an artist, obviously very dedicated...Now that we know we are independent except for the Dept of Northern Affairs which is some exception, I must say (!) we will just have to gird our loincloths a bit higher or lower whichever way you wish to take the simile and clutch on to every story, article and subject possible.<sup>23</sup>

Gilliat and Hinds' trip was no easy undertaking. Hinds quit her job and sold her beloved antique car to help fund the journey and Gilliat went into further debt.<sup>24</sup> The itinerary, typically for those travelling in the North, was also not entirely in their own hands: relying on government planes and ships to transport them from place to place often meant that the women were last priority, having to wait considerably long periods of time before securing transport or being crammed onto a boat intended for various other purposes.<sup>25</sup> However, travel to the North would not have been possible without the DNANR and HBC's network of people and infrastructure. Gilliat and Hinds travelled throughout the North West Territories (or what is now part of Nunavut) and northern Quebec (now Nunavik) from June 17 to October 20, 1960. Their major destinations were Frobisher Bay (now Iqaluit), Fort Chimo (now Kuujjuaq), and Cape Dorset (known as *Kinngait* in Inuktitut). Along the way they also visited a number of smaller communities more briefly, including Port Burwell (now Killiniq), George River (now Kangiqsualujjuaq), Lake Harbour (now Kimmirut), and Pangnirtung.<sup>26</sup>

Gilliat and Hinds' goals were twofold: to take an extensive summer vacation in an 'exotic' locale and to use the tools of their trades to tell a 'truthful' story about the North.

Both women wrote about wanting to convey an alternative narrative, one that visualized social injustices and gave more voice to Indigenous peoples. Reflecting on the poor reputation of journalists and photographers in the Arctic, Gilliat outlined her own aspirations while in Frobisher Bay:

Obviously reporters and journalists have a very bad name here. Some who come are of course the drinking kind and collect all their material in the bars, and never move from there. They also complained that too many people write favourable propaganda-type reports—and others just write for southern readers the sort of guff on the north that is expected. I hope that we will not incur their condemnation.<sup>27</sup>

Evidently, Gilliat was neither ignorant of her socioeconomic position nor of the propagandist intentions of most photojournalism. She, therefore, made an honest and informed effort to contest harmful stereotypes about the North and its peoples and attempted to rectify the inequities in her position by photographing what she saw and experienced rather than staging an imagined and pre-conceived construction. Yet, she still worked within the structures of ‘mainstream’ Canadian culture and it is my intention in this thesis to reveal the kinds of tensions that underscored Gilliat’s practice. By turning to the archive, we can better understand Gilliat’s personal experiences in the North and the relationships she built with Inuit.<sup>28</sup> The unpublished images and writing, offer a counter-narrative that does not necessarily subvert a dominant colonial narrative but suggests a more complex encounter with the North and its peoples.

Before setting off, Gilliat secured assignments from *The Beaver*, *Maclean’s*, and *Weekend Magazine*, as well as from Imperial Oil. She also shot hundreds of other images, which are now in the Gilliat Eaton Fonds.<sup>29</sup> On this trip, as in most of her professional practice, Gilliat worked with 35 mm and medium format film cameras, which allowed

her to work quickly and in various, sometimes precarious, ‘on-site’ locations.<sup>30</sup> Hinds periodically wrote newspaper columns while in the Arctic and later produced a book-length manuscript about the trip. Hinds’ book was never published but Gilliat kept a copy of the manuscript edited with her handwritten comments.<sup>31</sup> Gilliat was quite critical of Hinds’ intention to write a book for she felt that temporary non-Inuit visitors rarely produced accurate or respectful representations of the North and its peoples. She argued that most anthropologists, ethnographers, and journalists spent so little time in the Arctic that their narratives were inherently limited and often false. Perhaps this explains why Gilliat dedicated herself to the medium of photography. Understanding the necessarily limited amount of information a photograph could convey, Gilliat never intended to produce a complete narrative but instead to offer fragments of Arctic life as she experienced it.

The women also took the opportunity of travelling in the North to experiment with sound and motion picture technologies. For Hinds, the use of audio recording equipment allowed her to capture an audible trace of many of the Inuit she encountered. In some cases, she transcribed people’s oral narratives to include in her manuscript. This technique privileged the voice of the Indigenous Other while also demonstrating Hinds’ ostensibly ‘close’ relationship with the communities she encountered. Gilliat likely had similar intentions in her use of a motion picture camera. She generally employed it to record exciting moments such as seal hunting or char fishing, where movement and the unfolding of events were integral to the liveliness of the occasion.<sup>32</sup>

In her later years, Gilliat wrote a brief outline of her professional career, summing up the eastern Arctic trip as follows: “I photographed Kenojuak [Ashevak] and others at



work, and recorded many aspects of Inuit [sic] life at this turning point from precarious self-reliance to interaction with mainstream Canadian life.”<sup>33</sup> Gilliat viewed her role as an impartial documentarian, using photography to tell an ostensibly comprehensive and inclusive account about Inuit life. The irony of such a position, however, is apparent to us today, as writers have long disputed the ‘truth’ claims of documentary photography—including photojournalism. As John Tagg writes, “like the state, the camera is never neutral. The representations it produces are highly coded, and the power it wields is never its own.”<sup>34</sup> Documentary photography, moreover, relies on the aesthetic of realism to naturalize social knowledge, including concepts of gender, nation, and marginalized peoples. In visual culture theorist Wendy Kozol’s words, “Photography’s ideological power lies in the immediacy and accessibility of its visualization of the world.”<sup>35</sup> Yet, she argues, photographs are always polysemic texts that are open to varied interpretations and can exceed accompanying information such as captions. Anthropologist Deborah Poole has termed such slippages in representation as the photograph’s “excess of description.” It is in excessive detail, such as facial expressions or gesture, that photography’s intention of fixity is unsettled and negotiated. It is these very moments, which incite rich readings of images that structure this thesis.

## **Literature Review**

To date, there exists no secondary literature on Gilliat’s life or work except for a few short online biographies. I draw, therefore, on various aspects of Photography Studies, including work addressing Settler and Indigenous encounters, photojournalism, and feminism. This thesis is also informed by scholars from literary and cultural theory who theorize the ‘myth of the North’ and its relation to Canadian identity.

A relatively recent feminist shift in photographic scholarship sets out to critique patriarchal visual systems through the examination of women photographers. Moving beyond the limited parameters of a feminist recovery project, these scholars have worked to expose the structures that have, for much of history, buried women's narratives. In *Women's Camera Work*, Judith Davidov critiques male-centred historiography by "rehears[ing] the value of gender as an analytical category in photographic production."<sup>36</sup> Of particular importance to me, is Davidov's exploration of how women photographers, who have typically emerged from an art historical tradition that represented women as Other, claimed agency for themselves by, in turn, representing otherness, whether along racial or class lines.<sup>37</sup> Within a Canadian context, Susan Close's *Framing Identity* examines the role of women practitioners at the turn-of-the-twentieth-century. Included in her study are Mattie Gunterman (1872-1945), Ruby Gordon Peterkin (1887-1962), Etta Sparks (1879-1917), and Geraldine Moodie (1854-1945), the latter of which produced photographs in the eastern Arctic in 1904-05 and 1906-09. Close argues that photography is a social practice used by women professionals and amateurs as a way to explore and assert identity.

In addition to Close, a number of studies have looked specifically at the intersection between Euro-American women photographers and North American Indigenous peoples. The authors of *Trading Gazes*, for example, study women's photographic 'counter-narratives' as complex documents of cultural encounter. Susan Bernardin, Melody Gaulich, Lisa MacFarlane, and Nicole Tonkovich argue that photographers, including Mary Schäffer and Kate Cory, "fulfilled personal and professional aspirations by working or living in Native communities."<sup>38</sup> Yet, often the

Western societal values these photographers sought to escape were the same ones being imposed upon Indigenous populations in the West, where they “were being coerced into accepting those values as a precondition for their survival.”<sup>39</sup> Thus, while women may offer a counter hegemonic narrative through their photographs, we must always understand images of Indigenous peoples as highly mediated documents constituted by mainstream settler values.<sup>40</sup>

The critical writing on photographic representations of Indigenous peoples is vast, covering history since the mid-nineteenth century and encompassing a global scope. In the context of settler-colonial societies such as Canada, scholars, including Carol Williams and Brock Silversides, have written about how photography in various forms (survey, promotional, studio, and ethnographic) constructed romanticized portraits of Indigenous peoples and reinforced notions of settler ‘progress.’<sup>41</sup> More specifically, this thesis is informed by relatively recent scholarship that seeks to complicate the photograph as an unequivocal document of colonial success, arguing instead for the fluidity of photographic meaning in an effort to recognize Indigenous sitters’ participation, agency, and/or resistance in the photographic encounter. Aaron Glass confronts traditional scholarship on Edward Curtis’ early-twentieth-century photographs of North American Indigenous peoples that have come to embody the ‘vanishing race’ paradigm. He argues that, by turning to the archive and tracing paths of material circulation, it is possible to uncover narratives of Indigenous agency that complicate original readings of Curtis’ images.<sup>42</sup> Other scholars of visual Anthropology, including Elizabeth Edwards, Jane Lydon, Deborah Poole, and Christopher Pinney, have likewise made valuable contributions to the study of Indigenous photographic representation and I will return to

them in my discussion of methodology. Additionally, there have been a number of important and timely studies written by Indigenous authors who seek to (re)read photographs of their ancestors and communities. Lucy Lippard's well known book *Partial Recall* is an edited collection of creative and intimate essays written by Indigenous authors who (re)valuate photographs through processes of storytelling.<sup>43</sup> In Canada, Jeff Thomas' writing and curatorial work, in addition to his own art practice, addresses historical representations of Indigenous peoples as a means of reclaiming cultural identity.<sup>44</sup>

Despite the varied scholarship on Indigenous peoples and photography, there remains far less critical writing on representations of the Arctic and Inuit. An early essay by Richard Condon, surveys 120 years of photography in the North American Arctic. Importantly, he includes the Inuit photographer Peter Pitseolak and discusses contemporary uses of historical photography by researchers and Indigenous communities.<sup>45</sup> A more expansive, but equally influential work is *Imaging the Arctic*, a volume dedicated to still photography in Alaska, the Canadian Arctic, and Greenland. Its contributors deal with a diverse set of topics ranging from nineteenth-century explorer photographs to twentieth-century Inuit photographers. The volume's editors, J.C.H. King and Henrietta Lidchi, argue that photographs have a performative value that exists at the intersection of public and private memories—histories and reminisces. The cover of the book, for example, is a photograph of George Qluat's grandmother Odelle Panimiraq, identified by photographer Geraldine Moodie as Koo-tuck-tuck (1904).<sup>46</sup> This image is at once a document attesting to the presence of Moodie in Cape Fullerton (*Qatiktalik* in Inuktitut, Nunavut) and a record of the style of beadwork work that adorned the inner

parkas worn by Inuit women at the time. Yet, the photograph also has a social role embedded in personal and familial history, exceeding both documentary functions. Informed by King and Lidchi, my analyses will also examine photographs at the intersection of their historical, memorial, and documentary functions.

Historian Alan Marcus' contribution to *Imaging the Arctic* compares photographs of Ahlarmiut taken in 1955 by *Life* photographer Fritz Goro with those taken by Dutch anthropologist Geert van den Steenhoven.<sup>47</sup> Marcus argues that the iconic images of Goro picture Ahlarmiut as an ideal primitive race, while van den Steenhoven's photographs more accurately capture the cultural hybridity that existed at the time. Marcus' comparative analysis is important for detailing the varying photographic practices that existed simultaneously and reflected, in turn, differing attitudes towards Inuit. In the essay "The Present as History," anthropologist Nelson Graburn reflects on his own photographs in the Arctic (from the late 1960s to the early 90s) and the ways in which he negotiated between an excitement about changing ways of Inuit life and a desire to capture tradition and custom. In many respects his experience reflects Gilliat's own. What is most important for Graburn, however, is how the photographs are seen and used in the present and the future. Once personal knowledge fades, historically situated photographs such as Graburn's risk becoming reductive representations of stereotypes from the past.<sup>48</sup> Thus, it is integral that photographs move beyond the confines of archives in the South to reach Inuit communities in the North, allowing them the opportunity to see and (re)claim images of themselves, their ancestors, and their territory—a point to which I will return in the concluding chapter.

Little critical work has been done on Arctic and Inuit photography since the publication of *Imaging the Arctic*. A notable exception is Martha Langford's recent essay about Richard Harrington's photographs in Padlei, Nunavut (1949-50). Eschewing conventional art historical analysis that focuses on the image-maker, Langford adopts anthropologist Clifford Geertz's methodology of "thick description" to trace the material lives of image-objects and analyze the layers of meaning they accrue along the way. From their exhibitionary display to their publication in books and popular magazines, Langford argues that it is by viewing multiple image functions together that we can better "grasp both local conditions of production and global dimensions of the product."<sup>49</sup>

All of the aforementioned texts are valuable to my research; however, this thesis will challenge their predominately male narratives. While photography in the North is often associated with male (explorer) personalities, such as the whaler Captain George Comer (1858-1937), there were a number of women practitioners in the Arctic who offer a counter-narrative to male dominated representations.<sup>50</sup> *Imaging the Arctic* does include contributions on photographers Geraldine Moodie and Gladys Knight Harris but these relatively short essays do not allow for the deeper investigation needed to examine the ways in which white women in the North negotiated a set of contradictory subject positions—simultaneously advantaged by race but disadvantaged by gender.<sup>51</sup>

At odds with my own subject of analysis is the tendency for studies on photography of Indigenous peoples and studies on Arctic photography to be written from an anthropological/ethnographic point of view. Moreover, as Carol Payne and Andrea Kunard point out, most discussions about post WWII Canadian photography occur within a curatorial context, focusing on the expressiveness of 'art photography' and largely

excluding the photojournalistic images of mass circulation publications. However, within US historical scholarship, a number of studies have been devoted to the study of *Life* magazine. One seminal text is Wendy Kozol's *Life's America*, in which the author engages in a close reading of *Life's* photo-essays to argue that postwar 'America' relied on domestic ideals of the nuclear family to "define political agendas about pressing social problems."<sup>52</sup> Kozol contends, "What is at stake in news photographs is the ability to visualize social identities, to privilege some, to ridicule others, and to deny the existence of yet others."<sup>53</sup> As I will demonstrate in my reading of Gilliat's photographs, even those that seemingly captured the complexity of Inuit identity were flattened and fixed once they entered the published realm. In visualizing the Other, the popular press simultaneously privileged the social identities of Euro-Canadian society.

The same breadth of analysis that authors afford *Life* is largely lacking in the Canadian context where only a handful of scholars have devoted research to mass circulators. Archivist and photo historian, Sarah Stacy, has written about the history of *Weekend Magazine* and its production of a "proto-multicultural national message" in the 1960s and 70s.<sup>54</sup> What is of particular interest to me is Stacy's interrogation of the 'resistances' between photographs and text.<sup>55</sup> Attentive to those moments when text does not fully support the communicative meaning of photographs, Stacy compares the differences between *Weekend Magazine* and its French language edition, *Perspectives*. In doing so, she reveals the political and social realities that were silenced or misrepresented by these two popular publications.

A few other scholars have similarly addressed the construction of 'Canadianness' in *The Beaver*, a popular magazine published by the Hudson's Bay Company. Joan

Sangster's article "'The Beaver' as Ideology: Constructing Images of Inuit and Native Life in Post-World War II Canada," for example, focuses on *The Beaver's* photo essays about Inuit communities, examining how the popular magazine constructed an ideology of Canadian Northerness while simultaneously reinforcing colonial attitudes towards the nation's Indigenous peoples.<sup>56</sup> Sangster's focus is on image and ideology rather than a discussion of the experiences of Indigenous peoples. She critiques *The Beaver* for positing Indigenous people as the objects of colonial scrutiny but she does not discuss the photographers behind the camera or the moment of encounter that took place between the maker and sitter(s). By focusing on one photographer and her social practice, this thesis complicates readings of the popular press such as Sangster's. As I will argue, Gilliat's photographs at once conform to stereotypical and ideologically informed representations of Inuit as innocent and adaptive while also revealing the ways in which Inuit resisted reductive representations and retained cultural integrity.

Also important to my understanding of Gilliat's commercial career is Carol Payne's book, *The Official Picture: The National Film Board of Canada's Still Photography Division and the Image of Canada, 1941-1971*. Payne analyzes key themes in the Still Photography Division's history—including the depiction of landscape, women, the nation's Centennial, and Indigenous peoples—and argues that the NFB images seen in magazines, newspapers, and exhibitions contributed to Canadian nation building. Chapter Six is particularly important in detailing how Inuit have recently turned to archival images as a form of resistance and a way of negotiating cultural memory that counteracts the official views originally imposed by such images.<sup>57</sup>



In order to better understand Gilliat's personal obsession with the North it is necessary to situate her work within broader political and social contexts. Sherrill Grace, who adopts a Foucauldian model in her book *Canada and the Idea of North*, argues that a wide array of interdisciplinary forms, from theatre and prose to poetry and painting, contribute to a "discursive formation" of the North.<sup>58</sup> In *Northern Experience and the Myths of Canadian Culture*, Renée Hulan reads historic literary sources that have contributed to a socially (specifically Euro-Canadian) constructed myth of the North. Hulan also importantly interrogates the gendered language that characterizes writing on the North.<sup>59</sup> Regarding political history in the Arctic, I refer to two important books by Frank Tester and Peter Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic, 1939-63* and *Kiumajut (Talking Back): Game Management and Inuit Rights 1900-70*.<sup>60</sup> While the atrocities of colonial policies such as forced relocation are largely absent in Gilliat's photographs, this history is important for understanding the context in which she was working.

To date, there has been some limited but informative literature on Inuit photographers who offer counterpoints to southern traditions of imaging the North and its peoples. Of particular note is Peter Pitseolak (1902-1973), Inuit historian, camp leader, photographer, and artist, who photographed the area in and around Cape Dorset from the early 1940s until his death. In collaboration with historian and author Dorothy Harley Eber, Pitseolak produced an oral history of his life. This book is important not only for sharing the life and work of a fascinating Inuk man, but also for privileging his own words and memory.<sup>61</sup> A critical essay by David Winfield Norman discusses the work of Pitseolak and Inuk filmmaker Zacharias Kunuk as examples of 'visual sovereignty' and

‘decolonial media aesthetics.’<sup>62</sup> Additionally, a wealth of literature has appeared on Kunuk’s influential Igloolik-based film studio, including Michael Evans’ book *Isuma: Inuit Video Art*.<sup>63</sup> Pitseolak, Kunuk, and numerous other Inuit artists using film and photography, make work that addresses personal and collective identity politics while also reminding settler viewers that most historical representations of their people were made by outsiders such as Gilliat.<sup>64</sup>

## **Methodology**

This thesis combines extensive archival research with photographic and cultural theory. The bulk of my primary investigation was conducted at Library and Archives Canada where the Gilliat Eaton Fonds is housed. The graphic collection consists of approximately 25 000 photographs (including negatives in black and white and colour and gelatin silver prints). There are also extensive textual records that contain handwritten diaries; correspondences with friends, family, and publishers; typed essays Gilliat wrote about various subject matter she photographed; technical pamphlets and instruction manuals; as well as records of employment and income in her most active freelancing years. Archival material dedicated to Gilliat’s Arctic trips includes a journal documenting the 1960 trip that totals over 400 pages; a collection of published and unpublished essays/articles about the North written by Gilliat and others; Barbara Hinds’ unpublished book manuscript; and approximately 6 500 photographs.<sup>65</sup> I also conducted research at the Cole Harbour Heritage Farm Museum (Cole Harbour, Nova Scotia), which Gilliat helped found and which today houses the bulk of her collection post 1964. This archive has, however, retained approximately four boxes of correspondence pertaining to Gilliat’s time in Ottawa as well as hundreds of prints of her early work (of which LAC holds

original copies.)<sup>66</sup> While visiting the museum, I interviewed Gilliat's friend and colleague, Elizabeth Corser, who also played a prominent role in the Museum's founding and whose memories of Gilliat helped confirm many of my own assumptions.<sup>67</sup> Finally, I visited the Dalhousie University Archives, which holds the collection of Barbara Hinds. This fonds has another copy of Hinds' Arctic manuscript, a number of Gilliat's prints, as well as approximately 53 audio recordings of interviews Hinds conducted in the Arctic with *Qallunaat* and Inuit.<sup>68</sup> Unfortunately, this thesis does not have the space to devote critical attention to Hinds' Arctic journalism, but there is certainly rich source material for future scholarly research.

Gilliat was an avid collector and kept detailed records of her life. Her thorough diaries, for example, offer insight into her working methods and personal interests. They also have in many ways guided my own inquiries. Gilliat's obsession with the North, for example, was difficult to ignore. I have, therefore, woven Gilliat's own voice (off set in italics) into my writing by quoting passages from her diaries at length. My hope is that this editorial technique will allow readers the opportunity to get to know Gilliat without my own mediation. This is not to say, that my reading of Gilliat is uncritical or that I wish to privilege her intention as the only way to view the photographs. Her writing does, however, add to the layered meanings of the photographs and becomes but one point-of-view through which we can understand the images today. When read in conjunction with her photographs, the diaries 'perform' an historical narrative, working to both 'anchor' and complicate her images.<sup>69</sup>

For this thesis, primary research is supplemented by a methodological approach that draws on scholarly work in Visual Anthropology, Feminist Art History (including,

conceptualizations of the gaze), and Photography Studies, including critiques of the documentary mode. While some scholars have resisted the subordination of images to language, Mieke Bal suggests that understanding images as texts is still a useful metaphor: “Neither texts nor images yield their meanings immediately. They are not transparent, so that images, like texts require the labour of reading.”<sup>70</sup> Bal also argues for the continued practice of *close* reading, a method that has, she suggests, fallen out of use due to the awareness that no text speaks for itself but is informed by the social world and the cultural makeup of the reader. A text, argues Bal, is always *framed* and meaning is contingent on the concepts to which one applies to their reading. Yet, in the relationship between student, frame, and object, the latter should still have the last word.<sup>71</sup> “It is not the artist or the author,” writes Bal, “but the objects they make and ‘give’ to the public domain that are the ‘speakers’ in analytic discussion.”<sup>72</sup> Thus, empowerment of the object pleads for a return to close reading.

While Bal calls for a close reading of the image, Feminist scholars tend to shift from a focused object study to look at art as a social practice. For Griselda Pollock, considering art as a social practice allows one to analyze the totality of relations and determinations, or pressures and limits that inform (women) artists.<sup>73</sup> This is particularly important for feminist art historians like Pollock whose goal is not to simply insert women into the canon but to decipher the patriarchal structures that have excluded them historically. Feminist Art History has, moreover, tended to move away from the biographical model, which works to individualize and mythologize the work of the male ‘genius’ while admitting women artists merely as figures of exception.<sup>74</sup> This thesis is about the life and work of one woman; however, I have resisted reproducing a

straightforward biography. The lack of any serious scholarship on Gilliat and the breadth of archival material available necessitated that I focus on her alone. This methodological strategy, moreover, has allowed me to privilege Gilliat as a producer and to recognize her lived experiences. However, I do not think of the photograph as a transparent screen through which we can understand an artist. I aim rather, to fulfill Pollock's definition of a feminist cultural analyst as one "who decod[es] the dynamic process of how meaning is produced and explor[es] what kinds of readings its signs make possible."<sup>75</sup> What Bal and Pollock do share is an insistence on reading as a method of deciphering meaning rather than conceiving of it as given or unequivocal. Bal's strategy of interdisciplinary cultural analysis and Pollock's *Feminist Art History*, predicated on a *differencing* of the canon, both inform this thesis.

For a self-reflexive writing model, I look to Lucy Lippard's introduction to the collected volume *Partial Recall*. Here Lippard draws on anthropologist James Clifford's concept of "partial truths" to argue that photographs, like ethnographic texts, are necessarily partial documents, whose 'truths' are always incomplete and subjective.<sup>76</sup> Lippard also reconfigures Panofskian iconology in her three step 'recall' process for looking at photographs of Indigenous subjects. Her approach moves from an initial fascination with a photograph, recalling Barthes' concept of *punctum*, to a more nuanced analysis attuned to the social and political specificities of an historical moment.<sup>77</sup> In my own research I have tried to follow a similar approach, using my initial interest or attraction to an image as a point of departure for deep readings. Thus my thesis is structured around a number of case studies rather than a comprehensive examination of Gilliat's entire photographic output.

While Lippard theorizes her settler subject hood and resists “colonial cannibalism” (or the act of speaking for and hence consuming the Other), her subjective analysis risks repeating the colonial hegemony she attempts to deny.<sup>78</sup> Thus, to supplement Lippard, I look to scholars who critically theorize the gaze.<sup>79</sup> In their analysis of photography in the popular journal *National Geographic*, Catherine Lutz and Jane Collins argue for the importance of the gaze as a potentially destabilizing site of encounter. Drawing on Lacan and feminist readings of his work, they identify seven different gazes, which include, among others, those of the photographer, the subject, and the magazine or institution.<sup>80</sup> Lutz and Collins argue that a critical analysis of the intersection of multiple gazes allows for more nuanced, if at times conflicting, interpretations of photographic meaning. Reflecting the recent ‘affective turn’ in humanities and social sciences scholarship, Ariella Azoulay examines photographs of violence, trauma, and loss, theorizing the encounter between spectator and image.<sup>81</sup> Her work productively complicates conventional understandings of the photograph, since Susan Sontag’s writing of the 1970s, as a binary with an active photographer and the passive subject of the camera’s gaze; instead, Azoulay employs the political rhetoric of citizenry to argue that the performative force of portrait photographs includes the agency of the sitter and implicates the viewer in a space of encounter—thereby, enacting a sense of civic duty.

Theorists who work at the intersection of photography and Anthropology are also important to my study. Elizabeth Edwards, for example, argues that image analysis must go beyond the purely visual to consider the cultural work that photographs do.<sup>82</sup> She suggests that photographs are not just the “result of social relations but active within

them, maintaining, reproducing and articulating shifting relations.”<sup>83</sup> Thus, influenced by Igor Kopytoff and Deborah Poole, Edwards espouses an ‘object biography’ model for understanding how photographs accumulate meaning through the fluid relationships between production, consumption, material forms, ownership, institutionalization, exchange, possession, and social accumulation.<sup>84</sup> Drawing on Edwards, I approach Gilliat’s Arctic photographs as active agents of social history, whose meaning(s) have been generated through various interpretations over time—including my own.<sup>85</sup> Deborah Poole considers the discursive and political landscapes of ethnographic photography. She argues that the “excess of description,” or the descriptive visual plenitude of photographs, can unsettle our accounts of the world and open images up to polysemous meaning.<sup>86</sup> Employing a similar theoretical stance, Australian scholar Jane Lydon investigates photographs for what they can tell us about Indigenous perspectives and the historical encounter between the camera and the Indigenous subject.<sup>87</sup> The works of Azoulay, Lydon, Edwards, and Poole comprise the core methodological underpinnings of this thesis. While situated within distinctive theoretical and geographical contexts, these four authors expand the Ideological Critique of those scholars associated with what Robin Kelsey and Blake Stimson term the “*October Moment*.”<sup>88</sup> They each argue for the photograph as a site of negotiation in which the photographer, sitter, consumer, and viewer all negotiate and make meaning differently.

## **Chapter Summaries**

This thesis is structured around a series of close image analyses that allow me to investigate diverse but interrelated topics of landscape, gender, and race in photographic representations of the North. While passages from Gilliat’s diary help to introduce and

contextualize the photograph's making, my readings go deeper to examine the multiple meanings any single image can carry. Chapter One looks more closely at Gilliat's motivation to go to the North and the ways in which she constructed her own identity in doing so. I argue that Gilliat saw the Arctic as both a central (and enigmatic) core of Canadian national identity and a place to bolster her career as a photographer. In this chapter I look at how Gilliat's landscape images were informed by an imaging tradition in the North while also functioning as intensely personal, perhaps even spiritual, encounters. Finally, I examine how Gilliat and Hinds actively combatted negative stereotypes of white women in the Arctic. I contend that Gilliat used the camera to picture Hinds, and herself in turn, as professional women who could do 'men's work' while maintaining their femininity and empathetic character.

Chapter Two draws on Mary Louise Pratt's conceptualization of the "contact zone" to analyze Gilliat's photographs of Inuit. Centred around two case studies, I argue that although Gilliat was aware of how photographs subjugate Indigenous peoples, her published images often ended up reproducing the same stereotypes she actively resisted. While it is important and necessary to critically examine mainstream media's renderings of Inuit and the ways in which journalism naturalized racist colonial politics, returning to unpublished archival materials can offer a compelling challenge to such accounts. I do not, however, suggest that Gilliat was an exceptional figure or that she pushed back against those she worked for, but rather that her archival material allows us to better understand the relationships she cultivated with her Indigenous photographic subjects and the ways in which they might have actively participated in their own representation. Extending from discussions of the "contact zone" in Chapter Two and the ways in which



Gilliat used the camera to assert her identity in Chapter One, my final chapter looks closely at photographs of Inuit women to argue that Gilliat represented the female Other as both a way of constructing her own identity and as a counterpoint to narratives that stressed Indigenous male experience, particularly that of the courageous ‘hunter’ type.

Collectively, these chapters explore one woman’s photographic career through a close reading of her trip to the eastern Arctic. Arguing for photography as a social practice, I explore how Gilliat used the camera as an assertion of her own identity as a female newcomer to Canada. I also touch on the complexities of documentary and photojournalism, as well as the inherently problematic nature of photographing Indigenous peoples. These inquiries come together in the archive, which I argue is a productive site for the recuperation of women’s histories and the excavation of complex narratives of intercultural encounter. While my focus here is on the source material having to do with the North, I have spent a great deal of time with the Gilliat collections and encourage others interested in the social history of photography to utilize these rich archives. Those wanting to know more about women’s artistic and photographic histories, British colonialism (particularly British Ceylon), Canadian photojournalism, photographic albums (particularly in the 1930s and 40s and/or those made by children), and/or Settler-Indigenous relations as rendered photographically, will find rich source material in the archives of Rosemary Gilliat.

*What I saw, I photographed!*—Cole Harbour, 1999.<sup>89</sup>

## Chapter One: Landscape, Gender, and an “Idea of North”

**“Undoubtedly we’ll have our moments of awful gloom up North. One cannot forever live in delight, but I’m certain the moments of splendour which must happen, will be enough to last us till we die.”—Barbara Hinds to Rosemary Gilliat.<sup>90</sup>**

**“North is multiple, shifting, and elastic; it is a *process*, not an eternal fixed goal or condition.”—Sherrill Grace, *Canada and the Idea of North*.<sup>91</sup>**

While in the eastern Arctic Gilliat was primarily assigned to shoot human interest stories such as Inuit printmakers in Cape Dorset or Girl Guides in Frobisher Bay, yet she invested much of her ‘free’ time wandering around and photographing landscapes. In the small fishing village of George River (now Kangiqsualujjuaq, Nunavik) in northern Quebec, for example, she was particularly captivated by the beauty of the pristine Arctic tundra. In a photograph entitled *Camp at the freezer site in Kangiqsualujjuaq, Quebec* [Figure 1.1] the rugged terrain of granite is dotted with tall white canvas tents staked into pillowy blankets of low-lying moss and lichen. Small groups of unidentifiable people occupy the middle ground while the faint outline of a canoe is barely perceptible in the background where the dusty blues of the river and sky merge. A passage from Gilliat’s diary recounts this very scene:

The sun was shining as the plane rocked in the swell and a canoe stood by to meet us. From the rocky shore a kayak—the first I have ever seen outside a museum—slid out from the rocky shore. This gave me a strange feeling—to have read so much about the arctic and the Eskimo—and I could hardly realize I was seeing this with my own eyes. This feeling has occurred more than once on this summer’s junket...The tents were pitched on springy tundra and small birds flew about almost under your feet. I felt intensely happy, for this was the arctic as *I had hoped to find it*.<sup>92</sup>

As an Inuk man carried her luggage to shore, Gilliat had one opportunity to photograph the kayak: “[I] only hope I got him—such a rare chance too—he shot off across the bay like the proverbial arrow” [Figure 1.2].<sup>93</sup> It was also Gilliat’s ‘rare chance’ to visit

George River, which was still relatively undeveloped at this time.<sup>94</sup> Thus, Gilliat's elation upon seeing the view she had *hoped* to find reflects her pre-conceived and 'primitivizing' understanding of the North. Having already spent a period of time in Frobisher Bay (now Iqaluit), Gilliat was no stranger to the transformations that southern intervention had wrought on northern lands and peoples, particularly as a result of the establishment of settled communities. Yet, she still associated the 'True North' with, to use Gilliat's words, "unspoiled tundra" and "relatively unsophisticated" 'Eskimos.'<sup>95</sup> Thus by photographing and writing about these sights, Gilliat contributed to a 'salvage paradigm' rhetoric, in which settler Canadians believed it was necessary to document, collect, and save, the cultural products of the country's Indigenous peoples. It was here, after all, that Gilliat finally saw a kayak, that seemingly foreign and ancient mode of transportation that she had only ever encountered in museums or in paintings by non-Indigenous artists.

Beyond a betrayal of Gilliat's primitivizing outlook, the photograph of George River [Figure 1.1] also underscores her own presence in the North and proclivity for travel in remote locations. Gilliat and Hinds had naively expected that while in the Arctic they would camp most, if not all, of the time and so they packed a tent and all other necessary supplies. But to their apparent dismay, they were usually put up in federally owned housing and treated to the luxuries of heat, food, and alcohol. In George River, however, the women were very excited to have the opportunity to camp and, by picturing canvas tents, Gilliat emphasized the rustic condition of their travels. The photograph, moreover, was deliberately framed to exclude the wood framed buildings and industrial freezer that also occupied this site. On the far right, for example, is an ominous green embankment that from a distance appears to be a moss covered hill but upon closer look

reveals itself to be a forest green tarp covering. Another photograph, from the same site [Figure 2.3], includes the tarped heap from a closer vantage point. While it is unclear what lies underneath the tarpaulin, its close proximity to a large industrial freezer indicates that it is likely important to the commercial fishing venture of this small Inuit village. By cropping out such modern conveniences, Gilliat not only emphasized the ‘primitive’ character of George River but also her own aptitude for ‘roughing it.’

In this chapter I examine Gilliat’s experiences, focusing on her desire to travel North and how she visualized herself and Hinds while in the Arctic. I contextualize Gilliat’s travels by beginning with a brief analysis of Canadian mythologies of the North, as argued particularly by the scholars Sherrill Grace and Rob Shields. Gilliat, who had been fascinated by the North long before 1960, was both influenced by and contributed to such mythologies. I argue that Gilliat’s Arctic landscape photographs, while informed by predictable aesthetic and ideological conventions, were intensely personal and private moments, functioning as both indexical traces of her presence in the North and as ways of understanding—and ‘controlling’—the far reaches of Canada. Drawing on Renée Hulan’s and Joan Sangster’s respective discussions about gender and and North, I then consider how Gilliat offered a ‘feminist’ counter-narrative of northern travel—albeit one constructed from a position of colonial privilege. As is evident by the two *Weekend Magazine* stories that open the introductory chapter, Gilliat was often confronted by the limitations of travelling and working as a single woman, yet I argue that she combatted such limitations in her photographs and travel writing.

## Picturing the ‘Vast and Empty Country’

In October 1952 after a long and arduous boat journey Gilliat was elated to finally see Canadian land and exclaimed in her journal, “But the space—already I begin to understand the vast empty country—what an appeal it has after Europe which is so tamed.”<sup>96</sup> Her use of the counterpoint “tamed,” immediately conjures its opposite: images of a wild and uninhabited landscape. In the early days of her arrival to Ottawa, Gilliat immersed herself in Canadian culture, which included visits to galleries in search of a national aesthetic: “I love landscapes—but few were alive...The trouble, as one might expect is that so many Canadian artists are so busy imitating their European forerunners—there is so little of Canada’s life.”<sup>97</sup> Arriving in Canada with the preconceived notion of a vast and unruly wilderness, Gilliat was disappointed to encounter the restrained landscape traditions of her home country. Subsequently, it was her love for the outdoors and desire to picture Canadian identity—both geographic and social identities—that took Gilliat all over the country. From the St. Lawrence Seaway to the interior of British Columbia, Gilliat used her camera to see and know the nation.

*Round a bend we came within sight of the St. Lawrence—that marvelous great river that makes me wish I had been born a Canadian... I never expected to get to Canada—and certainly never to see the United States—they seemed for so long two fabulous far away countries and I still find it hard to believe I am here, and to see the St. Lawrence that Pete wrote and talked about, and the islands of the river—it gave me a strange feeling...—Ottawa, May 23, 1953.*<sup>98</sup>

Joan Schwartz and James Ryan contend that photographs contribute to a “geographical imagination.” A term coined by Edward Said, a “geographical imagination” is the mechanism by which people domesticate difference or transform that which is ‘exotic’ into something familiar and natural. In the context of Orientalism, Said

argues that the West imagines and articulates the Orient, dictating its terms of existence and shaping the encounter between East and West.<sup>99</sup> For Schwartz and Ryan, photography is but one practice that contributes to the construction of imaginative geographies. In their words, “photographic practices—from tourist photography to domestic photography—play a central role in constituting and sustaining both individual and collective notions of landscape and identity.”<sup>100</sup> Gilliat herself felt most comfortable photographing landscapes: In a passage from her diary addressing her anxieties about portrait photography—a point to which I will return in Chapter Two—Gilliat wrote, “But there is no doubt that I am happier on nature subjects...even after 10 years of photography of imposing on other people’s privacy.”<sup>101</sup> While Gilliat’s abundance of landscape photography may be, in part, an effect of her apprehensions towards portraiture, it also illustrates her relationship to place. Gilliat therefore employed photography to construct her own “geographical imagination,” picturing her environment in an effort to situate herself in time and space.

Only two years after arriving in Canada, Gilliat had already seen and photographed more of the nation than the average Canadian. In 1954, as noted in the introduction, Gilliat and three friends, Anna Brown, Helen Salkeld, and Audrey James, packed up a Volkswagen and travelled across the Trans-Canada Highway, camping along the way until they reached Vancouver. The highway, a potent symbol of a united Canada, framed Gilliat’s photographic views of the wilderness for which she was searching. Often photographing her travel companions in remote locations surrounded by trees and mountains, Gilliat pictured her friends—and herself in turn—as strong, adventurous, and ‘Canadian’ women. But in her search for distinctly Canadian sites, it was the North that

most intrigued and attracted Gilliat. Within a few days of landing in Canada, Gilliat met a nurse stationed in Fort Churchill, Manitoba who advised her on making arrangements to go North. Shortly afterwards, Gilliat sent some of her Ceylon photographs to *The Beaver* in hopes of securing an assignment. When the editor wrote back expressing an interest in her work, Gilliat reflected in her journal, “How much I hope he means it—enough to do something about it... That strange attraction of the North, that I felt so strongly in Norway—what does it mean?”<sup>102</sup> Thus, even before arriving in Canada, Gilliat felt pulled to the enigmatic North.

### **An “Idea of North”**

*The sparkling water and swish of the waves was enough to send anyone into a trance and the warm sun was so caressing it was hard to imagine that we were sailing arctic seas. Later that afternoon, however, we saw an iceberg glittering in the sun on the starboard bow and Josepee steered fairly close so that we were able to get a good look. It was in two domes rounded and shining and it looked eternal... I shot the last three exposures of any kind that I had in my many cameras—that is unpleasant to be right out of film in this country. Something startling is sure to turn up—Port Burwell, August 1, 1960.*<sup>103</sup>

The North has been a constant presence in Canadian art. In the early nineteenth century, for example, British Naval officer George Back represented the Arctic in drawings and watercolours as a place of trepidation and profound beauty. Within relatively the same period, Swiss artist Peter Rindisbacher painted Inuit (and many North American First Nations) as ‘primitive’ objects of curiosity. By the first few decades of the twentieth century, Euro-Canadian painters associated with the Group of Seven, including Lawren Harris and A.Y. Jackson, looked to expansive and empty Arctic regions as a source of spirituality and the premise for a new national aesthetic. While today, contemporary Winnipeg-based artist Sarah Anne Johnson uses mixed media to express a personal relationship with the North while also commenting on the escalating

threat of global warming. Such differing representations reflect an ongoing and shifting sociopolitical relationship with the North.

Photography, in particular, has been used since the mid-nineteenth century to visualize and document the Arctic as explorers, scientists, and artists alike have used the camera to produce an image of the North that reflects their own time and culture.

According to Amy Adams, who has written a history of Arctic and Inuit photography, “it remains largely through the descriptive power of photographs that the rest of the world is acquainted with the Arctic and its people.”<sup>104</sup> Photographs from the A.P Low Exhibition at the turn-of-the-twentieth-century, for example, are recognized as important documents in Canada’s declaration of sovereignty in the North. Such federally sponsored expeditions were also a way of monitoring and visually documenting activity in the Arctic (of both international trespassers and Indigenous peoples). Around the same time, anthropologists and ethnologists such as Diamond Jenness, employed the camera in their scientific study of Inuit. Poised with the belief that traditional Indigenous cultures would soon be extinct, anthropologists used photography as a form of both visual and cultural documentation.<sup>105</sup> By the mid-twentieth century, a period of intense colonialist policy, photojournalists ventured to the Arctic to picture ‘successful’ Indigenous assimilation while maintaining a primitivizing and paternalistic view of Inuit. Inuit artists have, however, offered a counter-narrative to hegemonic representations. Beginning in the 1940s, for example, photographer Peter Pitseolak used the camera to document his family and culture—an invaluable counterpoint to non-Indigenous representation that was often imagined and romanticized. As is evident from these few and very brief examples, photographic visualizations of the North have taken a myriad of forms and have been conveyed from



multiple points of view. Thus, an idea of North—as rendered photographically—is heterogeneous and in constant flux.

This multitude of visual representations of the Arctic in both photographic and other expressive forms collectively contribute to what Sherrill Grace terms, a “discursive formation” of the North. Grace avoids the common scholarly term *myth* for its implications of a fanciful narrative with no relationship to fact. Preferring the term *idea*, Grace argues that while representations of the North may be factually inaccurate and ethically problematic, they can and should be considered as constructing (and constructed by) an imagined view.<sup>106</sup> Grace contends, moreover, that “representations of the North are as beautiful, powerful, inviting, disturbing, exclusionary, and exploitative as the individuals creating and using them *according to accepted standards and ideas of the day*.”<sup>107</sup>

The North tends to conjure up images of extreme climate, wild landscapes, and resilient peoples; as such, it has become a recurrent metaphor for Canadian culture and people. As sociologist Rob Shields compellingly articulates, the North “forms the mythic ‘heartland’ of Canada but remains a zone of Otherness in the spatial system of Canadian culture.”<sup>108</sup> For Shields, as for Grace, the North is an empty slate onto which people project images of Canadianness and define their own southern urban existence. Thus non-Indigenous representations of the North, though often inaccurate, are always products of imagination and typically say more about dominant Canadian culture than actual life in the Arctic. Writing specifically on filmic representations Peter Geller contends, “As seen through the camera lens, the North became an ordered environment often defined in reference to a marker of southern civilization.”<sup>109</sup>

The idea of North is, therefore, a southern, projected constellation of ideas and images. Yet, the North, as Shields points out, also has its own material conditions and an ‘official’ social mythology blankets the “palimpsest of personal images and experiences” both Indigenous and non.<sup>110</sup> Grace argues, furthermore, that we cannot simply disavow historical ideas of the North but need to interpolate “new voices in the dialogue.”<sup>111</sup> “New voices” refers most importantly (and most urgently) to the Indigenous peoples of the North but might also include other disenfranchised groups such as non-Indigenous women, like Gilliat and Hinds, who travelled in the Arctic.

Historical representations of the North were not lost on Gilliat. As a woman fascinated by Canadian culture and an avid researcher, Gilliat was certainly aware of mythologies of the North and her collecting practices reflect this. Her commissioned and published work, in turn, reproduced the South’s imagined North, capturing the Arctic’s ‘raw nature’ while simultaneously promoting cultural assimilation and promoting industry and tourism. Yet, Gilliat was also self-reflexive and worked to both know and understand the Other. While her published photographs contributed to a national mythologizing, her personal writing articulates an awareness of her whiteness and a discomfort with the colonial system of which she was naturally complicit. While in George River [Figure 1.1], for example, Gilliat felt a deep sense of empathy for Inuit who were routinely forced to leave their lands for medical aid in the South: “I can understand how terrible it must be for an Eskimo, having known all this lovely land, to go outside and be incarcerated in a hospital or sanatorium.”<sup>112</sup> It was by picturing wilderness that Gilliat made a sincere attempt to understand the Inuit’s intimate connection with their

land. Thus, Gilliat's own understanding of the North was itself complex and at times contradictory.

*I would love a week of this, so there would be time to readjust oneself to face the struggle in the South—of meeting deadlines—of long lonely hours in the darkroom—of haggling with people who want photographs of whose price I have no idea. And of course debts! ...Still we have had four months—a real arctic summer. It will be tremendously exciting to see the photographs and I hope that some of the precious ones will be good. It would be unnatural to go on having such a wonderful time for any longer than this!—* Frobisher Bay, October 15, 1960.<sup>113</sup>

### **Picturing a Northern Place**

Photography was a way in which Gilliat made the abstract space of the North a meaningful, specific, and personal place. In the edited volume, *Placing Memory and Remembering Place in Canada*, editors and historians John Walsh and James Opp “assert the significance of *place* as a site made meaningful by memory and commemorative practices.”<sup>114</sup> Photography, for example, is but one social practice that turns a site into an evocative visual language. Although placing is critical to abstract notions of nation and empire (as argued by Benedict Anderson), Walsh and Opp argue for an historical analysis of the individual and collective processes of memory making and their relation to place. Gilliat herself recognized the importance of photographs to memory. After her first trip North she wrote, “even if no good to the H.B.C. they will help me to remember the journey...”<sup>115</sup> Her photographs therefore served multiple functions even for herself, as both saleable views of the nation and personal supplements to memory.

*Patches of snow made the full brown landscape more interesting—and all the time one was curious of that sweeping shoreline across the bay. As Barbara said—probably we will always remember this first impression of the Arctic—* Frobisher Bay, June 17, 1960.<sup>116</sup>

As I have already argued, Gilliat photographed landscapes as a way of getting to know the far reaches of her adopted home and as a process of identity formation. In the

Arctic, her landscape images also function as an indexical trace of her travels, as stamps of her presence in an ostensibly harsh and demanding climate. In a photograph of a site near Cape Dorset, the deep golden hues of a hard rocky landscape recede in perpetuity, meeting the horizon line of a sweeping pale blue sky [Figure 1.3]. Of this site, or one similar, Gilliat wrote:

I went back and took some more photos of my golden stones and then was completely carried away by the really marvelous rocks of this part of Cape Dorset. The rocks were white, also pink, and gold with a purple grape-like bloom—but mostly rose coloured. There were old rings and seal catches everywhere. There were boulders rolled smoothly by wind and water till they were smooth elemental shapes that could have been the refined sculptures of Barbara Hepworth or Arp. Colours might have been poured into the stone—some appeared to be marbled—grey, white, and pink mixed in like sweets in an English sweetshop, like bullseyes [sic]...I have never seen rock and stone like this, so exciting that I got carried right away and shot rolls and rolls of film.—Cape Dorset, September 18, 1960.<sup>117</sup>

In keeping with a photographic landscape tradition of the North, Gilliat rendered Cape Dorset barren and inhospitable. Yet, unlike popular images of the North as a dark, lifeless, and glacial territory, her image of golden rocks and green vegetation speaks of colour, life, and liveliness. The scheduling of Gilliat and Hinds' trip was largely determined by the relative ease of travel in the summer and early autumn. The decision to take a trip in the warmer months also meant that Gilliat did not need to learn a new set of technical skills in order to work in the Arctic.<sup>118</sup> Furthermore, the warm season allowed Gilliat and Hinds to visit and photograph multiple sites within a short period of time and to occasionally camp in their canvas tent. Overall, the timing of the trip permitted the women to move through the North with a relative degree of ease and independence. Although Gilliat's landscapes are not frozen or lifeless, they still implicitly showcase the

photographer as an intrepid adventurer in an Arctic wilderness thereby inserting her body in place of an explorer/adventurer type typically coded as masculine.

Gilliat's time photographing landscapes were intensely personal moments, where the splendour of unfamiliar wilderness threw her into a frenzy of photographic activity. Or to use her own words, the Arctic wilderness "was enough to send anyone in a trance."<sup>119</sup> But just as Gilliat's images of nature can be read as assertions of self or personal (re)orderings of an unfamiliar land, her landscape photography is also intimately tied to the social politics of place. The same images that, I have argued, can be read as a kind of self-portraiture, are also implicated in a colonial tradition of landscape photography that worked to control nature and dispossess Indigenous peoples of the land. In W.J.T. Mitchell's words, landscape can also be "a place of amnesia and erasure, a strategic site for burying the past and veiling history with natural 'beauty.'"<sup>120</sup> In a Canadian context Jonathan Bordo argues that 'absence' is a unique feature of Euro-Canadian artists' representation of landscape.<sup>121</sup> The absence of human presence, particularly that of Indigenous peoples, marks the land as wild, empty, and available. Gilliat's renderings of an empty landscape thus work to dispossess the Inuit from their land and mark the area as ripe for the taking.

While many of Gilliat's landscapes are empty natural sites, her writing about them conveys a different sentiment. As is evident by the long diary passage describing the landscape of Cape Dorset, nature always carries signs of habitation and use. Tent sites and abandoned fishing nets littered the area she photographed, functioning as visual reminders of Inuit use of the land. These discarded items, however, do not surface in Gilliat's photograph for they would complicate and clutter her picturesque view of a wild

and empty land. At the same time, Gilliat's relationship with nature seemingly brought her closer to understanding or, at least, empathizing with an Inuit worldview. While on a ship headed for Fort Chimo (now Kuujuaq) Gilliat reflected on the ominous character of the Arctic waters: "but over the straits of McClellan it looked murky and sinister. I can really imagine how Eskimos naturally believed in evil spirits being out to get you, after seeing that forbidding channel."<sup>122</sup> And in Port Burwell (now Killiniq), another small fishing community, Gilliat wrote again about Inuit relationship with the land: "The orange rocks and soft blue sky and marvelous air and shine off the ice made one utterly and completely happy. No wonder the Eskimos love their land and are unhappy in the South."<sup>123</sup> For Gilliat, sustained contemplation of nature was a vehicle through which she could better understand—albeit on a surface level—the significance of the land for Inuit and the cultural effects of southern presence in the North.

### **Gendering the Arctic**

*Saw various editors—how I loath tramping around offices trying to sell photos which no one wants much! I think Bill is right, typing is probably the best thing to do!!  
But how deadly—Toronto, 1953.*<sup>124</sup>

Unlike most women who travelled to the Arctic before them, Gilliat and Hinds were not missionaries, teachers, or the wives of DNANR staff or RCMP officers; they were freelance professionals who used their skills to travel. However, despite their relative freedom as professional women, the disadvantage of their gender was made apparent throughout the entire trip. Hinds, for example, began her book manuscript by underscoring the unusual nature of their presence in the North and the adversity they prepared themselves to face:

Going North is referred to by 'those who know' as going Inside. When you are North, the South is named the Outside. This helps to maintain the exclusive club

atmosphere which has been nurtured by bearded scientists, prospectors and traders, and discourages women from entering the Arctic, except for nurses and school teachers. They are functional. We were to serve no cause but journalism, and in respectful difference to the club we were entering and whose members we may have had to entertain, we included a little whisky amongst the apple rings and flaked onions.<sup>125</sup>

Hinds characterized the North as an exclusive men's club, using the dichotomous terminology of 'inside' and 'outside' to refer to both a landscape and culture distinct from her southern home and to a site of gendered difference. Understanding her privilege in entering this men's club, Hinds prepared to impress her hosts by packing some whisky. This gesture is significant for it underscores Gilliat and Hinds' desire to be welcomed into the club but also suggests that they strategically manipulated their 'feminine' qualities of entertaining and care giving to achieve their goals.

Gilliat similarly recounted numerous instances when she felt limited by her gender while in the Arctic. On one of their first nights in Frobisher Bay, the regional manager of the area, Frank Delaute, invited the women over to socialize and meet his male colleagues. The men interrogated Gilliat and Hinds on their intentions in the Arctic, making them feel uncomfortable and unwelcome:

At present he [Mr. Green who runs the rehabilitation centre at Apex Hill] seems distinctly hostile—as naturally we are seen to be time-wasters—and I suppose two other things are against us. Being women, and being English. But we hope to live down these disadvantages in time. Naturally correspondents are also highly suspect and it will be a slow business gathering co-operation or trust.<sup>126</sup>

It was early on that Delaute also warned Gilliat about her conduct in the North: "Every woman in the North is a nuisance—so try to be the least nuisance possible."<sup>127</sup> Upon their return to Frobisher Bay at the end of the trip, Delaute confirmed with Gilliat that she and Hinds had succeeded in making themselves useful in the Arctic. By "succeeded" Delaute

implied that the women strategically traded upon expectations of their femininity to help deal with emergencies, such as caring for a sick Inuk girl who Gilliat and Hinds accompanied on the boat from Port Burwell to Fort Chimo where she was to receive medical treatment. Gilliat, however, did not seem particularly surprised by Delaute's comments; in fact, she had experienced such sexism before, especially when hired as a photographer. When she first arrived in Canada, for example, Gilliat was warned that 'typing' would be a more suitable profession for a woman. And, even when she did break into the 'scene,' Gilliat often found herself to be the only woman on shoots and she had to work tirelessly to convince people to purchase a woman's photographs. In the Arctic, proving herself as capable and skilled was an equally difficult task. However, despite Gilliat's frustrations with gender discrimination, she was undeniably proud of her apparent success as an Arctic traveller. Most of all she was overjoyed by the fact that, having proved herself useful, she might be able to return to the North and certainly to pave the way for other women to follow in her footsteps.<sup>128</sup>

In her study of white women's Arctic travel writing in the mid-twentieth century, historian Joan Sangster argues that women's narratives are characterized by an "ambivalence, awkwardness, and a need to justify their presence, dissimilar to the tales of many men."<sup>129</sup> Moreover, non-missionary women who travelled to the Arctic needed to "prove themselves," to demonstrate that they could weather the surroundings and make themselves useful in the domestic sphere. Gilliat's own writing confirms Sangster's observations. The photographer consistently encountered people, both Inuit and *Qallunaat*, who questioned her motives and made her doubt the relevance of her work. But while her diary is replete with moments of ambivalence and hesitation, Gilliat's



photographs tell a different tale. Images of herself, Hinds, and the adventures they went on—not unlike her Trans-Canada Highway images—assert a strength and confidence that counters Gilliat’s written reflections and reveal the ways in which she used the mediums of writing and photography to engender narratives differently.

### **Feminist Self-Portraiture**

Self-portraiture has long been an effective and critical—if not subversive—mechanism for women artists. Picturing oneself performing ‘work,’ is both a strategy of female visibility and an assertion of identity and labour. Self-portraiture, however, need not be an actual likeness of a person. It has been recently argued by a number of art historians that forms of material and visual culture such as beadwork, dress, and domestic space can also function as embodiments of self-identity.<sup>130</sup> While there are very few photographs of Gilliat in the eastern Arctic, she did engage in self-portraiture in other ways. For example, as I have already argued, Gilliat’s landscape images can be understood as both meditative studies of an empty Arctic land and documentary traces of her physical presence in the North—a different kind of self-portrait.

Gilliat’s photographs of Hinds can also be read as stand-ins for the photographer herself: A way of asserting the photographer’s identity while remaining in control of the picture’s making. In an untitled photograph Hinds sits on the deck of a boat with a typewriter in her lap [Figure 1.4]. She gazes down towards the keyboard and types away, appearing both content and comfortable on deck. The typewriter, moreover, underscores Hinds’ intellect and professionalism as well as her ‘insider’ access to Inuit culture as she accompanies a group of men on a boat trip and writes about the adventure in real time. Two busy figures occupy the foreground, seemingly oblivious to the presence of the

camera and likely in the middle of an important daily chore. Although Hinds does not help the boat crew, she is nonetheless not presented as passive; she is a professional woman actively working in her journalistic field. The snapshot aesthetic, reinforced by the unusual cropping of the figures' bodies and the slight downward gaze of the camera, suggests, moreover, that this was an ordinary and private moment and not one necessarily staged for the camera.<sup>131</sup>

A handful of Gilliat's photographs of Hinds also show her engaged with Inuit. One of the most detailed narratives in both women's writing and the subject of many of Gilliat's photographs were two seal hunts they were invited to join. Literary scholar Renée Hulan, who has examined the ways in which ethnographic and travel literature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has framed northern experience, argues that hunting narratives—one of the most popular themes in northern travel writing—concentrate on male Indigenous experience and glorify the heroic, white figure who enters the North.<sup>132</sup> By focusing on hunting culture, ethnographers and travel writers emphasize gendered divisions of labour, Inuit men's valiant abilities, and the 'primitive' nature of living off the land.<sup>133</sup> For Gilliat, the hunt was important for several reasons: it granted her intimate access to Indigenous knowledge while allowing her to enter and assert herself in a traditionally masculine space. The fact that Gilliat took a number of photographs featuring Hinds on these occasions is no coincidence.

Like the photograph of Hinds typing on a boat, another image portrays the writer performing a different kind of labour [Figure 1.5]. Here, Hinds steers the boat while an Inuk hunter by the name of Pitsulak stands beside her. Hinds literally subverts a masculine type by placing her own body where a male one typically resides. Yet, the

facial expressions of the two figures betray the constructed, perhaps even performative, nature of this scene. While Hinds' nervous smile indicates discomfort, Pitsulak is grinning and at ease. He seems to regard the very idea of Hinds steering the boat as comical. Importantly, Pitsulak's presence in the image situates the boat in an Arctic setting and signifies a relationship between Hinds and an Inuk; yet, his playful demeanor also suggests a kind of performance for the camera that, in turn, discredits Hinds' 'authentic' northern experience. Clearly this is not a customary situation but one in which the women were granted privileged access to the event of the hunt. They were, after all, invited on their first seal hunt by Bob Green (superintendent for the Apex rehabilitation centre in Frobisher Bay) and not by the Inuit crew members. Moreover, when the women returned 'home' to Frobisher Bay they stripped off their layers of filthy clothing, dressed up for dinner and sipped a "civilized martini."<sup>134</sup> The women could only 'go native' for so long before wanting to return again to the comforts of so-called civilized life.

As I have already noted, Gilliat and Hinds were often confronted by the limitations of their gender while travelling in the North. This was especially evident when Inuit and *Qallunaat* men alike questioned the women's ability to survive harsh Arctic conditions. Gilliat was particularly irritated when their *Qallunaat* hosts insisted that the women sleep in houses rather than the tent they had brought with them. After their first night in the Arctic, Gilliat remarked: "It was odd to be having breakfast in our luxurious flat—instead of the tent for which we had been prepared. I doubt if anyone took us seriously about this."<sup>135</sup> There were moments, however, when Gilliat and Hinds had the opportunity to sleep in their tent and prove themselves capable in the northern wilderness. While on their first seal hunt, the crew hit bad weather and had to resort to safety on

shore where Gilliat and Hinds set up their tent. Apparently Pitsulak and the rest of the crew were impressed:

When it was up he [Pitsulak] was really quite impressed and looked at it inside too and it was a good tent. It must have been a relief to them that we had our own tent...We lay in there and listened to the gale which tugged at the tent.<sup>136</sup>

Gilliat photographed the small canvas tent against a jagged rock cliff [Figure 1.6]. The image is rather uninteresting in and of itself but the shifting signifier “our” scribbled on the contact print is meaningful. This is not a random tent the women stumbled upon, nor a shelter provided for them by the boat crew. But their *own* tent, which they packed and dragged through the Arctic and set up on shore the night their boat hit bad weather. The tent is tied tightly to surrounding rocks and stretched almost to the point of breakage. Fear of Arctic winds and unpredictable weather is perceptible in the taut canvas. Precariously set amongst large boulders, this does not look like a comfortable place to rest. Yet, the affirmative statement “our tent” implies a pride in the dwelling, a sense of satisfaction in their ability to set up their own shelter and sleep in this foreboding landscape. This is not, furthermore, a heroic or majestic site but an affirmation of a ‘real’ experience in the North. Without picturing themselves in the image, Gilliat’s denotative words once again evoke the women’s presence in the Arctic land. While camped out on this island the women also dried their clothes, attended to a fire, and learned to make *Nanuq* (polar bear) Stew. All rather mundane camp tasks, but ones that Gilliat captured with her camera as a validation of the women’s hard work and their ‘authentic’ Inuit experience.

The next day, after the storm had passed, the women posed for a photograph with their Inuit companions [Figure 1.7]. From Gilliat’s diary and a comparison with other

photographs I have identified the individuals from left to right as Spyglassie, Mosesee, Pitsulak, Hinds, Sarpinak (Pitsulak's son), and Gilliat. All the figures in the image look slightly startled as if they were not ready to have their photograph taken. The women display faint smiles and tentative expressions while the men meet the camera's gaze with stern, unimpressed faces. The figures are placed against a steep rock face, which stands in as a symbol of the barren northern landscape while simultaneously making the space feel shallow, constrained, and claustrophobic. The awkwardness of the image may be attributed in part to the amateur skill of its maker. One figure missing from the photograph is the eleven-year-old Mosha whom Gilliat identified as the son of Mike and the nephew of Simonee.<sup>137</sup> He was likely the one who snapped the image. Despite their ambiguous facial expressions, the figures stand in a row as if expecting to be photographed together. Presumably Gilliat directed Mosha to take this picture as an affirmation of the women's attendance on the seal hunt and their relationship with the Inuit crew. Recording the only women on the trip, the photograph further attests to Gilliat and Hinds' atypical and privileged access to this site of Inuit cultural custom and Indigenous knowledge.<sup>138</sup>

The North is often referred to in gendered terms. Renée Hulan argues that the very rhetoric of travelling to the Arctic is masculinized as 'penetrating' or 'entering' another culture to reveal something knowable.<sup>139</sup> The masculine outsider 'naturally' embodies traits of self-reliance, autonomy, and physical prowess so as to claim dominance over the feminized subject of study (the land or racial Other).<sup>140</sup> Hulan claims, moreover, that historically even women ethnographers tended to erase signs of their gender in order to construct a masculine narrative. In other words, white women, just as

their male counterparts, exploited their position of power to romanticize and marginalize the Other. My reading of Gilliat's seal hunt photographs suggests that Hinds, and Gilliat in turn, interrogated masculine types by inserting their female bodies as gestures of strength and independence that combatted negative views of white women in the North. While, on the one hand, this can be read as an attempt to erase feminine gender codes in order to occupy a position of power, I would argue, on the other hand, that Gilliat subtly and consciously played with gender conventions in an effort to subvert the hyper-masculine and paternalistic explorer type and to question the naturalization of the North as a masculine space.

Such a subversion invokes Judith Butler's theorization of gender performativity in which she argues that gender is constituted through the "stylized repetition of acts" that are "renewed, revised, and consolidated through time."<sup>141</sup> The body's presence in the world is not the representation of a predetermined interior essence, but rather "gains meaning through a concrete and historically mediated expression."<sup>142</sup> We are compelled, Butler argues, to perform the fiction of gender as a means of cultural survival because performative failure is readily and regularly punished, pushing subversive identities to the margins of society. Yet, the notion of performativity also enables a more fluid understanding of gender, one that is open to transformation and contestation. Although we are not entirely free beings (as the social body is governed by what Foucault calls 'disciplinary power') we do have a certain degree of agency that allows us to make meaning—to do one's body and to do one's body differently from contemporaries, predecessors, and successors. Further, while gender is not a role you can simply adopt to express or disguise an interior self, contestation is possible through "the breaking or

subversive repetitive of that style.”<sup>143</sup> Subversion, however, is more readily accepted on a theatrical stage—such as that of the photograph—where non-conforming bodies are seen as false and unthreatening. Photography, therefore, was a vehicle through which Gilliat (in photographs of herself and other women) could suspend rigid gender codes and occupy a social position from which she was usually exempt. The photographic stage, however, was just that, a *stage* and did not necessarily reflect real life experiences, in which Gilliat and Hinds were not always taken seriously in their professional endeavours in the North.

Hulan argues, moreover, that feminist-counter narratives of the North have generally done little to complicate the dominant narrative except for giving women access to it. (For Gilliat, however, granting women access to the Arctic was one of her very goals.) Gilliat certainly worked within the structures of colonialism and she produced work that anticipated the expectations of her receiving audience—for example, photographs of the seal hunt, which included many images of male Inuit hunters and harpooned seals, fed into a fascination with Indigenous hunting culture—yet she did not only focus on men’s experience. As I will expand upon in Chapter Three, Gilliat was dedicated to picturing and understanding Inuit women’s roles and experiences in the North. I argue that Gilliat photographed Inuit women as a way of asserting her own gendered identity while also attempting to represent the complexity of Inuit women’s lives as she understood them. Unlike conventional Arctic narratives that largely exclude women’s experience and graft Western gender assumptions onto Inuit, Gilliat tried to tell a more inclusive and complicated tale—albeit one that came from the place of privileged whiteness.

## Chapter Two: The Photograph as “Contact Zone”

**“[T]he spectator must reconstruct what was there from both what is visible and what is not immediately manifest, but what can—in principle—become visible in the exact same photograph.”—Ariella Azoulay, *The Civil Contract of Photography*.<sup>144</sup>**

Kananginak Pootoogook’s lithograph *The First Tourist* [Figure 2.1] is an Inuit representation of the intrusive *Qallunaaq*. A southern man, inappropriately dressed for the weather, points his camera towards a passive Inuk woman surrounded by stereotyped symbols of her ‘exoticism’—the skin clothing no longer in popular use, a stretched sealskin, and a stone *inuksuk*. The man holds his hand out in front of him as if directing the model’s every move, wishing to capture an indexical trace of the ‘primitive’ Other. There is something implicitly violent in his raised hand and pointed camera—a sense of threat hangs heavy. Pootoogook is clearly mocking the voyeuristic photographer who temporarily visits the Arctic and manipulates Inuit for the sake of a stereotypic image to take back to the South. Yet, the print also shrewdly recognizes the ways in which Inuit consciously perform for the camera, for some sort of personal profit or as a way to take control of their own representation. Despite the photographer’s sense of control over a view of perceived authenticity, there is a relationship at play here, in which the subject is also an agent in the photographic moment.

Despite its relatively recent origins in the late 1950s—under the guidance of artist and Area Administrator for South Baffin Island, James Houston—printmaking is now widely regarded as a ‘traditional’ Inuit art form. Although a number of Inuit artists have taken up photography and filmmaking, printmaking and carving still remain their most prolific commercial media.<sup>145</sup> Rather than employ a camera in a metaphorical returning of the gaze, Pootoogook worked in a medium designed largely for a non-Inuit



audience. As a graphic work, the critique is in many ways more pointed and powerful than if it were a photograph. A photographic image would convey a sense of realism, suggesting that the Inuk woman's accoutrements are still in active use and are defining features of contemporary Inuit identity. But Pootoogook may have been suggesting the very opposite: these items of clothing have come to function as synecdoche, standing in for all Inuit and relegating them to an "ethnographic present."<sup>146</sup> Likewise, the illustrative rendering of an anonymous photographer signifies non-Indigenous society as a whole, who for hundreds of years have penetrated the North, violently staking claim over its land and people.

Although this particular print was made three decades after Gilliat's trip to the eastern Arctic, it illustrates some of her own anxieties about photographing Indigenous peoples. Early in the trip Gilliat remarked on the obnoxious behaviour of one camera-toting man in Frobisher Bay:

The Eskimos here are so allergic to being photographed—they have too much of it. Last Saturday at Apex Hill sports, I heard a man from Lower Base, who was photographing an Eskimo shout roughly "Hold still you bastard," and then told him to dance. The Eskimo just grinned and complied. But he was an older man. I think the younger men are beginning to realize that they don't have to put up with everything from the white man.<sup>147</sup>

Gilliat's comments express a disdain for photographers in the Arctic who, so focused on reproducing a preconceived idea of the primitive Other, resorted to violent extremes such as derogatory language or bribery. Like the photographer in Pootoogook's print, the man Gilliat wrote of demanded this Inuk subject to perform his indigeneity. In this same moment, Gilliat also took note of changing Inuit behaviour in response to conditions of their modernity. Becoming accustomed to the presence of *Qallunaat* and the colonizing

gaze of the camera, Inuit began to ‘talk back’ by dictating the conditions of their representation, refusing to be photographed, or taking hold of the camera themselves. However, despite her ambivalence about photographing Indigenous subjects, the majority of Gilliat’s images in the Arctic are of Inuit. Working primarily on commercial assignment meant that Gilliat had to reconcile her personal views and anxieties with the prevailing attitude of the colonial system of which she was a part. In this chapter I attempt to navigate these tensions through a close reading of two photo shoots that resulted in published stories. While these photo stories, commissioned by the NFB Still Photography Division and *Weekend Magazine*, frame the North as the nation’s Other, Gilliat’s unpublished images and personal writing offer a counterpoint through which alternative meanings can be read.

I consider Gilliat’s photographs of Inuit as “contact zones.” Coined by Mary Louise Pratt, the term “contact zone” designates a space of colonial encounter in which separated peoples establish ongoing relations, “usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict”<sup>148</sup> In contrast to the term ‘frontier,’ which is “grounded within a European expansionist perspective,” Pratt’s “contact zone”

is an attempt to invoke the spatial and temporal copresence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjunctures, and whose trajectories now intersect. By using the term ‘contact’ I aim to foreground the interactive, improvisational dimensions of colonial encounters so easily ignored or suppressed by diffusionist accounts of conquest and domination. A ‘contact’ perspective...treats the relations among colonizers and colonized, or travelers and ‘travelees,’ not in terms of separateness or apartheid, but in terms of copresence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices, often within radically asymmetrical relations of power.<sup>149</sup>

By looking at photographs through the lens of a “contact zone,” my aim is to understand the political and personal relationships that took place between Gilliat, a settler

photographer, and her Inuit subjects. While analysis of her published photographs is important for understanding the ways in which the North was pictured in mainstream media, returning to the archive allows for a glimpse into competing negotiations of identity that are embedded in these images.

Also informing my analyses is the critical work of historian and visual anthropologist Jane Lydon whose work on photography in Australia offers a model for a more nuanced understanding of the relationship around the camera. Lydon argues that if we focus only on reading historical photographs as evidence of colonialism's measured success, then we inherently limit the meanings they can produce:

Although photographs reveal the power of the colonial gaze, they also express its moments of uncertainty, offering a less-mediated view of the past that exceeds their maker's intentions, capturing details and attitudes beyond their original purpose, and setting in motion the compelling play of past and present, Aboriginal and European, self and other.<sup>150</sup>

I take my cue from Pratt, Lydon, and other scholars who recognize exploitative representational currents while simultaneously attending to the complexity of interpersonal relationships played against historical realities. I argue, therefore, that Gilliat's photographs carry traces of a dynamic and performative relationship in which both the photographer and Inuit subject possess agency—albeit within a space of dramatic inequality.

### **Photographing Curiosities**

*I longed to take a photograph of him—but such to his dignity that I did not dare to!—*  
August 17, 1960, Ungava Bay.<sup>151</sup>

Gilliat's recounting of the aggressive male photographer from Lower Base was not an isolated incident. On a number of other occasions, she criticized photographers

visiting the North who manipulated their subjects for the sake of a photograph that would conform to southern expectations of Inuit. While in Frobisher Bay, for example, Gilliat met Sam Tata, a well-known photographer based in Montreal who had worked with Henri Cartier-Bresson.<sup>152</sup> On July 10<sup>th</sup> Tata joined Gilliat to photograph a group of Inuit men returning with an abundant char catch. Of the occasion Gilliat wrote: “Tata came with us and dressed some of the returning Eskimo fishermen in yellow nylon slickers—all rather corny.”<sup>153</sup> She felt that Tata’s manipulative styling served to heighten the dramatic effect of his photographs while diminishing the pride and excitement the Inuit men felt in this moment.

Gilliat was also envious of Tata’s ease in photographing Indigenous subjects. He was experienced and comfortable working in ‘exotic’ locations and Gilliat felt he had been more productive in his few days there than she would be on her entire trip. In part, Gilliat’s reflection on her perceived shortcomings was contingent on gender. As I described in Chapter One, white men in the North, while usually generous to Gilliat and Hinds, often questioned their presence and their goals. Gilliat was, in effect, even more careful and tentative in her photographic choices. However, her supposedly limited output was also closely related to personal feelings about photographing Indigenous peoples:

But there is no doubt that I am happier on nature subjects—I always have this horror—even after 10 years of photography of imposing on other people’s privacy—and especially on native people. Such as the Eskimos who are always being photographed—as curiosities.<sup>154</sup>

Evidently, Gilliat understood the potential violence of the camera and the inherent power imbalance in any image of an Indigenous subject by a *Qallunaaq* photographer. While this passage elucidates her sizeable collection of nature photographs, it might also

account for her focus on photographs of children, whom she could bribe with candy and who did not usually possess the skills to refuse, or on large social gatherings where Gilliat could more or less blend into the crowd.

*But I was always slow, and one of the troubles is being shy of people, which is cramping. B prefers to interview people alone, which means we have to bother people twice—however it may work out all right in the end. Being a journalist she wants to make use of material right away—whereas I prefer to collect all I can, and then do something with it, as all the time one learns more.— Frobisher Bay, July 10, 1960.*<sup>155</sup>

The Gilliat Eaton Fonds is rife with expressions of anxiety over the role of the photojournalist. In her diary, for example, Gilliat recounted attempts to combat the negative view Inuit (and *Qallunaat* settled in the Arctic) had towards outsiders and media personnel. And in letters to various editors, Gilliat demanded the correction of facts in order to “avoid writing the usual popular misconceptions about the north.”<sup>156</sup> In an effort to evade the perpetuation of fallacies of the North, Gilliat took meticulous notes, filling a number of small notebooks with various facts about the Arctic including lists of personal and place names (sometimes even including Inuktitut names such as *Killiniq* and *Kinngait*). After most photo shoots, Gilliat gave her subjects a gift in return, be that candy, cigarettes, or a copy of their portrait which she mailed to the Arctic after returning home. While these practices demonstrate a sense of empathy and Gilliat’s desire to quell the general distrust of journalists in the Arctic, she—like most photojournalists—still rarely had control over her photographs in their published form. Thus, Gilliat’s polite but insistent request to the editor of *Weekend Magazine* as quoted above, betrays her anxiety about the polysemic nature of photographs and points to the complexity of the documentary genre more generally.

As outlined in the introductory chapter, there is a rich body of scholarship dedicated to an ideological critique of documentary photography. Critics including Martha Rosler, Abigail-Solomon Godeau, Allan Sekula, and John Tagg have challenged claims about the transparency and neutrality of the photograph. As noted by Richard Bolton, the editor of *The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography*, these scholars have “argued that meaning is instead established through interpretative conventions that exist outside of the image—conventions that are socially and institutionally constructed and that serve an ideological function.”<sup>157</sup> John Tagg, for example, has theorized the camera as an extension of state control, arguing that the photograph is not embedded with evidential value but comes to stand as evidence through a “social, semiotic process.”<sup>158</sup> Extending the ideological critique of those associated with the “*October* moment” and writing more specifically about photojournalistic images made within contexts of trauma, Ariella Azoulay contends that “weak populations remain more exposed to photography, especially of the journalistic kind, which coerces and confines them to a passive, unprotected position.”<sup>159</sup> Gilliat, already conscious of photography’s subjugating potential, was nervous that her photographs might be used to present inaccurate facts about the North and Inuit—or worse, serve institutional interests that espouse and naturalize colonial ideologies. In the letter cited above, Gilliat also expressed concern about linguistic anchorage and the way in which text can direct photographic meaning, constructing ‘facts’ that perhaps never existed in the images to begin with.

## Photojournalism and The Politics of Place: Photographing George River

In Chapter One I described Gilliat's landscape photographs of George River, a small fishing village she associated with an imagined idea of the 'True North.' It was also in George River where Gilliat understood herself as possessing a particularly important and powerful role as a photojournalist.<sup>160</sup> In April 1959 this northern Quebec community was the site of the first Inuit co-operative, which developed an enterprise for commercial fishing and logging.<sup>161</sup> In the same year, another co-operative and fishery was established in Port Burwell (now Killiniq, Nunavut), which Gilliat and Hinds also visited.<sup>162</sup> After hearing that the George River fishery had only sold half of what they caught the year before, Gilliat wrote, "I do hope most earnestly that my photographs will come out well enough to make some worthwhile propaganda for the char fisheries."<sup>163</sup> Understanding the power of images and the role she could play as a *Qallunaag* journalist, Gilliat set out to endorse both Inuit co-operatives. Of course, she also had her own interests in mind, as travel to such remote and desirable locations was only possible through the acceptance of commissions such as this.

The history of Arctic co-operatives is politically complicated. Beginning in the 1950s, Inuit were encouraged to settle into trading posts to be near schools and medical services and as a result were no longer able to fully support themselves by hunting. Moreover, with the collapse of the fur trade, a number of northern regions became ridden with poverty and scarce food supplies.<sup>164</sup> As Hinds candidly expressed, "They [Inuit] were appallingly neglected by an indifferent government."<sup>165</sup> Thus, as part of a broader government 'self-help' plan, civil servants introduced co-operatives to provide Inuit with wage labour and to stimulate the development of a local economy.<sup>166</sup> While money,

equipment, and expertise were supplied by the DNANR, the goal from the beginning was that Inuit would quickly take over the management and ownership of co-operatives. According to sociologist and former executive director of the Inuit Art Foundation Marybelle Mitchell, the federal government's view was "that the aboriginal people should substantially increase their exploitation of renewable resources in order to generate profit that would eliminate the need for state assistance."<sup>167</sup> Therefore, the role of the civil servant or co-operative officer, "was to be one of guidance with a view to eventually doing himself out of a job by developing native self-sufficiency."<sup>168</sup>

Gilliat, who was very much aware of the difficult histories of George River and Port Burwell, believed in the co-operative model but was not confident in its success or sustainability. She was particularly troubled that Inuit had to continue to rely on white men—both government figures and middle-class consumers—to thrive:

What a lot is risked in this operation, too much I think, the odds against the successful fishery operation are so high—and that is incorrect too—the Eskimos are successful in catching the fish—it is the white man who cannot make his clever machine work that lets the Eskimos down.<sup>169</sup>

By 'clever machine' Gilliat was likely referring to the precarious freezer technologies that failed in both fishery sites while she was in the Arctic. However, her comment might have also referred more generally to the machinery of the co-operative as a whole. Not only did Inuit require the supplies and labour necessary for large volume fish harvesting, but they also relied on freezers, transportation, and southern markets to bring in profit. As Mitchell contends, while Inuit retained "some control over the terms and conditions of their work," they still had no control over the marketing and sale of their products.<sup>170</sup>

*It was quite an experience to see them bring in their first catch—these good fishermen have done their part—if only the white men do not let them down. The freezer could break down, the fish may not all be sold—but with good fortune the fishery will be a*



*success. Really there was an undefinable feeling of pride in these men as they brought pan after silver pan of fish up from their little boat. — Port Burwell, August 1, 1960.*<sup>171</sup>

As a photographer and journalist team, Gilliat hoped that herself and Hinds could “help educate the public.”<sup>172</sup> Her goals in educating southern Canadians, however, went beyond merely promoting Arctic char to increase sales. With her photographs, Gilliat wanted to convey the hard work and pride that she witnessed in these two Inuit communities. In George River, for example, Gilliat photographed an Inuk she identified as Johnny who appears to have had a prominent role in the char fishery [Figure 2.2]. Johnny flashes a smile at the camera and shows off his large catch; clearly aware of Gilliat’s presence, he confronts the camera’s gaze and takes pride in the fruits of his labour. He is a man not only proud of his fishing abilities but also of his community’s economic and cultural independence.

As a collection, Gilliat’s fishery photographs visualize two vibrant communities in a moment of intense cultural and economic transformation. While many of her landscape photographs from the fisheries are idyllic scenes of tents scattered on tundra [Figure 1.1], relying on a familiar visual trope that equated Indigenous peoples with the natural world; Gilliat also turned her lens towards the modern technologies necessary to a large-scale fishery. Another photograph pictures Johnny with Keith Crowe (DNANR) as they transport fresh char into an industrial freezer [Figure 2.3].<sup>173</sup> The obtrusive grey box stands as a symbol of ‘progress’ and contrasts with some of the more picturesque scenes described and photographed by Gilliat. Here the freezer is at once a sign of assimilation and Inuit economic control. This is unlike conventional photojournalistic images that, influenced by the ideology of ethnography, denied coevalness, which anthropologist

Johannes Fabian describes as a refusal to acknowledge the subject's contemporaneous existence with that of the researcher, or in this case the photographer.<sup>174</sup> In this particular image, Johnny is not relegated to an "ethnographic present" but is a man living in and dealing with contemporary conditions of change

Gilliat also pictured Inuit women who were an integral part of fisheries and co-operatives more generally. As I will elaborate in Chapter Three, Gilliat was especially intrigued by Inuit women's roles and was intent on visualizing more than stereotypical motherhood. In one particularly arresting image from George River two women focus intently on cleaning fish as a young Inuk girl peeks up over the table to see what her elders are doing [Figure 2.4]. Gilliat understood that, while run by Inuit and *Qallunaat* men, the co-operatives would only succeed with the collaborative effort of Inuit women who, while caring for their young children, prepared the fish for freezing.<sup>175</sup> Another photograph depicts two women cleaning fish at a wooden table within an interior space [Figure 2.5]. The woman in the white parka, identified by Gilliat as Maggie (and the wife of Willy Eetok), carries a baby in her *amauti*, while two young children stand around the table and look on. This photograph serves to show the collaborative labour that went into the char fishery. It involved the efforts of Inuit men, women, and sometimes children, as well as the aid of *Qallunaat* (Crowe stands in the background) stationed in the North. Although the framing and archival title, *Maggie, the wife of Willy Eetok, cutting fish with her daughter Elizabeth on her back, George River, Québec*, lays emphasis on the mother and child, the excess visual information in this seemingly unrehearsed snapshot unexpectedly confronts us with the complex politics and ominous history of place. Deborah Poole argues that the visual plenitude of photographs "threatened to undermine

the distance required for scientific [anthropological] observation.”<sup>176</sup> The same kind of distance that was (and sometimes still is) required by mainstream media’s social observation of the Other. While seemingly an objective view, the photograph always evokes an “off-frame context,” which allows for the reading of alternative meaning(s). In the image of Maggie only very young children are pictured amongst the women cleaning char; older children were attending the nearby summer residential school, the George River Hostel.

Since Inuit at this time were still mainly unilingual Inuktitut speakers, education, according to Mitchell, “was considered an absolute necessity.”<sup>177</sup> In George River, for instance, a six-week summer school was set up to instruct Inuit children in English, arithmetic, reading, and writing. The students slept in tents on gravel floors while the community hall served as the classroom and dining hall. Run by educator Joan Ryan, the non-denominational hostel operated for one summer although the school continued for a number of years.<sup>178</sup> While much ink has been shed on the legacy of residential schooling, I refer to the recent report of The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) for an apt summary of this scarring past. The TRC has identified 139 Indian Residential Schools that operated across the country for upwards of 120 years:

These residential schools were created for the purpose of separating Aboriginal children from their families, in order to minimize and weaken family ties and cultural linkages, and to indoctrinate children into a new culture—the culture of the legally dominant Euro-Christian Canadian society.<sup>179</sup>

The report continues to explain how the horrific experiences of thousands of children forced to attend residential schools were hidden from view for most of Canada’s history. Although the George River hostel was in operation for only one summer, we can confidently assume (and documentary evidence supports) that coerced attendance to the

school resulted in the separation of families, the significant loss of culture and language, and a legacy of trauma. Gilliat, while close to Ryan and seemingly in support of state-run education, was troubled by the issues affecting the school. She commented, for instance, on the lack of clean water and the school's remote location, making it difficult to access in the case of emergencies.<sup>180</sup> Gilliat also observed children and parents' separation anxiety: "Actually the parents were as homesick for the children as the children were for their parents—as Eskimo families are very close indeed—and this *experiment* is an entirely new conception for the Eskimos."<sup>181</sup>

Gilliat did not photograph the residential school itself (nor was she hired to do so); however, she did take pictures of the children and their teacher, Joan Ryan. In one photograph [Figure 2.6], a group of children dressed in colourful coats and scarves crowd around Ryan who is ringing a large silver bell in the air. One can practically hear the sharp metallic ring resonating through the crisp Arctic air. Some of the children look away from the camera, presumably towards their teacher, while others shield their eyes from the glaring sun. One child, wearing a beige hooded jacket, solemnly stares down towards the ground. Three young girls in the foreground meet the camera's gaze; they look apprehensive and suspicious. Not a single student is smiling. These are the faces of children who have been forcibly removed from their families to attend summer school. This is not, however, a typical view of a residential school; it is not of a school building where students are pictured learning and/or working, nor is it a 'before and after' photograph—those images that came to famously symbolize assimilation and the erasure of Indigenous culture.<sup>182</sup> Rather, Gilliat's photograph captures the ambivalent expressions of children involved in a disastrous social *experiment*.

Most of Gilliat's other photographs of the George River Hostel show students playing in a nearby pond after the school day concluded [Figure 2.7]. Stripped down to their underclothes, the children splash about in the watering hole, seemingly oblivious to Gilliat or other observing adults. It was in this moment of temporary joyfulness that Gilliat claimed to witness the true spirit of youth: "[It] was the happiest scene I had watched in years... How I wished I had lots of film. I shot off all I have, and just hope I got something good—because it was the essence of childhood—the delirious gaiety of it all."<sup>183</sup> Métis artist and scholar Sherry Farrell Racette argues that photographs of students engaged in team sports, playing musical instruments, or enjoying free time were used to “generate public positivity and mask other realities, but they also reveal moments when students could escape into artistic or physical expression.”<sup>184</sup> When Gilliat's photograph was later used in an NFB photo story entitled “Play in Land of the Long Day,” the rhetoric of leisure and recreation masked the realities of Inuit children's lives.<sup>185</sup> But when viewed in historical context, the joyous and fleeting abandon of these children becomes a comment on the rigidity and injustice that structured the rest of their days. Farrell Racette reads such images as a “visual tribute to the resilient spirits of children...[a] spirit that eroded the power of the panopticon from within, causing the failure of the ‘laboratory of power.’”<sup>186</sup>

While in the Arctic, Gilliat had to grapple with conflicting feelings about colonial policy—she was both critical of state intervention (“the paternalism of the old system” she called it) and believed in the need for non-Indigenous aid and the promotion of industry.<sup>187</sup> Her photographs, however, unlike those we tend to associate with ‘social documentary’ representation, avoid picturing poverty, starvation, abysmal living

conditions, or assimilationist education models.<sup>188</sup> On the one hand, Gilliat's 'sanitized' views were contingent on the institutional bodies she worked for. The NFB, for instance, was not in the market for social-documentary photographs that critiqued federal policy. Gilliat, moreover, as a woman and a photojournalist was denied entry into certain spaces as part of the overall social management of the Arctic that worked to keep oppressions from view.<sup>189</sup> On the other hand, Gilliat was emphatic about not victimizing her Indigenous subjects. She was also troubled by the extreme cynicism she sometimes encountered from fellow southerners. When a prominent *Qallunaaq* man in the North asked Gilliat and Hinds to present to the media all the problems availing the Arctic—disease, death, starvation, prostitution, drunkenness—Gilliat appreciated his socially conscious point of view but disproved of his pessimism: "I feel the Eskimos are fine and strong enough as people, in time, to rise above what we are doing to them now."<sup>190</sup> While a lofty and naïve point of view (and one that distanced Gilliat from the social issues she found difficult to grapple with), it nevertheless explains Gilliat's positive representations of the North, which in many ways reflect her joyous experiences travelling through and interacting with Inuit in the Arctic. However, beyond speculation about Gilliat's technical and aesthetic choices, there are limits to how images can address more abstract concepts. Photographs themselves could not accurately tell the history of Settler-Indigenous contact in the communities of George River and Port Burwell, the rapid transformation of Inuit culture, or the trauma of state-run schooling. Thus it is by ceding to Edwards' call to look *through* rather than *at* Gilliat's photographs, that we can better grasp the political and social context of their making.<sup>191</sup>

Gilliat's entire photographic output from her visits to the two Inuit co-operatives can be read in a number of ways: as Inuit men performing and promoting their co-operative [Figure 2.2.], as Gilliat's 'feminist' intervention in the male dominated narrative of the North [Figure 2.4], or as a subtle commentary on the abuses of residential school [Figure 2.6]. Yet, the NFB photo story that included Gilliat's fishery images is anchored by layout and text that attempts to fix or direct meaning.<sup>192</sup> The title of the photo story, "Ilkalupik: King of the Arctic," focuses the reader's attention on fish itself, the commodity to be sold [Figure 2.8].<sup>193</sup> The story, moreover, conflates the distinct communities of Port Burwell and George River, referring only to Port Burwell although some of the images are from the latter. The lead image, for example, of a sailboat afloat in an endless sea, does little to indicate any context of time or place except to emphasize the wilderness setting and thus confine Indigenous peoples to the realm of nature. The text of the photo story, which was likely written by staff writer John Ough but may have been based on some of Gilliat's notes, is focused on the popularity of Arctic Char as an "epicurean delight" in major Canadian and American cities:

Arctic Char from Canada's North is adding to the taste thrills of many southern gourmets who specialize in epicurean delights. Fashionable clubs and restaurants in New York, Chicago, Boston, Detroit, and major Canadian cities offer the delicate-tasting char to their discriminating clientele...First overseas shipment of char went to Paris for a banquet of the French Nature Protection Society—a body that takes pride in serving its members something new, if possible exotic, in the ways of foods. To those in the know, Arctic char is just that.

The supporting images are tightly cropped photographs of Inuit fishing, cleaning fish, or purchasing western goods at the co-op store. A similar photograph of Maggie and her baby (identified in the NFB layout as image "C") is framed to exclude contingent information such as Keith Crowe in the background. Likewise, the image in the bottom

right (“F”) makes no mention of the civil servant Max Budgell whose back faces the viewer. The article, therefore, suggests that Arctic co-operatives were entirely Inuit-run enterprises thus playing up their ‘exotic’ nature and justifying their high price in southern restaurants. While the photo story briefly references the effects of contact, it does not detail the history that brought about co-operatives in the North, nor does it depict modern fishery technology such as walk-in freezers and outboard motors (both of which Gilliat also photographed), instead privileging canoes, nets, and knives as ‘primitive’ tools of the trade. Thus the photo story contributes to a broader Euro-Canadian view of Inuit that denied their modernity. Of course, Inuit had been living in modernity for as long as anybody else had. Representations such as this, however, picture Inuit as safe and non-threatening, thereby suggesting that the terms of their modernity are determined by the colonizer rather than by themselves. Thus, a centre/periphery relationship is maintained.<sup>194</sup>

In her seminal study of the NFB Still Photography Division, Carol Payne argues that Indigenous peoples were largely excluded from photo stories depicting land and natural resources, and were instead segregated into ethnographic narratives.<sup>195</sup> Even in those about harvesting foods, the images and text tended to primitivize Indigenous tools and methods. In her reading of a 1964 photo story about Inuit char fishing, Payne notes the images’ distanced views—a typical vantage point of ‘objectivity’ and scopic possession—arguing that “the photographs diminish the stature of the people portrayed while situating the implied, non-Indigenous viewers at a cultural remove, endowing them with a superior, caretaking role.”<sup>196</sup> This is also true of the “Ilkalupik” photo story where views of anonymous Inuit who do not acknowledge the camera, appear as objects of the



non-Indigenous viewer's gaze. Photographs such as men casting nets from a canoe (image "B") or an Inuk woman wearing an *amauti* (image "C"), serve to heighten the 'primitive' characterization of the char industry. While the image of commerce at the co-op store (image "E"), celebrates Inuit assimilation from a paternalistic distance.

Notably, the earlier photo story with Gilliat's images, unlike the one Payne examines, explicitly acknowledges the changing conditions of Inuit life. While the pictorial plays up the exotic nature of Inuit-produced char, it paradoxically praises Indigenous adoption of commercial production and exploitation of the land:

The fishing, freezing and shipping of char to southern markets has given a small group of Eskimos a new source of income in a land where the traditional means of making a living is rapidly changing through contact with the civilization of the white man. For a limited number of Canada's 12, 000 Eskimos this added income, which reduces their dependence on the vagaries of a fluctuating food supply is now a reality.

The writer recognizes the transformation of Inuit ways of life brought about by colonialism while subtly applauding Inuit for adapting to a market economy. As argued by W.J.T. Mitchell, the Indigenous dweller is often pictured as someone who fails to see the value and material potential of the land, which, paradoxically, is what also makes the land so valuable.<sup>197</sup> This, in turn, lends the Western observer a presumptive right of conquest and colonization. In the "Ilkalupik" photo story, exploitation of the land is held up as an example of successful assimilation into mainstream Canadian culture. Yet, at the same time, the Inuit fishers are pictured as primitive types, thus suggesting to southern Canadian viewers that they should 'help' the Inuit by buying 'exotic' Arctic products to satisfy their epicurean palates. Thus, even in narratives of assimilation, Inuit were paradoxically denied their modernity.

In their published form, Gilliat's photographs support and supplement a primitivizing discourse, defining Inuit as part of Canadian identity yet always at a cultural and geographical remove. I do not wish to suggest, however, that Gilliat's fishery photographs were manipulated to achieve meanings that were beyond her original intentions. She did, after all, intend on producing 'propaganda' to help this commercial venture. She also willingly accepted the support of the DNANR and kept their objectives in mind as she photographed throughout the Arctic. However, my intention here is to show how photographs can fulfill multiple agendas and how image-makers, particularly those working within the genre of photojournalism, had to negotiate between their own point of view and the expectations of a client. By focusing on Gilliat's fishery shoot as a case study, I have demonstrated how the archive can offer an opportunity to examine the ways in which historical mainstream media combined image and text to frame and support a politicized agenda. Thus, while Gilliat's detailed diary and archival photographs offer a glimpse into the workings of an entire community and the land they lived on, the edited photo story decontextualizes place and distances local narrative, thus enforcing primitive stereotypes and naturalizing colonialist policies in the North. As a whole collection or series, Gilliat's photographs from Port Burwell and George River represent a "contact zone" and visualize co-presence—these are not a people who are living in the past or dying off but one who are thriving in the present.

### **Visualizing Relationships in the North: Kingwatsiak and Houston**

Gilliat was also assigned to photograph and write about *Qallunaat* in the North. In the Gilliat Eaton Fonds is a two-page magazine article about Alma Houston who played a prominent role in Cape Dorset alongside her husband James.<sup>198</sup> The French language

story, written and photographed by Gilliat, details the life of a white housewife in the Arctic. Supporting photographs show Alma Houston engaged in various activities such as hosting guests (both Inuit and *Qallunaat*) in her home, tending to her greenhouse, playing outside with her sons and husband, modeling a seal skin coat, and teaching Inuit women how to cook ‘southern’ food purchased at the HBC store. The article describes Houston’s optimism despite the hardships of life in the Arctic, such as the limited access to fresh food and the lack of running water.

There is also an emphasis on Alma Houston’s close relationship with the Inuit community in Cape Dorset. Having learned Inuktitut, Houston interacted socially with many Inuit families and instructed women in sewing and cooking. A quote from Houston reads, “‘Je m’ennuie terriblement de Cape Dorset...Malgré tous les inconvénients qu’il y faut surmonter, j’aime ce lieu et j’aime ses habitants.’”<sup>199</sup> To help visualize Houston’s supposed love for the people of Cape Dorset is one small photograph of her with an elderly Inuk. The caption for the black and white image reads “un jour, un vieil esquimau lui a demandé d’écrire à la reine Elisabeth. Il désirait une photo de la famille royale” [Figures 2.9 a and b].<sup>200</sup> The caption highlights the Inuk’s supposed allegiance to the British crown as well as his illiteracy in English and thus his reliance on the benevolence of Houston to write a letter for him. It does not, however, provide his name or indicate anything more about his relationship with Alma Houston. Instead, the pictorial generally emphasizes the close relationships Houston maintained with Inuit and the dependence they had on *her*. This is evident both through her physical proximity to the man in the photograph and the caption explaining that she is transcribing a letter for her Inuk ‘friend.’

As is the case of captions generally, the words accompanying the photograph of Houston and the unidentified man unequivocally direct and limit the viewer's reading of the image.

Drawing on the work of Barthes, literary theorist Clive Scott argues that the photographic caption is a verbal intervention that forestalls and directs a viewer's response.<sup>201</sup> "The mediating voice not only makes meaning, but reassures the viewer and patronizes the image at the same time."<sup>202</sup> Scott contends, furthermore, that the "photo-sequences of the photo-story devalue the expressive and narrative power of the individual image..."<sup>203</sup> In the case of the Houston photo story, the miniscule photograph of the Inuk man is placed above a half-page image of a group of Inuit watching the delivery of goods via aircraft. Surrounding the photograph is oversized red text that reads, "Elle fait ses emplettes un fois l'an seulement," underscoring Houston's isolation from the luxuries of urban living.<sup>204</sup> Moreover, black and white is used only for the two photographs that picture Inuit; this aesthetic choice, while likely contingent on printing costs, has the effect of displacing Inuit into the past. In the case of the photograph of Alma Houston and her Inuk friend, the use of black and white flattens the man against the stark white backdrop and reduces him to a symbol of 'Eskimo.' The photograph also overtly visualizes the imbalanced relationship between colonizer and colonized. According to Lucy Lippard, the presence of non-Indigenous people in photographs of the Other is almost always a paternalistic gesture, a sign of white control.<sup>205</sup> In Gilliat's photograph, Houston and the elderly man are seated beside each other on equal ground (at least visually), yet the inclusion of a pen and pad of paper in Houston's hands symbolizes English literacy and her advancement over her Inuk companion. The figure of the Other is pictured as reliant

on the knowledge and care of a non-Indigenous mentor. The photo-sequence and accompanying text, therefore, relegate the elderly man, and Inuit more generally, to a mere footnote in the tale of a white woman's exciting and difficult life in the Arctic.

Another photo story published in *Perspectives*, *Weekend Magazine*'s French language counterpart, also describes the life of Alma Houston in Cape Dorset. In this case, the text written by an unattributed author is more explicitly primitivizing, describing Cape Dorset as a "backward place" and arguing that natives "must give up their primitive lifestyle...to adapt to the world of the white man."<sup>206</sup> The article used an almost identical photograph of Houston and an Inuk. Here, however, the man is identified by name: "Le vieux Kingwatsiak dicte à Alma sa lettre à la reine."<sup>207</sup> But again, the photograph is small and the information limited; beyond the caption, there is no information about Kingwatsiak's life or his relationship to Houston. Thus, the two photo stories, with their near identical photographs, left me with a number of unanswered questions: Where are these two sitting? Why is Kingwatsiak interested in the Queen? Why is he wearing that small medal on his duffle coat? What is their relationship to each other? What is their relationship to the photographer? The photo stories about Houston are important for what they reveal about historic characterizations of the Arctic and women's roles in the nuclear family, but, as is to be expected from popular magazines, they do not disclose information about the photographs' conditions of production.

As I began to search the Gilliat Eaton Fonds, I found additional images and supplementary texts that reveal a more comprehensive tale about Kingwatsiak, the circumstances of this particular photo shoot, and the images' later circulation.

Anthropologist Aaron Glass has argued for the importance and productive potential of

turning to unpublished photographs in archives. In his article “A Cannibal in the Archive,” Glass examines a series of unpublished Edward Curtis photographs of George Hunt—Curtis’ and Franz Boas’ long time Kwakwaka’wakw collaborator—posed as Kwakwaka’wakw Hamat’sa (‘the cannibal dancer’). Glass argues, “by escaping the reiterative exposure that turns images into icons with overdetermined meanings,” uncirculated images show more promise for revealing a “complex social and historical encounter, as well as the active intention, agency, and engagement of the model.”<sup>208</sup> Drawing on the work of such historians of photography as Elizabeth Edwards and Margaret Iverson, Glass encourages a (re)turn to archival photographs as productive sites for the excavation of “histories of intercultural encounter and negotiation.”<sup>209</sup> According to Glass, viewing photography as “*performative* implies the self-conscious agency of both photographer and indigenous subject, the creative nature of the image-making process, and the constitutive power of the resulting pictures.”<sup>210</sup> As I turned to the unpublished images of Houston and Kingwatsiak and traced their later circulation, I discovered meanings that were previously obscured by the magazine stories. Of particular importance, is evidence, similar to what Glass proposes of the Curtis photographs, of collaboration between Houston, Gilliat, and Kingwatsiak.

In a diary entry from September 4, 1960, Gilliat unpacked the events of the day she met and photographed Kingwatsiak. Shortly after her arrival in Cape Dorset Gilliat began photographing Alma Houston for a story that *Weekend Magazine* commissioned her to produce. Gilliat had only three days to get all of her shots as Houston was about to leave for the South where her sons could attend school. Upon preparation for their departure, Alma Houston went around town saying goodbye to various friends. On one

such outing she invited Gilliat and Hinds to come along as she bid farewell to Andrew Kingwatsiak. Arriving at Kingwatsiak's home, Alma Houston asked him if Gilliat could take their photograph. According to Gilliat's diary, "he replied that so many people had taken his photo that he had no more pictures left in him. But he graciously consented."<sup>211</sup> His resistance to being photographed indicates a frustration with *Qallunaat* visitors who insisted on photographing Inuit—a sentiment later shared by Pootoogook and expressed in the lithograph that opened this chapter. For Kingwatsiak, then, a photograph is akin to a gift or something one gives away and there is a limit to how many photographs someone has in them. He did, however, agree to have his photograph taken and in doing so took control of his own representation in a significant way. Kingwatsiak fetched a medal he acquired during the Queen's coronation when he visited Scotland with a whaler a few years prior. Appearing proud of this award, Kingwatsiak asked Houston to help pin it to his parka before posing for a picture. Gilliat began shooting before Kingwatsiak was prepared, and a black and white contact print shows Houston pinning the medal onto his coat [Figure 2.10]. Glass proposes that "in many cases they [Indigenous subjects] may have had both their own reasons for participating and the means and motivation to directly influence the nature of the resulting pictures."<sup>212</sup> While these reasons might not be entirely clear to us today, this print shows Kingwatsiak preparing to have his photograph taken and taking some interest in the circulation of his representation.

In another photograph from the shoot, Kingwatsiak meets the camera's gaze with a grin, appearing at ease and comfortable [Figure 2.11]. In this colour image, the rich blues and reds of the figures' parkas pop away from the white background and clearly reveal the tent setting into which Kingwatsiak had permitted Houston and Gilliat to enter.

While it is impossible to determine whether or not Kingwatsiak was coerced into having his photograph taken, it is clear that he felt at least a bit at ease in front of the camera and understood something of the power of an image. His coronation medal, duffle style coat, and gold metal watch, reveal him as a man living in the present, not as a hunter or other Indigenous character type living in the past.

Gilliat's photographs also visualize 'intersubjective time.' According to Lippard, 'intersubjective time,' a term borrowed from anthropology, "commemorates a reciprocal moment (rather than a cannibalistic one), where the emphasis is on interaction and communication."<sup>213</sup> In the series of photographs, Alma Houston transcribes Kingwatsiak's words as he dictates a letter to the queen asking her to send him a photograph of her son Andrew—Kingwatsiak's namesake. While Houston's benevolence and Kingwatsiak's loyalty to the Queen could have simply made for a good story and an interesting photo opportunity, Gilliat remained true to her word and sent a letter to the Governor General's secretary Mr. E. Butler who, in turn, forwarded the request to Buckingham Palace and eventually replied with a photograph of the royal family. A handwritten note on Butler's returned letter reads, "A photo of Prince Andrew was sent to Kingwatsiak who received it safely."<sup>214</sup> This gesture is significant for a number of reasons: first, Kingwatsiak could 'speak' via Gilliat who included his translated request in her letter to Butler; second, this points to Gilliat's trend of returning photographs to the Arctic. On more than one occasion she sent prints North asking that they be given to the people in the photographs. This practice marks Gilliat as different from the many photographers who preceded her in the North and who routinely neither returned images to their Indigenous subjects nor secured permission to take a photograph in the first



place.<sup>215</sup> Yet, even if Kingwatsiak's intentions were in fact to receive a photograph of Prince Andrew and this was not an event staged by Houston, it is unlikely that Kingwatsiak was aware of its later magazine circulation. According to Azoulay, the 'civil contract of photography' dictates that the photographed is never the owner of one's own image. Even when consent is given, the photographed cedes certain rights, giving up control over the image's composition and distribution.<sup>216</sup> While Kingwatsiak agreed to have his photograph taken it is unlikely that he was ever informed about its later publication.

As described in the introductory chapter, many photo scholars espouse a social biography model, tracing a photograph's production, circulation, and consumption in order to view the range of "values, relationships, desires, ideologies, and representational strategies that are mobilized and performed through the multiple material forms of the photograph."<sup>217</sup> Through my own case study of Gilliat's photographs of Houston and Kingwatsiak, I have argued that unpublished photographs found in the archive offer a more complicated narrative than that presented in mainstream media. The published versions are grounded by text and layout that underscore the hardships of life in the cold, inhospitable North and praise a white woman's success in the Arctic. Yet as a series of archival photographs, we see a modern Inuk who understood how to manipulate his own representation. While in the Arctic, Gilliat was cognizant of the potential harm in photographing Indigenous peoples and recognized the importance of sending photographs back to the North. Yet, she was also the author of at least one text that accompanied her photographs of Kingwatsiak and Houston, thus confirming her own stereotypes of the North and Inuit. While my analysis lacks the critical perspective of the

Indigenous subject as well as that of the contemporary reader, I hope to have shown how ‘thickening’ an image’s description, to invoke Clifford Geertz’s familiar term, is a productive exercise for understanding the malleability of photographic meaning.<sup>218</sup>

In *Eye Contact* Jane Lydon suggests that while photographs created within colonialist systems certainly speak of oppression and control, there remains the potential for them also to reveal encounters that were (and are) resistant, collaborative, and perhaps mutually beneficial. She writes:

In a nation wracked by uncertainty about its identity, and especially about the status of its indigenous peoples, photographs still speak eloquently of oppression, but also of collaboration and intimacy.<sup>219</sup>

In the case studies that structure this chapter we see evidence of Inuit actively participating in their representation as well as Gilliat’s own struggle to define her position in the Arctic as an affluent *Qallunaaq* woman working within a representational system that had long been used to marginalize and devalue Inuit culture and experience. By mining the archive for primary sources beyond the printed image—such as diaries, letters, and contact prints—I have been able to (re)construct complex narratives of encounter. While, it is imperative to recognize that Gilliat’s photographs were made in and refer to a time of historic subjugation (even if only covertly, as is evidenced by my reading of the George River Hostel images), it is also important that we recognize a more nuanced and complex set of relations that took place between the colonizer and colonized. A consideration of Gilliat’s photographs as a “contact zone,” moreover, allows one to move beyond a reading of her work as an uncomplicated expression of colonial ideology and instead to consider the photograph as a complex moment of exchange in which both photographer and subject had something at stake.

### Chapter Three: Picturing Inuit Women

**“The dehumanizing aspect of portrait photography as mere inventory is undermined by the irreducible presence of a self.”—Lucy Lippard, *Partial Recall*.<sup>220</sup>**

Much of Rosemary Gilliat’s 400-page diary of her northern journey is dedicated to a discussion of Inuit women: from speculations about harmful relations between *Qallunaat* men and Inuit women to descriptions of their clothing and appearance. The diary is also marked by a tension between Gilliat’s delight in the ‘primitive’ and her insistence on ‘modern’ values and opportunities for women. For example, Gilliat was particularly intrigued by and wanted to photograph traditional female activities such as chewing sealskin to soften and stretch the material for making *kamiik*; yet, at the same time, was bothered by the lack of meaningful wage labour for women in the North [Figure 3.1].<sup>221</sup> She was also particularly distraught by the sexual harassment she heard about and witnessed while in the eastern Arctic. Appalled by the actions of *Qallunaat* men, Gilliat advocated for more RCMP presence in the area. She also understood that Inuit behavioural customs made it difficult for women to refuse men’s advances and believed, therefore, that it was white women’s responsibility to help teach Inuit women to say ‘No’:

[S]o many people try to come over to Apex to seduce the girls. Really there should be RCMP in Apex...One of the problems is that an Eskimo girl, by nature of her own training in Eskimo manners—does not refuse a man, even if she does not want him—so they do not like to say no to these white men. But perhaps in time she will learn from her white sisters that she does not have to say yes to every man—however uncomfortable an arrangement that may be for the man!<sup>222</sup>

Likewise, Barbara Hinds believed that all Inuit women should be given a padlock to put on their doors and that men working in the North be subject to medical screening to avoid the risk of spreading sexually transmitted infections.<sup>223</sup> Both Gilliat and Hinds sought the

solution to such injustice in preventative measures and pedagogy rather than in the need for a fundamental behavioural shift in the colonizer. But while Gilliat reflected on such troubling scenarios and wished Euro-Canadians would be more conscious of the social problems availing the North (and that they created in the North), she focused her camera not on deplorable conditions but on women and girls working, playing, and caring for their families. While at times, Gilliat reproduced an ethnographic gaze [Figure 3.1]—in which the subject of the image is the documentation of difference—she was also intent on ‘painting’ a complex portrait of Inuit women who were coping with rapid societal change. She recognized a strength and resiliency in Inuit women that she may have identified in herself and thus it was by picturing the Other that Gilliat was able to both construct and express a part of herself.

This chapter extends the discussions in the two preceding chapters to examine Gilliat’s photographs of Inuit women more closely. As Susan Close has argued, women photographers often constructed identity “not by turning the camera upon themselves, but rather...by photographing the Other.”<sup>224</sup> Likewise, Susan Bernardin and other editors and contributors to the collected volume *Trading Gazes* suggest that as women pursued new occupations and revised older roles, “they turned to Native peoples, culture, and values to reinvent themselves.”<sup>225</sup> While speaking of an older generation of photographers, the claims by Close, Bernardin, and other scholars remain relevant in later periods. Gilliat, for example, took an interest in Inuit as a romanticized escape from her urban life in the South and as a way to bolster her career. Particularly concerned with the female Other, Gilliat used photography and personal writing to emphasize the cultural differences between herself and Inuit women while simultaneously standing in feminist solidarity

with her Inuit ‘sisters.’ Here, I will also return to the earlier discussion of the “contact zone” in order to look specifically at a gendered space of Settler/Indigenous encounter: How did the knowledge, experiences, and desires of being a woman frame Gilliat’s interaction with and representation of the female Other?

### **Eskimo Girls Can Also Use a Rifle!**

There is a colour slide in the archive that I returned to over and over. Technically speaking, it is not a particularly interesting photograph; most of the figures look away from the camera or their faces are obscured by dark shadows. I do not believe it was part of a planned photo shoot; rather, it was a moment Gilliat happened upon and felt the urge to photograph. I kept returning to this image not only for its juxtaposition of animal/human and life/death, but for its material presence in the archive. In the photograph [Figure 3.2] a dead seal lies in the foreground with thick incisions running down its torso revealing the pinky-white flesh within. Deep scarlet blood pours out of the seal’s body onto the rocks below. I can imagine it pooling around Gilliat’s boots as she photographed the group of Inuit men contemplating their kill. The seal, fleshy and visceral, is the focus of the men grouped around it. But the dead animal is not the most enticing aspect of the image. What strikes me—the *punctum* to use Barthes’ familiar term—is the figure standing in the background, a young Inuk woman. With her fuchsia dress, green headscarf, and red hair ribbon, she is positioned in sharp contrast to the monotone clothing of the men below her. She stands upright and proud, meeting the camera’s gaze (and, by extension, that of the viewer) straight on, with a smile across her face and a rifle in her right hand. Who is this young woman? Why is she not engaged in the actions of the men around her? And why is she holding that rifle?

Library and Archives Canada's online caption for this image reads, "Group of People Gathered Around a Dead Seal, Ungava, Nunavut."<sup>226</sup> The caption is merely descriptive, focusing on the hunt and the animal itself rather than on any of the human figures in the image. However, in the Gilliat Eaton Fonds, the photograph exists as a colour slide with a handwritten caption along the outside edges: "Udjuk Mary shoots a seal/Eskimo girls can also use a rifle!/She is best sewing lady/Ungava" [Figure 3.3]. This series of short sentences tells us much more about the woman represented in the image and about how Gilliat understood Inuit women's experiences.<sup>227</sup> As the visual anthropologist Christopher Wright has written, "Inscriptions ... are performances through which photographs acquire meaning and are embedded in histories."<sup>228</sup>

This photograph of Mary Udjuk is an example of how digital databases often alter the materiality and meaning of original archival objects. In the article "Photographic Materiality in the Age of Digital Reproduction," Joanna Sassoon argues that digitization is a cultural practice whereby custodial institutions, in aiming for wider and more equal access to collections, in fact increase institutional control over archival materials.<sup>229</sup> Digitization reduces photographs to a purely visual medium, obscuring elements such as captions, frames, the back of a photograph, or an image's reproduction in various contexts.<sup>230</sup> In emphasizing content over context and materiality, digitization also "profoundly alters the interactive experience of viewing photographs."<sup>231</sup> Sassoon suggests that when important information becomes invisible to the researcher, "the intellectual and social value, and the polysemic nature of the photographic object, is reduced."<sup>232</sup> In the case of Gilliat's photograph of Udjuk, the digital record has obscured the relationship between photographer and subject and between myself and the

photographic object. Moreover, the “content-based digital orphan,” to use Sassoon’s term, limits the potential for a broader discussion about a settler woman’s representation of gender in Inuit culture.

*Then Mary—an Eskimo—the gum-chewing girl who travelled with us—shot a seal—just the other side of the landslide—the men were skinning it when I got there— Port Burwell, July 27, 1960.*<sup>233</sup>

As already noted, Gilliat was dedicated to representing what she perceived to be ‘true’ about Inuit culture and, in doing so, was particularly intrigued by gender roles and the family structure. Many of her photographs of the North show men and women performing various labours. Photographs from seal hunts, for example, depict Inuit men steering the boat, harpooning polar bears, and setting up camp. These images would have fulfilled the desires of a Western audience that expected stereotyped images of Indigenous hunting culture. Gilliat’s images of women caring for their homes and children are similarly uncomplicated. (In saying this, however, I do not mean to discount women’s roles, especially Inuit women who were equally responsible for their families’ survival, but to emphasize the Western belief that domestic space was inherently feminine.)<sup>234</sup> Yet, Gilliat was also committed to understanding and picturing the complexity of women’s experience in the North. As a single professional woman, she may have seen hard working Inuit women as more aligned with her own world view. Many of Gilliat’s personal photographs from her Trans-Canada road trip (1954) or Shilly Shally, her cabin in Gatineau Park, similarly picture female friends engaged in physical labour such as fixing cars, pitching tents, or building outhouses [Figure 3.4].<sup>235</sup> Whether or not Mary Udjuk is representative of Inuit gender roles (or if she even shot that seal),

this moment captured on film signifies Gilliat's own search for models of women who transgressed traditional gendered boundaries.

The exclamation mark following "Eskimo girls can use a rifle!" reveals Gilliat's excitement and respect for Mary Udjuk, a woman who could hunt for her own sustenance. Such a mark, however, also suggests a sense of irony; that is to say, that it underscores how remarkable it would have been to see a woman with a rifle. Thus the punctuation mark emphasizes this particular scene as a deviation from the norm. As Janet Bilson and Kyra Mancini, the authors of *Inuit Women*, have demonstrated, hunting was at this time generally the vocation of Inuit men. However, women did participate in some hunting and fishing activities depending on the time of year or particular circumstances.<sup>236</sup> They argue, moreover, that while gender roles among the Inuit are clearly delineated, they may not be as strictly enforced as has been historically reported. While heavier tasks tend to fall onto men, both women and men brave harsh conditions to protect their families and women often cross over to 'male territory' when necessary for survival (the opposite is also true). Moreover, women who express an interest in fishing and hunting seals are often welcomed on hunting trips and allowed to use rifles.<sup>237</sup> In this way, Inuit culture somewhat parallels aspects of Western societies where differentiated roles exist in theory but not always in practice.

*Joan [Ryan] says the word for fiancé [sic] in Eskimo means 'the makings of a wife'—allowing some flexibility and room for improvement—so much better than the rigid idea of ours.— Port Burwell, July 26, 1960.*<sup>238</sup>

On the same thin border surrounding the slide, Gilliat's words also draw attention to Udjuk's other talent, sewing. On the one hand, an emphasis on Udjuk's domestic skills ensures that she remains in the realm of 'proper' femininity as understood by a Western



viewer. On the other hand, Gilliat's words underscore the complexity of women's responsibilities and skills in the Arctic. By including comments on both her hunting *and* sewing skills, Gilliat did not single Udjuk out as an exceptional woman who adopted the role of masculine hunter with her (phallic) rifle, but as the embodiment of Inuit women who share responsibilities with their male counterparts. Gilliat, furthermore, referred to Inuit women in the plural and not Udjuk singularly; it is not only Udjuk who can use a rifle but "Eskimo girls." Yet, at the same time, Gilliat's use of the subject's personal name is significant for it stresses Udjuk's individuality and places her in the same space and time as the photographer and, in turn, the contemporary viewer. She is not an anonymous woman standing in as a sign of 'Eskimo woman' but a living, breathing, rifle-bearing woman who wears Western-style dress, sews, and hunts. With the camera Gilliat aspired to represent the multivalent nature of Inuit women's identity.

### **A Multitude of Gazes: Photographing Kenojuak Ashevak**

*I have seldom experienced the feeling of losing so many friends at once and truly the warmest were the Eskimos. The two Oshaweetuks & their wives—old Ikhalu—and the lovely family of Kenojuak—a perfect human family.—Cape Dorset, October 3, 1960.<sup>239</sup>*

Gilliat took an interest in the lives of a number of Inuit women, particularly those of the female printmakers associated with the West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative in Cape Dorset, which included, among others, Kenojuak Ashevak and Mary Pitseolak. Ashevak, in particular, held a special place for Gilliat; multiple photographs and long textual passages in the Gilliat Eaton Fonds reveal a deep interest and sincere respect for this remarkable artist.<sup>240</sup> Like the photograph of Mary Udjuk holding a rifle, Gilliat also photographed Ashevak with the tools of her trade, further attesting to Gilliat's preference for presenting women as active agents and members of their community rather than as

static examples of the primitive Other or as ‘exotic’ counterparts of traditionally feminine roles such as motherhood and homemaking.

An NFB photo story entitled “Kenojuak—Poet of the Arctic,” published on July 11, 1961, features five Gilliat photographs [Figure 3.5]. Accompanying text describes Ashevak as an imaginative artist with a troubled past, painting an exotic portrait of her life in a remote northern community:

She draws what she imagines from the myths and legends which are still so much a part of Eskimo life. Kenojuak has had her tragedies—death of fellow artist Sheouak [Petaulassie], this spring—her hardships—five years in a sanatorium—but she remains serene, charming. A harsh life has left no mark upon her art, which remains a flowing fantasia—a poetic evocation of the universal spirits behind all imagination, all art, all life.

The focus on Ashevak’s sense of imagination conforms to Western ideas of artistic genius—albeit with a certain ‘exotic’ bent. At the same time, the emphasis on her life’s hardships and tranquil character underscore both her ‘feminine’ qualities of resilience and composure and her adherence to, what Alan Marcus terms, a “happy-go-lucky” Eskimo stereotype.<sup>241</sup> The photograph of her drawing while seated on the floor (identified in the layout as image “B”) reinforces the representation of Ashevak as a ‘primitive’ artist. Although she meets the viewer’s gaze, Ashevak’s expression is serene and comfortable, not confrontational. Moreover, the slight downward gaze of the camera (and, in turn, the viewer’s gaze) hints at dominance over the Other. The caption underneath the image directs the viewer’s attention to Ashevak’s left-handedness, further suggesting her deviation from the norm.

The lead image on the top left (image “A”) displays Ashevak’s primary role as a mother and caregiver. The accompanying caption reinforces such perceptions, describing Ashevak as a:

[S]hy Eskimo mother from Cape Dorset, Baffin Island, who takes time from cooking and caring for her family to create prints that are imaginative and poetic, a kind of ‘hymn to life’ from a person who finds greatness, fantasy and poetry in the vast spaces of her Arctic environment.

As she holds her young child, Adlareak, close, the same sensitive and affectionate expression graces Ashevak’s face. But here the two figures look off into the distance, inviting the viewer to gaze at the mother and child for as long as he/she wishes. The tightly cropped image with a plain background erases any sign of Ashevak’s life in the Arctic, positioning her as a universal example of motherhood. The trope of motherhood thereby renders the Inuk mother and child more accessible to a Euro-Canadian audience in the South. In the opposite corner, figure “E” mimics this vision of motherhood: an unidentified Inuk woman carrying a baby in her *amauti* gazes intently at an Ashevak print as her young son peeks around from behind her body to confront the camera’s gaze with a look of suspicion and nervousness. Here, motherhood is framed within a more traditionally ethnographic view. As a full body portrait, the photograph documents the woman’s ‘exotic’ garment and unusual way of carrying a child, symbolically reflecting the “flowing fantasia” of the print before her. This mother and child are more clearly positioned as Other; they are ‘like us’ but not quite.

The mother and child pose is a familiar trope in social documentary and reform photography. Jacob Riis and Dorothea Lange, for example, both used this theme to frame portraits of American poverty.<sup>242</sup> Likewise, many photographers of the Other represented

mothers and children to portray difference within the commonly understood language of maternal love. The photograph of Ashevak and her son could be compared, for example, to Richard Harrington's image of an Inuk mother and child in Padlei, North West Territories. Purportedly Harrington's most recognizable photograph and one of the most famous to ever come out of the Arctic, the image of Kinaryuak and Kipsiyak depicts a moment of tender care in the midst of a starvation crisis (Padlei, 1950).<sup>243</sup> Lorraine Monk, Executive of the Still Photography Division, referred to Harrington's photograph as "Canada's Madonna and Child," inciting both Christian and art-historical associations that at once offer the photograph up as a 'universal' image and soften the horrific context of its production.<sup>244</sup> The photograph, one of three Harrington images included in Edward Steichen's influential exhibition *The Family of Man* (1955), functioned, in Martha Langford's words, as a "racial envoy[]" in Steichen's themes of childbirth and maternal love."<sup>245</sup> Langford argues, moreover, that the "image encapsulates the desires and dilemmas internalized by itinerant photographers of the Other, and especially those paradoxical yearnings for a universal language of representation cast in the patois of the real."<sup>246</sup> The same might be said of Gilliat's photograph of Ashevak and her young son included in the NFB photo story. In this case, the 'primitive' cultural expression of a far away people is presented to a non-Indigenous audience under the veil of an acceptable and consumable image of maternal affection. Yet, in its very inclusion in a story about one woman, Gilliat's photograph of Ashevak and Adlareak is more specific and individualized than Harrington's. This will become more evident as we turn to the archival prints.

While in their published form, Gilliat's photograph of Ashevak with her child conforms to an Euro-Christian idea of motherhood, other photographs from this shoot, like the archival shots of Kingwatsiak and Alma Houston, tell a more complicated tale of the artist through the lens of a *Qallunaag* photographer. As "one of the most important of the women artists," Gilliat knew that photographs of Ashevak would be both popular and profitable.<sup>247</sup> Yet, beyond commercial interest, Gilliat was also attracted to Ashevak for many of the same reasons she was enthusiastic about hard working Inuit women like Mary Udjuk. The series of unpublished photographs include Ashevak tending to an oil lamp, breast-feeding her baby, drawing in her tent [Figure 3.6], and spending time with her family [Figure 3.7].<sup>248</sup> A number of the images conform to a vision of motherhood that contradicts or perhaps devalues Ashevak's ability as an artist. However, unlike other photographs of the subject—as illustrated with the example of Harrington who employed a maternal theme to aestheticize an image of intense suffering—Ashevak is pictured not only as a mother but as a woman with multiple roles and interests. Nor is she relegated to an "ethnographic present" through the use of 'traditional' style clothing and a stark decontextualized space. In many of the photographs, like the one of the Ashevak family [Figure 3.7], the sitters are clearly framed within their own home, surrounded by objects that represent themselves and speak of a contemporary (post-contact) moment.

The invocation of intersubjective time further suggests a space of photographic collaboration. As Susan Close has argued, "for a photograph of a person to go beyond a mere physical likeness, portraiture demands that control of the process be shared."<sup>249</sup> Ashevak was no stranger to the camera. She was related to Peter Pitseolak by marriage and was photographed by him on multiple occasions in Cape Dorset and Quebec where

she was hospitalized for a number of years.<sup>250</sup> Thus, Ashevak was likely comfortable around the camera. Yet, the casual demeanor of Gilliat's photographs of Ashevak also rests in the fact that she invited the photographer into her summer home. In a photograph entitled *Artist Kenojuak carrying an infant on her back and exiting a tent, Cape Dorset, Nunavut*, Ashevak, with Adlareak on her back, stands in the doorway of her summer home [Figure 3.8].<sup>251</sup> Although it is not entirely clear whether the artist is emerging from the threshold or inviting Gilliat in, Ashevak confronts the camera's gaze, appearing at ease and welcoming.

Through a translator, Ashevak had expressed to Gilliat that she preferred drawing over chores such as chewing sealskin for *kamiit*. Trying to make a living from art, Ashevak likely understood the power of photography as a tool of promotion, and may have willingly participated in this particular photo shoot. The returned gaze, seen in most of Gilliat's photographs of the artist, suggests at once the constructed nature of the shoot and Ashevak's comfortableness with the camera [Figure 3.6]. Here is one woman proudly showing off her family, home, and artistic skill to another woman [Figure 3.7]. While Gilliat had her own motives for photographing Ashevak, the artist, too, had reason to consent to being photographed and interviewed. Gilliat's photographs, in turn, succeed in revealing a collaborative space of encounter. While power was inevitably imbalanced in favour of Gilliat, these personal and specific renderings suggest more agency on the part of the named subject, Kenojuak Ashevak, than the anonymous and powerless woman of Harrington's mother and child portrait.

In their influential book, *Reading National Geographic*, Catherine Lutz and Jane Collins propose that a "multitude of gazes" are present in all images of the Other. These

gazes include, among others, those of: the photographer, the magazine or commissioning agency, the magazine reader, the non-Western subject of the image, and the academic.<sup>252</sup> For Lutz and Collins it is these disparate points of view, or ‘multiplicity of looks,’ that account for the different meanings found in any photograph: “It is the root of much of the photograph’s dynamism as a cultural object, and the place where the analyst can perhaps most productively begin to trace its connections to the wider social world of which it is a part.”<sup>253</sup> Likewise, Ariella Azoulay argues for photographic interpretation that exceeds visual and aesthetic analysis. In her words, “The photograph bears the seal of the photographic event, and reconstructing this event requires more than just identifying what is shown in the photograph.”<sup>254</sup> Thus Azoulay contends that viewers need to “stop looking at the photograph and instead start watching it.”<sup>255</sup> By invoking the verb ‘to watch’ Azoulay suggests that there are dimensions of time and movement embedded in the original photographic situation that need to be reinscribed in the interpretation of a still image. By looking at the intersection of a few types of gazes I argue for Gilliat’s photographs of Ashevak as ambiguous and complex moments of encounter that carry meaning beyond their ostensibly fixed position within the NFB photo story. While it is the institutional gaze that might seem to control the view, there are myriad other gazes invoked by these images.

The photo story, “Kenojuak—Poet of the Arctic,” emphasizes the ‘exotic’ nature of Ashevak’s life and artistic practice while simultaneously pointing to her fundamental role as a mother and, hence, as a universally understood female type. The effect of the institutional magazine gaze is to promote and market the arts of Canada’s Other to a Western audience in the country’s South and around the world.<sup>256</sup> The magazine reader’s

gaze, in turn, reflects that of the institution and is shaped by the ‘parasitic’ words of the photo story’s text.<sup>257</sup> Inuit art is positioned as exotic and Othered but remains an essential part of Canadian cultural identity—an indigenizing of Canada’s art scene.

The photographer’s gaze, while inevitably influenced by the institutional gaze, can have competing motives.<sup>258</sup> While one of Gilliat’s intentions was to endorse Inuit prints, she was more focused on picturing an individual artist than on producing propaganda for the government.<sup>259</sup> Her gaze suggests a respect and appreciation for this artist, mother, and wife. Photographing Ashevak inside of her own home rather than in a studio also points to the possibility of a collaborative space between Gilliat and her subject. Ashevak’s returned gaze, in most of the photographs, further suggests that she was not intimidated by the situation and she may in fact have actively welcomed the camera’s presence. The meaning of a returned gaze has, however, sparked disagreement amongst film theorists. According to Lutz and Collins, some scholars believe that looking into the camera is a confrontational action that “short circuits voyeurism.”<sup>260</sup> Whereas others conceive of the returned gaze as an acknowledgment and tacit invitation to the viewer to keep looking. Lutz and Collins, for example, argue that a smile, often found in the returned look of *National Geographic* photographs, “plays an important role in muting the potentially disruptive, confrontational role of this return gaze.”<sup>261</sup> While Ashevak does invite the viewer’s gaze, she does not appear passively open to voyeurism; rather, her returned gaze suggests to the viewer that this is a privileged situation and not a natural right of the colonizer (as suggested, for example, by the photograph of Ashevak at her front door). Other shots, where Ashevak casually avoids the camera’s gaze as she works on a drawing or attends to her baby, similarly indicate a certain comfort around



Gilliat and her camera. As a woman, looking to sell her work in the South, Ashevak performed for the camera and actively participated in her own representation.<sup>262</sup>

Where all of these gazes intersect is in my own looking, or what Lutz and Collins term the “academic gaze.” As a white, middle-class, woman, my gaze in many ways overlaps with that of the historical magazine reader’s gaze. Yet, as a settler academic trained in visual culture, my goal is to critique and denaturalize photographs. Azoulay argues that the spectator (herself a citizen of photography) has a “responsibility toward what she sees” and needs to be trained to occupy a critical position of suspicion.<sup>263</sup> Lutz and Collins likewise note the academic’s need to resist aestheticizing temptations. However, they suggest that the seductive potential of photographs is not all together negative. For example, Lucy Lippard, in her introduction to *Partial Recall*, found herself initially attracted to Mary Schäffer’s image of the Beaver family (Îyârhe Nakoda, 1906) for its tenderness and deviation from the standard colonial gaze of early twentieth century photography.<sup>264</sup> This initial aesthetic and sentimental reading eventually led her to a more nuanced understanding of the photograph’s context of making. I, too, find myself attracted to the images of Ashevak for an unexplainable reason. Perhaps I see in her something I believe Gilliat did as well: a sense of serenity, of passion, of hardship, and strength. And while I risk re-inscribing the very imbalanced power relations that brought these images to be, I believe there is potential in first attractions (and suspicions). I still hold myself responsible for reading beyond the frame of the image and complicating the ostensible truth-value of the documentary. I am but one spectator participating in the negotiation of what and how Gilliat’s photographs make meaning.<sup>265</sup> Taken together, these various gazes suggest an interwoven narrative of encounter whereby the competing

interests of a national institution, a mainstream viewing population, a photojournalist (and tourist), an Indigenous subject, and a scholar in the twenty first century, come together to speak of photographs' multivalent meaning.

### **Gendering the “Contact Zone”**

In the volume *Contact Zones: Aboriginal and Settler Women in Canada's Colonial Past*, editors Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherdale apply Pratt's theory of the “contact zone” to a specifically gendered encounter. In their introduction, Pickles and Rutherdale suggest that Pratt's work has “moved us beyond linear narratives of progress, allowing for the disruption of the position of Aboriginal peoples as Other, who at best might offer resistance to colonial powers.”<sup>266</sup> Moreover, they assert that “in Canada white women were both powerful and powerless. Their power rested in their whiteness, but they were constrained by patriarchy.”<sup>267</sup> As I described in Chapter One, Gilliat was acutely conscious of the limitations of being a woman. Not only did she have to compete in a male dominated market but her integrity and usefulness were questioned by white men while traveling in the Arctic. Yet, she negotiated her restricted position by turning her lens towards Inuit women. While Gilliat occupied a position of racial power, she also empathized with her female subjects. These women, in turn, welcomed, or at least tolerated, Gilliat's presence as is evidenced by moments of a returned gaze or a congenial smile. Although, like her contemporaries and photographers before her, Gilliat constructed portraits of universal themes such as the mother and child, she also pictured women in their contemporary surroundings going about their daily lives.

Gilliat's trip to the Arctic, while perhaps uncommon, was not unique. There are examples of other Euro-Canadian women who travelled to the North for the purpose of

artistic and/or documentary pursuits. As such, they offer a valuable point of comparison to Gilliat. For example, in her contribution to the collected volume *Rethinking Professionalism: Women and Art in Canada, 1850-1970*, Art historian Loren Lerner examines drawings of Inuit made by Canadian artist Kathleen Daly Pepper (1898-1994). Daly travelled to the eastern Arctic with her husband George Pepper in 1960 (three months aboard the *C.D. Howe*) and again in 1961; after Pepper's death in 1968, Daly spent an extended period of time in Povungnituk (now Puvirnituq, Nunavik). Like Gilliat, Daly viewed herself as a professional with artistic skill that she could use to educate Euro-Canadians about Inuit. Lerner argues that Daly's Inuit portraits, which are both sensitive and experimental, meet James Clifford's call for an "ethical mode of ethnographic intervention."<sup>268</sup>

Although Daly worked within colonialism's social structures, Lerner contends that her self-reflexivity and honest interest in Indigenous peoples reveals an opposition to its norms. Influenced by Marius Barbeau, Daly found genuine value in other cultures but also held the common assumption that the past was more authentic.<sup>269</sup> While in Povungnituk, she invited mothers and their children into her cabin to pose for drawings. The resulting portraits picture the women in close-up within a neutral background [Figure. 3.9]. They appear frozen in time but also outside of their rapidly transforming landscape and culture. Lerner argues that Daly's empathetic renderings and identification with the nurturing role of Inuit women, countered the invasive forces of colonialism's paternalism.<sup>270</sup> In Lerner's words, Daly pictured "Inuit mothering as a form of strength, independence, and preservation of culture."<sup>271</sup>

Like Daly, Gilliat was self-reflexive in her own practice and sincerely interested in the lives and culture of Inuit, yet her resulting imagery took a rather different course. While Gilliat also pictured motherhood—as seen in the portraits of Ashevak for example—her subjects were never isolated from their surroundings. This is in part due to her working methods. For one, Gilliat did not have a studio space, nor did she photograph people within her own living quarters; she always went to people, photographing them outdoors or in their own homes. Second, Gilliat worked within the medium of (documentary) photography and carrying a portable camera around allowed her to take snapshots that inherently carry more visual information than Daly's pared down pencil drawings. As Deborah Poole argues, there is much that a photographer cannot control in his/her image making, thus it is inevitable for extra or unintended visual information to seep into a photograph. In turn, these "contingencies" or "excesses" offer a more open-ended interpretative environment, often complicating ethnographic or documentary photography's intention of fixity.<sup>272</sup> I have previously touched on the productive potential of visual excesses; for example, in the photograph of Maggie with a baby on her back at the George River fishery. Photography, therefore, was the ideal medium for Gilliat who was more interested in capturing life in transition than reflecting upon an Inuit essence that would remain despite the changes wrought by colonialism.<sup>273</sup> Her photographs of Mary Udjuk, for example, represent the subject wearing a Western style dress and holding a rifle, both signs of contact. Yet, the dead seal lying in front of her and the smile streaked across her face, signify a pride in the hunt, a traditional (and continuing) form of sustenance. While Daly and Gilliat were both informed by, and at times reproduced, a racializing rhetoric, they tried to avoid stereotypes in their visual representations. The

outcomes of their honest desire to know and understand the Other, however, where dissimilar; where Daly's line drawings framed Inuit motherhood as the essence of strength and independence, Gilliat's photographs of women performing labour attest to the myriad roles of Inuit women in a society in economic, social, and cultural flux. Women who she saw as tightly bound to the social fabric of a broader Canadian identity—to which Gilliat herself was a newcomer.

## Conclusion

**Cultural analysis is intrinsically incomplete. And, worse than that, the more deeply it goes the less complete it is. —Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*.<sup>274</sup>**

One thing most photography scholars can agree upon is that every photograph possesses multivalent meanings. In this thesis I have refused the convention that a photograph is an unequivocal document of history or a purely visual object reduced to the content within its borders. Instead I have sought to look at how photographs mediate lived experience. In other words, how photographs necessitate an encounter between the photographer and the world and between living subjects and the camera. In these pages, I have also traced the fluidity of meaning through the social lives of photographic objects. In particular, I have critically examined the ways in which photographs are framed by layout and text to ostensibly fix meaning and reflect hegemonic belief structures. In this thesis, therefore, I consider photography as both a social practice *and* a material object.

I have argued that Rosemary Gilliat used the camera as a tool for travel and adventure and as a way to identify with her new home of Canada. In the North, Gilliat photographed landscapes in an effort to transform vast abstract space into a personal and meaningful place. Pointing her lens towards the land, moreover, was in many ways a spiritual experience for Gilliat and one that seemingly enabled her to empathize with the Inuit communities she encountered. Yet, landscape photographs are inevitably implicated in a visual tradition that claimed scopic possession over the land while dispossessing Indigenous peoples of territory. In one seemingly banal landscape of Cape Dorset tundra [Figure 1.3] one can uncover both personal and political meaning and visualize the tensions that imbued Gilliat's practice. While she worked within colonialism's social

structures and produced images that appealed to institutional, popular, and mainstream viewing audiences, Gilliat also resisted some of colonialism's norms. This is perhaps most evident in her photographs of Inuit in which she made a self-conscious effort to present her subjects as they saw themselves (or, at least, as Gilliat *thought* they saw themselves). A consideration of photography as a social practice also necessitates that we reflect upon the agency of the sitter. As Ariella Azoulay argues, all photographs of the Other naturally imply an encounter; thus, it becomes the spectator's responsibility to bear witness to that encounter and recognize the complex power dynamics inherent in any photograph. The presence of returned gazes [Figure 2.2], congenial smiles [Figure 2.11], and the inclusion of the subjects' personal space [Figure 3.7], all point to the sitters' agency and participation. Moreover, Gilliat's propensity to record personal narratives and names in her diary, also help to reconstruct complex moments of intercultural contact, in which both the subject and photographer had something at stake. In addition to collaboration, photographs of the Other also reveal moments of resistance and ambivalence [Figure 2.6] or suggest that what the image is actually about are the troubling social and political contexts outside of the frame—those that remain concealed by the photograph proper [Figures 2.5 and 2.7]. This is not to say, however, that as a settler photographer Gilliat was an exception to the rule or that she produced photographs that were incongruous with prevailing Euro-Canadian attitudes and ideologies of the day. Many of her images are also ethnographically informed views that primitivize Inuit and support forced assimilation. This is most obvious in the material afterlives of her photographs as they entered mainstream circulation in Canada's South [Figure. 2.8].

*I hope for clear eyes to see, an understanding heart and patience to take good photographs—and courage to take photographs that mean invasions of other people's privacy—Ottawa, preparing to go to the Yukon, September 1, 1953.*<sup>275</sup>

This close study of Gilliat's photographic work contributes to, and fills gaps in, multiple fields of study, including Feminist Art History, the history of photojournalism in Canada, and the history of photography in the North. On the one hand, I have performed a feminist recovery project, recuperating one woman's professional history and arguing for its importance in the social history of photography in Canada. Yet, on the other hand, I have attempted to fulfill Griselda Pollock's call for a feminist Art History that does not aim simply to insert women into the canon, but to interrogate how and why women have traditionally been excluded in order to "make a difference in the totality of the spaces we call knowledge."<sup>276</sup> Active as a commercial photographer mainly from 1952-64, Gilliat had a relatively short but prolific career; yet she was confronted with sexism on a daily basis when publishers and editors questioned her credibility as a woman photographer. While many of Gilliat's northern images continued to circulate years after her trip, there is evidence that she also tried to sell her photographs to New York publishers and to mount an exhibition of her work in Ottawa, both of which failed to come to fruition. In addition to gender, the constructed hierarchy of photographic genres has also concealed Gilliat's life and work from public view. Photojournalism, which according to Wendy Kozol was often dismissed as a debased, popular form, has generally not been taken seriously in photographic histories.

Visual representations have long contributed to the constructed and imaginary view southern Canadians have of the Arctic. Looking to historic photographs, for example, can tell us much about political, ideological, social, and scientific relationships



with the North and its peoples. They may even help understand present imaginings of the North and contemporary Settler-Indigenous relations. Elizabeth Edwards has articulated this idea with particular eloquence:

In analyzing and trying to understand how people in the past patterned their world we may perhaps see how their patterns can be constructively integrated with our histories. In doing this, we may then better appreciate how we pattern our own world and how we might illuminate histories which are yet to be articulated.<sup>277</sup>

Throughout this thesis, I have attempted to acknowledge my own subject hood and to recognize that my readings, while working towards interpretative complexity, are inherently limited. What this thesis lacks above all, is the active presence of an Inuit perspective or reading. While I can argue for Inuit sitters' performative agency, I cannot speak for or even begin to understand what kind of meaning these photographs might have when returned to their source communities. I can only speak from my situated knowledge as a *Qallunaaq* academic in the South. Thus, the next logical step in the social lives of these photographs is a return to their source communities. Escaping their static position in the national archive—a site that many have argued is itself a technology of oppressive colonial power—and travelling back to the North would allow Gilliat's photographs to continue to accrue layers of meaning.<sup>278</sup> In Pamela Stern's words:

Regardless of the intents of the early photographers or the purposes to which the images were originally put, the existence today of historic photographs permits Arctic peoples to repossess their histories and to reassert sovereignty over their culture... Thus, while historic photographs are of interest to academics and other researchers, their greatest value may lie in their utility to the subjects and their descendants.<sup>279</sup>

There are numerous examples of 'visual repatriation' projects in Canada and around the world.<sup>280</sup> In southern Alberta, for example, anthropologists Laura Peers and Alison K. Brown initiated a community based research project with the Kainai Nation. Working with a collection

of photographs in the collection of the Pitt Rivers Museum (Oxford, UK) made between 1925 and 1927 by Anthropologist Beatrice Blackwood, Brown and Peers concluded that “historic photographs... can be used by communities to recover histories that have been submerged by mainstream academic analyses and to prompt memories that challenge received interpretations.”<sup>281</sup>

In regards to archival photographs of Inuit, LAC introduced their own ongoing photo-identification project in 2001. In collaboration with the Inuit training program Nunavut Sivuniksavut and Nunavut's Department of Culture, Languages, Elders and Youth, “Project Naming” was launched in an effort to identify Inuit in LAC’s archival holdings, to enable Inuit youth to connect with their elders, and to bridge cultural and geographical distances between Nunavut and Canada’s South. In addition to a series of community-based activities, “Project Naming” maintains an extensive digital database, which researchers can search and contribute to if they recognize a sitter in a photograph. To date, approximately 8000 images have been digitized and 2000 Inuit individuals, activities, and places have been identified.<sup>282</sup> Names have special significance in Inuit culture. Historically, (re)naming is a symbolic action that at once signifies oppressive power (from the adoption of Christian names when missionaries first went North, to the introduction of “Eskimo Identification Canada” disc numbers, and, finally, the implementation of surnames in the 1960s)<sup>283</sup> as well as empathy (as with Gilliat’s attempt to record the names and narratives of most of the Inuit she photographed). Today, naming (of both people and territories) is a powerful gesture in the declaration of Indigenous identities and the broader efforts of decolonizing settler colonialism. Even in what many might consider the simple act of naming, historic photographs begin to unravel narratives previously hidden from view and those that most often complicate original intentions of documentary fixity.<sup>284</sup> Extending the

efforts of “Project Naming,” Nunavut Sivuniksavut and Carleton University collaborated to launch “Views from the North: Photo-based Learning with Inuit Elders and Youth.” For this project, Nunavut Sivuniksavut students conducted interviews with elders in their home communities about photographs made between 50 and 70 years ago. An interactive website includes historic photographs, audio recordings of the interviews, and contemporary photographs made by participants in “Views from the North.” This project recognizes the social importance of photographic images and the ways in which they can mediate encounters in the present. In the words of Natasha Mablick of Pond Inlet (*Mittimatalik* in Inuktitut), the photographs “lead to a lot of regular conversations that we would have had but we probably wouldn’t have had if we didn’t have the pictures.”<sup>285</sup>

What all of these projects have in common is a goal of using photographs to illuminate and transcend narratives and to bring people together. Whether photographs are used in collaborative research between an archival institution and a source community or a casual chat between an Inuit youth and elder, photographs have the power to evoke histories *and* memories. A number of Gilliat’s images of Inuit, First Nations, and Métis have been included in “Project Naming’s” database, yet her photographs still remain widely unseen and have not been taken up in a greater ‘returns’ project. The date of Gilliat’s eastern Arctic trip, 1960, is an opportune time period for a community-based project, in which some of the individuals may still be living or will at least have living relatives, friends, and acquaintances. While this is the direction I envision for her photographs in the future, it is also not my place to impose a project on Inuit communities. Any community-based research initiative must reflect the desires and protocols of the source communities to which these photographs belong. But above all, I hope that people continue to engage with the Rosemary Gilliat Eaton collections and to tell new stories about her

Arctic photographs and the thousands of others that lay silent in the archive. After all, interpretation, according to Clifford Geertz, is never complete. The more we know, the more complicated and less complete things become.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Hugh Brody, "In Conclusion: The Power of the Image," in *Imaging the Arctic*, ed. J.C.H. King and Henrietta Lidchi (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998), 227.

<sup>2</sup> Art historian Harriet Riches, for example, takes issue with the prolific literature that has come to define women's camera work as "essentially deviating from normative practice." Riches, "'Picture Taking and Picture Making': Gender Difference and the Historiography of Photography," in *Photography, History, Difference*, ed. Tanya Sheehan (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College Press, 2014), 129.

<sup>3</sup> Susan Close, *Framing Identity: Social Practices of Photography in Canada (1880-1920)* (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, 2007), xvii.

<sup>4</sup> The Canadian Women Artists History Initiative at Concordia University (Montreal, QB) has done a commendable job promoting and circulating research on women's contributions to the cultural and material history of Canada. They also maintain an online database of women artists (which includes an entry on Gilliat) and a consultable documentation centre within Concordia's Art History department. For the edited volume that came out of their first conference, see Kristina Huneault and Janice Anderson, eds., *Rethinking Professionalism Women and Art in Canada, 1850–1970*, (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press), 2012.

<sup>5</sup> Wendy Kozol, *Life's America: Family and Nation in Postwar Photojournalism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), 34.

<sup>6</sup> Sherrill Grace, *Canada and the Idea of North* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 2001), xiii.

<sup>7</sup> Gilliat spent time in both the North West Territories (now Nunavut) and northern Quebec (now Nunavik). Generally, I refer to both as the eastern Arctic unless specification is necessary. I also use the term Arctic to refer to both high Arctic and sub-Arctic regions. Lastly, I use the terms Arctic and North interchangeably and capitalize the latter so as to underscore its culturally constructed nature. In the 1960s Canadian geographer Louis-Edmond Hamelin developed the concept of 'nordicity' to refer to the perceived, real, or imagined condition of high-latitude regions. His entry in *The Canadian Encyclopedia* is useful for understanding the geographic, climatic, economic, and social conditions of the North. Hamelin, "Nordicity," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/nordicity/>.

<sup>8</sup> Jane Lydon, *Eye Contact: Photographing Indigenous Australians* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 10.

<sup>9</sup> The oldest album contains Gilliat's own pictures as well as photographs of unidentified family members dating from around 1890. In the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries women were usually the compilers of photographic albums. Perhaps in part because of the absence of her mother, Gilliat took a keen interest in albums from a young age. Her albums primarily contain photographs of family, friends, and notable sites she visited during her travels. Also as a young girl, Gilliat began keeping daily journals, many of which are interspersed with drawings and photographs. For a history of the photo album and its precursor, the sentiment album, see Andrea Kunard, "Traditions of Collecting and Remembering: Gender, class and the nineteenth-century sentiment album and photograph album," *Early Popular Visual Culture* 4, no.3 (November 2006): 227-43.

<sup>10</sup> Gilliat, "A Record of Photographic Work by Rosemary Gilliat," December 1999, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 1 file 29, 'RGE notes on career/resume personal,' Library and Archives Canada, Ottawa, Ontario.

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<sup>11</sup> The North as a motivation for Gilliat's move to Canada was expressed to me by her friend, Elizabeth Corser, in an interview conducted on March 9, 2016 in Cole Harbour, Nova Scotia. Gilliat was also tired of her life in London and had a few friends in Canada who recommended that she move there. Gilliat, handwritten account of her life, no date, Cole Harbour Heritage Farm Museum, Box: Correspondence 1950, file 'A.'

<sup>12</sup> Gilliat's diary and many of the photographs from this trip have been uploaded to LAC's Flickr site. "Road Trip—Summer of..." Library and Archives Canada Flickr, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/lac-bac/albums/72157655756775420>. I have elsewhere written about Gilliat's Trans-Canada trip. Siemens, "'A Most Happy Holiday': Rosemary Gilliat's Photographic Travelogue Along the Trans-Canada Highway, 1954," *Render* no.4 (Spring 2016), forthcoming.

<sup>13</sup> After marrying, Gilliat took her husband's name yet she preferred her maiden name in all professional circumstances, especially in regards to her photographic work. In a letter to Lorraine Monk, Executive of the NFB Still Photography Division, Gilliat insisted that all reproductions of her work be identified by her maiden name only. I, therefore, also defer to her maiden name. Gilliat to Monk, April 2, 1971, National Film Board of Canada Still Photography Division, box 29 file 11, 'NFB Photographers,' National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives, Ottawa, ON.

<sup>14</sup> "Rosemary Eaton, An Activist for Heritage & Environment," Virtual Museum of Canada, [http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/sgc-cms/histoires\\_de\\_chez\\_nous-community\\_memories/pm\\_v2.php?id=exhibit\\_home&fl=0&lg=English&ex=00000862&pg=2](http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/sgc-cms/histoires_de_chez_nous-community_memories/pm_v2.php?id=exhibit_home&fl=0&lg=English&ex=00000862&pg=2).

<sup>15</sup> See *The Beaver* (Winter 1955): 44-9. Her contact with Inuit and northern First Nations was minimal on these trips. Gilliat's relationships with Inuit in the eastern Arctic were clearly more meaningful and memorable. Upon leaving Port Burwell Gilliat wrote, "I thought how lucky we were to have the most memorable of trips—almost as wonderful I think as my river trip down the Yukon from Whitehorse and Dawson—but of course this was a more unique experience because of the Eskimo people involved." While betraying primitivist undertones, this comment also makes clear the influence Inuit had on her experience of the North. Gilliat, personal diary, July 31, 1960, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 3 file 5, 'Arctic Trip Diary,' LAC.

<sup>16</sup> Gilliat, "A Record of Photographic Work by Rosemary Gilliat," December 1999.

<sup>17</sup> Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 4 file 10, 'NFB People of the High Arctic,' LAC.

<sup>18</sup> For a more detailed discussion of *People of the High Arctic* and other NFB photographs of the North, see Carol Payne, *The Official Picture: The National Film Board of Canada's Still Photography Division, 1941-71* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013), 168-9.

<sup>19</sup> Jean Lesage, "The Eskimo Family," transcribed lecture, Women's Canadian Club, Montreal, QB, October 25, 1954, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 1 file 21, 'Notes on Arctic and Eskimos,' LAC.

<sup>20</sup> For a discussion of *The Beaver*'s construction of an unique brand of Canadian 'northernness,' see Joan Sangster, "'The Beaver' as Ideology: Constructing Images of Inuit and Native Life in Post-World War II Canada," *Anthropologica* 42, no. 2 (2007): 191-209.

<sup>21</sup> This fascination continued for the rest of her life and is one of the reasons why I chose the 1960 Arctic trip as my object of analysis. Gilliat continued to write and collect essays on northern themes, especially about Inuit artists and Inuit women. In her later years, Gilliat often wrote letters to and about the press. In one particular poignant letter calling for better news coverage in Nova Scotia, Gilliat appealed for more (and more respectful) reporting of First Nations and Inuit. She wanted journalists to actually go into the communities they wrote about and privilege Indigenous voices. All this is to say that, while Gilliat never returned to the Arctic in her lifetime, her fascination and collecting of the North never ceased. Gilliat,

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essay, no date, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 1 file 26, 'RGE Contribution to the Royal Commission on the Media,' LAC.

<sup>22</sup> John Demont, "Barbara Hinds, 89, was former Herald Journalist," *The Chronicle Herald*, July 16, 2014, <http://thechronicleherald.ca/novascotia/1223187-barbara-hinds-89-was-former-herald-journalist>.

<sup>23</sup> Hinds to Gilliat, no date, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 1 file 40, 'Correspondences,' LAC.

<sup>24</sup> Gilliat, October 15, 1960, 'Arctic trip diary.'

<sup>25</sup> Even when they were scheduled to depart on June 17, 1960 the women were forced to wait an additional two days in order to prioritize the engineers and missionaries who were going to the Arctic. In some cases, however, these inconveniences worked to their advantage. While the women waited for a delayed plane to arrive in Fort Chimo to take them to Cape Dorset they took a quick excursion to Port Burwell.

<sup>26</sup> A note about terminology: In recent years many old colonial place names have been replaced by their Inuktitut language name as Inuit have gained political rights over their territory. In efforts towards my own unsettling, I was inclined to use proper designations throughout this thesis, however after much deliberation I have decided to utilize outdated names to reflect the historical moment that is pictured in Gilliat's photographs. In part, these old names function as verbal reminders of the colonial context of the images' making. Yet, I always reference changed names and Inuktitut names when applicable. As for the names used to describe northern Indigenous peoples, I use the plural Inuit or the singular Inuk. But when quoting Gilliat will use the term Eskimo, which is now considered derogatory and outmoded in Canada. When speaking more broadly of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit across Canada I use the term Indigenous.

<sup>27</sup> Gilliat, June 18, 1960, 'Arctic Trip Diary.'

<sup>28</sup> Archives, as articulated by Allan Sekula, also serve as a "kind of 'clearing house' of meaning," in which photographs are divorced from their "contingencies of use." Sekula argues that the archive, therefore, must be "read from below, from a position of solidarity with those displaced, deformed, silenced, or made invisible by the machineries of profit and progress." Sekula, "Photography Between Labour and Capital," in *Mining Photographs and Other Pictures, 1948-1968: A Selection from the Negative Archives of Shedden Studio, Glace Bay, Cape Breton*, ed. Benjamin H.D. Buchloh and Robert Wilkie (Halifax: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and the University College of Cape Breton Press, 1983), 194, 200.

<sup>29</sup> There are also copies of some of Gilliat's Arctic prints in the archival collections of the Cole Harbour Heritage Farm Museum and Dalhousie University.

<sup>30</sup> I have been able to conclude that Gilliat took at least two cameras to the eastern Arctic, including her twin lens Rolleiflex (medium format) and a 35 mm camera (most likely an Exakta with a waist-level viewfinder). She was also using a motion film camera, the model of which I have yet to identify.

<sup>31</sup> The manuscript is 28 chapters and 179 typed pages. Hinds was very eager to impress Gilliat and hoped that she would contribute photographs to the completed book. After reading and editing Hinds' unfinished manuscript, Gilliat informed Hinds that she would allow her photographs to accompany the book if it were ever to be published. She did not, however, wish to send Hinds her best photographs as she wanted to keep those for future sale. Gilliat to Hinds, November 11, 1963, Cole Harbour Heritage Farm Museum, Box 1: Correspondence, file '1963.'

<sup>32</sup> LAC has catalogued 30 films made by Gilliat. At least one, of the eight I have been able to view at this time, was filmed in the North and records children playing in Fort Chimo. More research is

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necessary to track down Gilliat's other films made in the eastern Arctic. But for the time being her diary helps to identify the events she recorded with her movie camera.

<sup>33</sup> Notably Gilliat altered her terminology in her older age. Clearly she continued her northern education although she never returned to the Arctic. Gilliat, "A Record of Photographic Work by Rosemary Gilliat," December 1999.

<sup>34</sup> John Tagg, *The Burden of Representation: Essays on photographs and histories* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988), 63-4.

<sup>35</sup> Kozol, *Life's America*, 26.

<sup>36</sup> Judith Fryer Davidov, *Women's Camera Work: Self/Body/Other in American Visual Culture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 7.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>38</sup> Susan Bernardin et al., "Introduction: Empire of the Lens: Women, Indians, and Camera," in *Trading Gazes: Euro-American Women Photographers and Native North Americans, 1880-1940* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003), 1-2.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>40</sup> Likewise, Carol Williams argues that the female settler photographer Hannah Maynard had to negotiate a set of contradictory subject positions in the complex racialized and gendered space of the frontier. Williams, "Economic Necessity, Political Incentive, and International Entrepreneurialism: The 'Frontier' Photography of Hannah Maynard," in *The Cultural Work of Photography in Canada*, eds. Carol Payne and Andrea Kunard (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011), 23-42.

<sup>41</sup> Carol Williams, *Framing the West: Race, Gender, and the Photographic Frontier in the Pacific Northwest* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Brock Silversides, *The Face Pullers: Photographing Native Canadians 1871-1939* (Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1994).

<sup>42</sup> Aaron Glass, "A Cannibal in the Archive: Performance, Materiality, and (In)Visibility in Unpublished Edward Curtis Photographs of the Kwakwaka'wakw Hamat'sa," *Visual Anthropology Review* 25, no. 2 (2009): 128-149.

<sup>43</sup> Lucy Lippard, ed., *Partial Recall* (New York: New Press, 1992).

<sup>44</sup> Jeff Thomas, "Emergence from the Shadow: First Peoples' Photographic Perspectives," in Payne and Kunard, *The Cultural Work of Photography in Canada*, 212-28. A number of other Indigenous scholars around the world have contributed important work on the social history of photography. Amy Lonetree, for example, argues that studio portraits of her Ho-Chunk ancestors visualize, what Gerald Vizenor terms, Indigenous "survivance." Lonetree, "Visualizing Native Survivance: Encounters with My Ho-Chunk Ancestors in the Family Photographs of Charles Van Schaick," in *People of the Big Voice: Photographs of Ho-Chunk Families by Charles Van Schaick, 1879-1942*, by Tom Jones et al. (Wisconsin: Wisconsin Historical Press Society, 2011), 13-22.

<sup>45</sup> A series of essays by Amy Adams expands Condon's earlier study by including more Inuit photographers. Amy Adams, "Arctic and Inuit Photography," *Inuit Art Quarterly* 15, no.2, no.3, no.4 (2000): 4-16, 4-19, 4-11.

<sup>46</sup> Quluat is a Canadian politician and was the keynote speaker for the 1996 conference, *Imagining the Arctic*, from which this volume was compiled.



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<sup>47</sup> Alan Marcus, "Reflecting on Contested Images," in King and Lidchi, *Imaging the Arctic*, 190-96.

<sup>48</sup> Nelson Graburn, "The Present as History: Photography and the Inuit, 1959-94," in King and Lidchi, *Imaging the Arctic*, 166.

<sup>49</sup> Martha Langford, "Richard Harrington's Guide: Universality and Locality in a Canadian Document," in Sheehan, *Photography, History, Difference*, 51-2.

<sup>50</sup> For an essay on American whaler George Comer and other early expedition photography, see Amy Adams, "Arctic and Inuit Photography Part One: An Accurate Representation of the World," *Inuit Art Quarterly* 15, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 8-10.

<sup>51</sup> Donny White, "In search of Geraldine Moodie: A Project in Progress," in King and Lidchi, *Imaging the Arctic*, 88-97; Molly Lee, "With Broom and Camera: Gladys Knight Harris's Photography of Inupiat Women," in *Imaging the Arctic*, 168-74. Close has also written about Moodie in chapters two and four of *Framing Identity*.

<sup>52</sup> Kozol, *Life's America*, vii. A later volume titled *Looking at Life Magazine* incorporates a range of essays that analyze how *Life* represented issues such as religion, race, sexuality, war, and immigration. Editor Erika Doss argues that it is necessary to critically (re)turn to photographs in historical mass media in order to challenge the seeming naturalness of cultural and political values. Erika Doss, ed., *Looking at Life Magazine* (Washington: Smithsonian Institutions Press, 2001).

<sup>53</sup> Kozol, *Life's America*, 6.

<sup>54</sup> Sarah Stacy, "The Economic Nationalism of *Weekend Magazine*," in Payne and Kunard, *The Cultural Work of Photography*, 137.

<sup>55</sup> Here Stacy is referring to W.J.T Mitchell's theorizations on image and word. See W.J.T Mitchell, "The Photographic Essay, Four Case Studies," in *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 281-322. For another detailed analysis of photographs in advertising and the slippage between image and word, see James Opp, "Picturing Communism: Yousuf Karsh, Canadair, and Cold War Advertising," in Payne and Kunard, *The Cultural Work of Photography*, 120-135.

<sup>56</sup> Sangster, "'The Beaver' as Ideology" 191-209. For a discussion of photographs produced slightly early, see Peter Geller, "The 'True North' in Pictures?: Photographic Representations in the Hudson's Bay Company's *The Beaver Magazine*, 1920-45," *Archivaria* 36 (Autumn 1993): 166-88.

<sup>57</sup> Payne, "Lessons with Leah: Rereading the Photographic Archive from the North," in *The Official Picture*, 165-888. For a related text, see Carol Payne, "'You Hear It in Their Voice': Photographs and Cultural Consolidation among Inuit Youths Elders," in *Oral History and Photography*, ed. Alexander Freund and Alistair Thomson (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 97-113. This chapter explores how photographs and oral history have the potential for political advocacy and the assertion of Indigenous identity. The introduction of this volume is also useful for thinking about how photographs and oral narratives construct complex and dynamic memories of the past. It helps in situating myself as a researcher and considering how I can bring Gilliat's images into the present through community engagement and oral storytelling, a point to which I will expand in the concluding chapter.

<sup>58</sup> Grace, *Canada and the Idea of North*, 15.

<sup>59</sup> Renée Hulan, *Northern Experience and the Myths of Canadian Culture* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002). See Chapter One, "Speaking Man to Man: Ethnography and the Representation of the North," 29-59.

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<sup>60</sup> Also, see Matthew Farish and P. W. Lackenbauer, "High Modernism in the Arctic: Planning Frobisher Bay and Inuvik," *Journal of Historical Geography* 35 (2009): 517-544. For a contemporaneous historical study of how images were important to processes of relocation in the Canadian Arctic, see Alan Marcus, *Relocating Eden: The Image and Politics of Inuit Exile in the Canadian Arctic* (Hanover, NH: Dartmouth College, 1995).

<sup>61</sup> Peter Pitseolak and Dorothy Harley Eber, *People From Our Side: A Life Story with Photographs and Oral Biography* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993). Eber has also written about Pitseolak's lesser-known drawings, which he created from photographic templates. See, "Peter Pitseolak and the Photographic Template," in King and Lidchi, *Imaging the Arctic*, 53-9. For a framing of Pitseolak's work within earlier visual paradigms that pictured the Other, see Jonathan Wise, "Photographic Memory: Inuit Representation in the Work of Peter Pitseolak," M.A thesis, Concordia University, 2000.

<sup>62</sup> David Winfield Norman, "Control Mapping: Peter Pitseolak and Zacharias Kunuk on Reclaiming Inuit Photographic Images and Imaging," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 3, no.1 (2014): 48-72. Norman also discusses the work of Greenlandic/Danish artist Pia Arke (1958-2007) whose contemporary photography and work with archival photographs offers an Indigenous response to colonialism and identity politics. For an in depth discussion of Arke's work, see Kirsten Thisted, "De-Framing the Indigenous Body: Ethnography, Landscape and Cultural Belonging in the Art of Pia Arke," *Nordlit*, 29 (2012): 279-98.

<sup>63</sup> Michael Evans, *Isuma: Inuit Video Art* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008).

<sup>64</sup> It has also been argued that Indigenous adoption of the colonizer's 'tools' is a form of resistance, a way of talking back. See Grace, "Writing, Re-writing, and Writing Back," in *Canada and the Idea of North*, 232.

<sup>65</sup> An estimation of the number of images taken on the eastern Arctic trip alone is impossible to know at this time as the Gilliat Eaton Fonds has been organized by region rather than time period.

<sup>66</sup> This small community museum, whose archives only opened in the last few years, holds all of Gilliat's photographs and correspondence from after 1964 as well as her extensive files on the development of Cole Harbour. I was told by the archivist, Terry Eyland, that they also have about 30 000 slides of photographs taken between 1965 and 2004. A more specific estimation of the extent of the Farm Museum's Gilliat collection is impossible to know at this time.

<sup>67</sup> I received ethics clearance from the Carleton University Research Ethics Board to conduct this interview. Date of clearance: February 24, 2016. Project number: 104156. This interview was conducted on March 9, 2016 in Cole Harbour, Nova Scotia.

<sup>68</sup> I utilize white, non-Indigenous, Euro-Canadian, and southern Canadian interchangeably to describe a generalized settler population in Canada. I also include the Inuktitut name for non-Inuit, *Qallunaat* (plural) and *Qallunaaq* (singular), as a gesture towards decentring my own whiteness.

<sup>69</sup> Roland Barthes articulates the relationship between word and image in "Rhetoric of the Image," in *Image, Music, Text*, 32-51, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978).

<sup>70</sup> Mieke Bal, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities: A Rough Guide* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 26.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 8-9.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

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<sup>73</sup> Griselda Pollock, *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism, and Histories of Art* (London & New York: Routledge, 1988), 4.

<sup>74</sup> Griselda Pollock, *Differencing the Canon: Feminist Desire and the Writing of Art's Histories* (London & New York: Routledge, 1999), 106.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 98.

<sup>76</sup> Lippard, "Introduction," in *Partial Recall*, 12-45. Also, see James Clifford, "Introduction: Partial Truths," in *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1986), 1-26.

<sup>77</sup> Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981).

<sup>78</sup> Lippard, "Introduction," *Partial Recall*, 14. To theorize the unique politicized space of Indigenous-settler encounter and my own subjectivity as a settler, I look to New Zealand Art Historian and curator Damian Skinner who recently outlined a set of propositions for the practice of Art History in settler-colonial societies. Skinner, "Settler-colonial Art History: A Proposition in Two Parts," *Journal of Canadian Art History* XXXV, no.1 (2014): 131-45, 157-71. For a discussion of how decolonization relates specifically to research, see Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Zed Books, 2012).

<sup>79</sup> The gaze, according to art historian Margaret Olin, is concerned with issues of power, manipulation, and "desire for self-completion through another." Olin, "Gaze," *Critical Terms for Art History*, ed. Robert S. Nelson et al., 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 325.

<sup>80</sup> Catherine Lutz and Jane L. Collins, "The Photograph as an Intersection of Gazes," in *Reading National Geographic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993) 187-216.

<sup>81</sup> Ariella Azoulay, *The Civil Contract of Photography* (New York: Zone Books, 2008).

<sup>82</sup> Elizabeth Edwards, "Objects of Affect: Photography Beyond the Image," *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 41 (2012): 230.

<sup>83</sup> Elizabeth Edwards, "Photographs and the Sound of History," *Visual Anthropology Review* 21, no. 1 and 2 (2006): 27-46. For another important theorist working at the intersection of photography and anthropology, see Christopher Pinney's *Photography's Other Histories* (2003) and *Photography and Anthropology* (2011).

<sup>84</sup> Edwards, "Objects of Affect," 222-24.

<sup>85</sup> I will also consider how the material form of a photographic object contributes to its fluid and complex meaning. Many of Gilliat's images exist as both a negative in the LAC archive and in printed form in various publications. These diverse spaces of encounter engender multiple narratives. For theories on the material specificity of photographs, I look to Elizabeth Edwards, Deborah Poole, and Geoffrey Batchen who all insist that a photograph's materiality is integral to the ways in which viewers interact with the image and thus to its meaning(s).

<sup>86</sup> Deborah Poole, "An Excess of Description: Ethnology, Race, and Visual Technologies," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 34 (2005): 159-79.

<sup>87</sup> Jane Lydon, "Introduction: Colonialism, Photography, Mimesis," in *Eye Contact: Photographing Indigenous Australians* (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2005), 1-32.

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<sup>88</sup> The “*October* moment” refers to the influence of the journal *October* on photography studies since the 1980s. Influenced by Marxist, post-colonial, semiological, and feminist perspectives, scholars, including John Tagg, Allan Sekula, Abigail Solomon-Godeau, and Rosalind Krauss, critiqued both the photographic object and its sites of collection and display. Robin Kelsey and Blake Stimson, “Photography’s Double Index (A Short History in Three Parts),” in *The Meaning of Photography*, ed. Kelsey and Stimson (New Haven, CT: Clark Institute, Yale University Press, 2008), viii-xxxi. For a discussion of the influence of this scholarship on Canadian photo studies, see Payne and Kunard, “Writing Photography in Canada,” in *The Cultural Work of Photography in Canada*,” 234-35.

<sup>89</sup> Rosemary Gilliat, “A Record of Photographic Work by Rosemary Gilliat,” December 1999.

<sup>90</sup> Hinds to Gilliat, no date [before June 1960], Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 1 file 40, ‘Correspondences,’ LAC.

<sup>91</sup> Grace, *Canada and the Idea of North*, 16, emphasis in the original.

<sup>92</sup> Gilliat, July 16, 1960, ‘Arctic trip Diary,’ emphasis added. Likewise, Hinds wrote of this occasion, “we were almost alone in real Eskimo country at last.” Barbara Hinds, chapter 12, “Grass Roots Economy,” Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 1 file 28, ‘Barbara Hinds manuscript for Arctic book and RGE notes,’ LAC.

<sup>93</sup> Gilliat, July 16, 1960, ‘Arctic trip diary.’

<sup>94</sup> It was not until 1962 that Inuit began to permanently settle at George River. In 1959 George River was the site of the first Inuit co-operative and Gilliat travelled here to photograph the Arctic char fishery. I will return to the history of Inuit co-operatives in Chapter Two.

<sup>95</sup> Gilliat, July 19, 1960, ‘Arctic trip diary.’

<sup>96</sup> Gilliat, no date, 1952, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 2 file 4 ‘Diary—Canada,’ LAC.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., emphasis in original.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., May 23, 1953.

<sup>99</sup> Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 58.

<sup>100</sup> Joan Schwartz and James Ryan, eds., “Introduction,” in *Picturing Place: Photography and the Geographical Imagination* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2003), 6.

<sup>101</sup> Gilliat, July 10, 1960, ‘Arctic trip diary.’

<sup>102</sup> Gilliat, 1953, ‘Diary—Canada.’ This initial assignment was for Gilliat’s trip to the Yukon. It was not until the Summer of 1960 that Gilliat went to the eastern Arctic, her longest and most ambitious northern trip.

<sup>103</sup> Gilliat, August 1, 1960, ‘Arctic trip diary.’

<sup>104</sup> Amy Adams, “Part One: An Accurate Representation of the World,” *Inuit Art Quarterly* 15, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 6. Also, see Pamela Stern “The History of Canadian Arctic Photography,” in King and Lidchi, *Imaging the Arctic*, 47-52. Stern does not talk about Inuit photographers but she does argue for the importance of photographic ‘repatriation’ projects, in which historical images are returned to their source communities.

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- <sup>105</sup> Amy Adams, "Part One: An Accurate Representation of the World," 15.
- <sup>106</sup> Grace, *Canada and the Idea of North*, 23.
- <sup>107</sup> Ibid., emphasis in original.
- <sup>108</sup> Rob Shields, "The True North Strong and Free," in *Places on the Margin: Alternative Geographies of Modernity* (London: Routledge, 1991), 4.
- <sup>109</sup> Geller, *Northern Exposures: Photographic and Filming the Canadian North, 1920-45* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004), 165.
- <sup>110</sup> Shields, "The True North Strong and Free," 165.
- <sup>111</sup> Grace, *Canada and the Idea of North*, 23. While Grace cites Shields for his important scholarly contribution to a discursive formation of the North, she takes issue with his participation in the very dualism he seeks to overcome. She also rightly points out that Shields does not engage with the re-territorializations of the North that were already in process (such as negotiations for the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement). Ibid., 41-2.
- <sup>112</sup> Gilliat, July 21, 1960, 'Arctic trip diary.'
- <sup>113</sup> Ibid., October 15, 1960.
- <sup>114</sup> James Opp and John Walsh, "Introduction: Local Acts of Placing and Remembering," in *Placing Memory and Remembering Place in Canada*, ed. Opp and Walsh (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 4.
- <sup>115</sup> Gilliat, October 31, 1953, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 2 file 4, 'Diary [Canada], 1952-53,' LAC.
- <sup>116</sup> Gilliat, June 17, 1960, 'Arctic trip diary.'
- <sup>117</sup> Ibid., September 18, 1960.
- <sup>118</sup> She did, however, research and collect information on the logistics of photography in the North, particularly in the freezing months. M.F. Coffey, "Aids to Working in the Cold," Defense Research Board, Department of National Defense Canada (Rochester, NY: Eastman Kodak Company, no date), Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 4 file 14, 'Instructional books,' LAC.
- <sup>119</sup> Gilliat, August 1, 1960, 'Arctic Trip Diary.'
- <sup>120</sup> Mitchell, "Holy Landscape: Israel, Palestine, and the American Wilderness," in *Landscape and Power*, ed. Mitchell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 262-3.
- <sup>121</sup> Jonathan Bordo, "Jack Pine: Wilderness Sublime or the Erasure of the Aboriginal Presence from the Landscape," in *Beyond Wilderness: The Group of Seven, Canadian Identity, and Contemporary Art*, ed. by John O'Brian and Peter White (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), 332-3.
- <sup>122</sup> Gilliat, August 1, 1960, 'Arctic trip diary.'
- <sup>123</sup> Ibid., June 26, 1960.
- <sup>124</sup> Gilliat, personal diary, no date, entry titled "Toronto," Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 2 file 4, 'Diary [Canada] 1952-53.'

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<sup>125</sup> Hinds, chapter 1, “Beginnings,” ‘Barbara Hinds manuscript for Arctic book and RGE notes.’

<sup>126</sup> Gilliat, June 17, 1960, ‘Arctic trip diary.’ Notably, it is not only Inuit who were suspect of white journalists. Non-Indigenous men, particularly government workers, were also nervous about unflattering representations of their work in the North. On a number of occasions Gilliat wrote about needing to be careful about what her and Hinds wanted to see and document. At any moment, they could upset one of these men and be sent, or at least coerced, into going back home.

<sup>127</sup> Gilliat, June 18, 1960, ‘Arctic trip diary.’

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Joan Sangster, “Constructing the ‘Eskimo’ Wife: White Women’s Travel Writing, Colonialism, and the Canadian North, 1940-1960,” in *Through Feminist Eyes: Essays on Canadian Women’s History* (Edmonton: Athabasca University Press, 2011), 332.

<sup>130</sup> The Canadian Women’s Art History Initiative’s (CWAHI) most recent conference, “The Artist Herself: Broadening Ideas of Self-Portraiture in Canada,” and concurrent exhibition held at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre (Kingston, ON) are a testament to the diverse forms of women’s self-portraiture. For critical analyses of the objects included in the exhibition, see Alicia Boutilier and Tobi Bruce, eds., *The Artist Herself: Self-Portraits by Canadian Historical Women Artists* (Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada, 2015).

<sup>131</sup> For theorization of snapshot photography, see Catherine Zuromskis, “Introduction: The Social Life of Snapshot Photography,” in *Snapshot Photography: The Lives of Images* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2013).

<sup>132</sup> Hulan, *Northern Experience*, 60.

<sup>133</sup> Sangster argues that portrayals of Inuit as stubborn adherents to pre-modern culture reinforced power relations and perpetuated Canada’s distinctive brand of internal colonialism. Sangster, “Constructing the ‘Eskimo’ Wife,” 330. In some ways, Gilliat’s photographs certainly adhere to this trope. Yet she also avoided staging perceived primitive traditions for photographs. Even when photographing more ‘traditional’ activities, modern equipment and clothing are always visible in the images. This can at once be read as a celebration of assimilationist strategies but also as a sign of cultural hybridity where Inuit were adopting Western techniques and tools that were useful to themselves and their way of life. Gilliat’s seal hunt photographs, however, were not published nor were they made on assignment. Thus, my focus here is on how Gilliat asserted her own identity through these photographs and not how they promoted national interests and fed popular desires.

<sup>134</sup> Gilliat, August 19, 1960, ‘Arctic trip diary.’

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., June 17, 1960.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., August 17, 1960.

<sup>137</sup> Variant spellings found in Gilliat’s diary include Moosa, Moshah, and Mosher.

<sup>138</sup> While it is interesting that an Inuk boy was the maker of this image a discussion of the reversed or returned gaze does not seem particularly relevant here. The photograph says more about Gilliat’s intentions than an Inuit point of view. Furthermore, her photographs of Mosha with a camera appear to have a paternalistic overtone as if it was ‘cute’ to watch an Inuk boy play with a camera. There are other moments where Gilliat wrote about Inuit men and women with cameras in a similar primitivizing way.

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- <sup>139</sup> Hulan, *Northern Experience*, 18-19.
- <sup>140</sup> Ibid., 26.
- <sup>141</sup> Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," *Theatre Journal* 40, no. 4 (Dec. 1988): 519, 523.
- <sup>142</sup> Ibid., 521.
- <sup>143</sup> Ibid., 520.
- <sup>144</sup> Azoulay, *The Civil Contract of Photography*, 159.
- <sup>145</sup> Contemporary Inuit photographers include, among others, Barry Pottle, Jimmy Manning, and Simeonie Keenainak. For a discussion of contemporary Inuit photojournalism and independent photographers, see Amy Adams, "Part Three: Contemporary Inuit Photography," *Inuit Art Quarterly* 15, no. 4 (Winter 2000): 4-11.
- <sup>146</sup> According to anthropologist Johannes Fabian, the "ethnographic present" is an anthropological tendency to describe the subject's culture in the present tense, which paradoxically displaces people into the past or suggests that they are timeless. Fabian, *Time and The Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 31.
- <sup>147</sup> Gilliat, July 10, 1960, 'Arctic trip diary.'
- <sup>148</sup> Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), 6.
- <sup>149</sup> Ibid., 6-7.
- <sup>150</sup> Lydon, *Eye Contact*, xxii-xxiii.
- <sup>151</sup> Gilliat, August 17, 1960, 'Arctic trip diary.'
- <sup>152</sup> Pierre Desurreault, *The Tata Era* (Ottawa: The Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography, 1988).
- <sup>153</sup> Gilliat, July 10, 1960, 'Arctic trip diary.'
- <sup>154</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>155</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>156</sup> Gilliat to Frank Lowe (*Weekend Magazine*), no date, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 1 file 40, 'Correspondences,' LAC.
- <sup>157</sup> Richard Bolton, "Introduction," in *The Contest of Meaning: Critical Histories of Photography*, ed. Bolton (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1989), xii.
- <sup>158</sup> Tagg, *Burden of Representation*, 4.
- <sup>159</sup> Azoulay, *The Civil Contract of Photography*, 117.
- <sup>160</sup> Both Lorraine Monk (NFB) and Malvina Bolus (*The Beaver*) requested pictures of char fishing co-operatives. Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 1 file 33, 'Correspondences,' LAC.

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<sup>161</sup> Marybelle Mitchell, *From Talking Chiefs to a Native Corporate Elite: The Birth of Class and Nationalism Among Canadian Inuit* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 164.

<sup>162</sup> Daniel Francis, "Killiniq Island," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/killiniq-island/>.

<sup>163</sup> Gilliat, July 16, 1960, 'Arctic trip diary.'

<sup>164</sup> In George River, for example, the HBC operated a post in the area during the periods of 1838-42, 1876-1915, and 1923-32. For more information, see <http://www.nunavik-tourism.com/Kangiqsualujjuaq>. For a critical analysis of the fur trade and game management in the Arctic, see Frank Tester and Peter Kulchyski *Kiumajut (Talking Back): Game Management and Inuit Rights 1900-70* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007).

<sup>165</sup> Hinds, manuscript, chapter 12, "Grass Roots Economy," Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 1 file 28, 'Barbara Hinds manuscript for Arctic book and RGE notes.' In Gilliat's words, this was "another of these northern tragedies." Gilliat, July 24, 1960, 'Arctic Trip Diary.'

<sup>166</sup> The NFB produced a film about the first co-operative in George River. While problematic in its depiction of Inuit, the documentary captures federal sentiment at this time. It also includes a number of individuals Gilliat photographed, notably, George Koneak and Stanley Annanack. *The Annanacks*, directed by René Bonnière (Ottawa: National Film Board of Canada, 1964), [https://www.nfb.ca/film/the\\_annanacks](https://www.nfb.ca/film/the_annanacks).

<sup>167</sup> Mitchell, *From Talking Chiefs to a Native Corporate Elite*, 164.

<sup>168</sup> Saul Arbess, *Social Change and the Eskimo Co-operative at George River, Quebec* (Ottawa: Northern Co-ordination and Research Centre, Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources), 1966, quoted in Mitchell, *From Talking Chiefs to a Native Corporate Elite*, 165.

<sup>169</sup> Gilliat, August 8, 1960, 'Arctic trip diary.' In George River and Port Burwell the two most important civil servants were Keith Crow and Max Budgell respectively.

<sup>170</sup> Mitchell, *From Talking Chiefs to a Native Corporate Elite*, xiii.

<sup>171</sup> Gilliat, August 1, 1960, 'Arctic trip diary.'

<sup>172</sup> Ibid., August 1, 1960.

<sup>173</sup> Gilliat identified the civil servant as Keith Crow, when in fact his name was Crowe, which LAC corrected in their image titles. Notably, Crowe published a book about northern Indigenous peoples in 1974. Keith Crowe, *A History of the Original Peoples of Northern Canada (Revised Edition)* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991).

<sup>174</sup> Fabian, *Time and Other*, 31.

<sup>175</sup> For a collection of essays on the current roles of women in northern fisheries, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, in Alaska, Arctic Canada, and Europe, see Joanna Kafarowski, ed., *Gender, Culture and Northern Fisheries* (Edmonton, AB: Canadian Circumpolar Institute Press, 2009).

<sup>176</sup> Poole, "An Excess of Description," 167.

<sup>177</sup> Mitchell, *From Talking Chiefs to a Native Corporate Elite*, 166.

<sup>178</sup> For a brief history of the George River Hostel and related archival documents, see National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, University of Manitoba,



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[http://nctr.ca/scripts/mwimain.dll/127/1/1?SEARCH&dboption=search&database=irs\\_school\\_val&report=web\\_location&advanced\\_search=n&showsingle=y](http://nctr.ca/scripts/mwimain.dll/127/1/1?SEARCH&dboption=search&database=irs_school_val&report=web_location&advanced_search=n&showsingle=y).

<sup>179</sup> *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* (Ottawa: Library and Archives Canada, 2015). The report can be read in entirety at [www.trc.ca](http://www.trc.ca).

<sup>180</sup> Gilliat, July 24, 1960, 'Arctic trip diary.'

<sup>181</sup> Ibid. Emphasis added.

<sup>182</sup> Undoubtedly the best known of such images is that of Thomas Moore at the Regina Industrial School, 1896 (Saskatchewan Archives Board, R-A8223, 1 & 2). For a discussion of residential school photography, see Sherry Farrell Racette, "Haunted: First Nations Children in Residential School Photography," in *Depicting Canada's Children*, ed. Loren Lerner (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2009), 49-84.

<sup>183</sup> Gilliat, July 24, 1960, 'Arctic trip diary.'

<sup>184</sup> Farrell Racette, "Haunted," 78.

<sup>185</sup> National Film Board of Canada Still Photography Division, photo story 305, "Play in the *Land of the Long Day*," February 20, 1962, photographs by Gar Lunney, Ted Grant, Bud Glunz, Jean Roy, Dough Wilkinson, and Rosemary Gilliat. The photo story's title makes reference to the NFB film, *Land of the Long Day*, directed by Doug Wilkinson in 1952, [https://www.nfb.ca/film/land\\_of\\_the\\_long\\_day](https://www.nfb.ca/film/land_of_the_long_day).

<sup>186</sup> Farrell Racette, "Haunted," 78.

<sup>187</sup> Gilliat, July 14, 1960, 'Arctic trip diary.'

<sup>188</sup> Martha Rosler notes that the more general term 'documentary' "denotes photography practice having a variety of aesthetic claims but without involvement in exposé." "In, Around, and Afterthoughts (On Documentary Photography)," in Bolton, *Contest of Meaning*, 335.

<sup>189</sup> Gilliat was also very cautious about making the DNANR upset. In response to Hinds' desire to visit "Ekaluit—the Eskimo village" (a ghettoized community near Apex, the HBC site in Frobisher Bay), Gilliat commented, "I feel that we have to go carefully with Northern Affairs and it is better not to rush things at this point. B feels I am far too cautious I know—but since we have accepted the help and sponsorship of the N.A.—well there we are!" Gilliat, June 17, 1960, 'Arctic trip diary,' emphasis in original.

<sup>190</sup> Gilliat, August 8, 1960, 'Arctic trip diary.'

<sup>191</sup> Edwards, "Negotiating Spaces: Some Photographic Incidents in the Western Pacific, 1883-84," in *Picturing Place: Photography and the Geographical Imagination*, ed. Joan M. Schwartz and James R. Ryan (London: I.B. Tauris, 2003), 278.

<sup>192</sup> Barthes, "The Rhetoric of the Image," 156.

<sup>193</sup> National Film Board of Canada Still Photography Division, photo story 277, "'Ilkalupik: King of the Arctic,'" January 24, 1961, photographs by Rosemary Gilliat.

<sup>194</sup> Thank you to Dr. Ruth Phillips for pointing this out to me in her comments on a conference paper I presented at the UK Association of Art Historians annual conference in Edinburgh, April 8, 2016. For an introduction to global modernisms, see Susan Friedman, "Periodizing Modernism: Postcolonial

<sup>195</sup> Payne, *The Official Picture*, 118.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., 120. National Film Board of Canada Still Photography Division, photo story 365, “Age Old Hunt for Fabled Fish of Canada’s North: SAPOTIT—Where the Char Run Big,” June 2, 1964, photographs by Doug Wilkinson.

<sup>197</sup> Mitchell, “Holy Landscape,” 265-66.

<sup>198</sup> Magazine article, date unknown, after June 1960, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 1 file 29, ‘RGE notes on career/resume personal.’ The publication source remains unidentified but there is correspondence to suggest that *Weekend Magazine* requested a photo story about Alma Houston.

<sup>199</sup> “‘I miss Cape Dorset terribly...despite all the inconveniences one has to overcome, I love this place and I love its peoples.’” Alma Houston qtd. in Gilliat, magazine article, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 1 file 19, ‘RGE notes on career/resume personal.’ Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.

<sup>200</sup> “One day an old Eskimo asked her to write to Queen Elizabeth. He desired a photo of the royal family.”

<sup>201</sup> Clive Scott, *The Spoken Image: Photography and Language* (London: Reaktion Books, 1999), 49. Also, see Barthes, “Rhetoric of the Image,” 39.

<sup>202</sup> Scott, *The Spoken Image*, 52.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>204</sup> “She only goes shopping once a year.”

<sup>205</sup> Lippard, “Introduction,” in *Partial Recall*, 33.

<sup>206</sup> “Joies de la vie arctique,” *Perspectives*, July 29, 1961, photographs by Gilliat.

<sup>207</sup> “The old Kingwatsiak dictates to Alma his letter to the Queen.”

<sup>208</sup> Aaron Glass, “A Cannibal in the Archive,” 129-30.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid., emphasis in original.

<sup>211</sup> Gilliat, September 4, 1960, ‘Arctic trip diary.’

<sup>212</sup> Glass, “A Cannibal in the Archive,” 131.

<sup>213</sup> Lippard, “Introduction,” in *Partial Recall*, 37. Johannes Fabian argues that ‘temporal distancing’ (which is related to a broader ‘denial of coevalness’) is a common device in anthropological discourses that seek objectivity. Ironically, the very fields of anthropology and ethnography are based upon human communication between the researcher and object of study thereby presupposing intersubjectivity in spite of efforts to evade temporal co-presence. Fabian, *Time and Other*, 30-31.

<sup>214</sup> Gilliat, September 16, 1960, ‘Arctic trip diary.’

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<sup>215</sup> One at least two occasions, Inuit wrote letters to Gilliat after her 1960 visit. In 1962, for example, Gilliat received a letter from an Inuk named Noudla. Cole Harbour Heritage Farm Museum, Box 1: Correspondence, file '1963.'

<sup>216</sup> Ariella Azoulay, *The Civil Contract of Photography*, 107.

<sup>217</sup> Edwards, "Objects of Affect," 223-24. Martha Langford has adopted a similar model in her essay "Richard Harrington's Guide: Universality and Locality in a Canadian Photographic Document," in which she draws on Clifford Geertz's concept of 'thick description' to trace the multiple image functions of Harrington's photographs in Padlei, Nunavut (1949-50).

<sup>218</sup> Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward and Interpretive Theory of Culture," in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., Publishers, 1973), 3-30.

<sup>219</sup> Lydon, *Eye Contact*, 251.

<sup>220</sup> Lippard, "Introduction," in *Partial Recall*, 16.

<sup>221</sup> *Kamiit*, similar to mukluks, are Inuit boots made from sealskin. *Kamik* is a single boot, *kamiik* a pair of boots, and *kamiit* more than one pair of boots.

<sup>222</sup> Gilliat, July 10, 1960, 'Arctic trip diary.'

<sup>223</sup> Ibid., June 29, 1960; Hinds, "Chapter Six: No Discrimination," 'Barbara Hinds manuscript for Arctic Book and RGE notes.'

<sup>224</sup> Close, *Framing Identity*, 50.

<sup>225</sup> Bernardin et al., "Introduction: Empire of the Lens: Women, Indians, and Camera," in *Trading Gazes*, 2.

<sup>226</sup> Gilliat, *Group of people gathered around a dead seal, Ungava, Nunavut*, July 13-August 9, 1960, MIKAN no. 4731669, Library and Archives Canada, [http://collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam\\_archives/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayItem&rec\\_nbr=4731669&lang=eng](http://collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam_archives/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayItem&rec_nbr=4731669&lang=eng).

<sup>227</sup> Included in the 'scope and content' portion of the digital record is the following: "The girl who holds the rifle is identified as Udjuk Mary." This additional information is important for identifying the young woman but it does not capture Gilliat's excitement nor her observations about Inuit women's labour.

<sup>228</sup> Christopher Wright, "Supple Bodies: The Papua New Guinea Photographs of Captain Francis R. Barton, 1899-1907," in *Photography's Other Histories*, ed. Christopher Pinney and Nicholas Peterson (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 148.

<sup>229</sup> Joanna Sassoon, "Photographic Materiality in the Age of Digital Reproduction," in *Photography Objects Histories: On the Materiality of Images*, ed. Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart (New York: Routledge, 2004), 211. Sassoon is clearly drawing on the widely influential work of Walter Benjamin and his seminal essay, "The Work of Art in the age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1936). Sassoon agrees with Benjamin that mechanical reproduction has positively increased the availability of images, yet she takes issue with his failure to theorize the power dynamics at play in such democratization. Who has the power to reproduce images and how do they control content and circulation?

<sup>230</sup> According to Sassoon, "Few institutions digitise the same image more than once, despite different contexts in which the photographs are found, providing a range of meanings." Sassoon, "Photographic Materiality," 202.

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<sup>231</sup> Ibid., 202.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid., 204.

<sup>233</sup> Gilliat, July 27, 1960, 'Arctic trip diary.'

<sup>234</sup> For a discussion of Inuit gendered roles in the pre-contact and settlement periods, see Janet Mancini Bilson and Kyra Mancini. *Inuit Women: Their Powerful Spirit in a Century of Change* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007). This is an extensive study based on fourteen years of research and fieldwork in Baffin Island. While I take issue with the authors' underlying assumption about cultural 'authenticity,' their work is important for providing a comprehensive and timely study of Inuit women's experiences over the past 150 years.

<sup>235</sup> Gilliat was the custodian of Shilly Shally from around 1955 until the early 1960s when she moved east and handed the property off to a young couple.

<sup>236</sup> Bilson and Mancini, *Inuit Women*, 40.

<sup>237</sup> Bilson and Mancini suggest that this has become more common in contemporary times.

<sup>238</sup> Gilliat, July 26, 1960, 'Arctic trip diary.'

<sup>239</sup> Ibid., October 3, 1960.

<sup>240</sup> Although it is common for writers to refer to Kenojuak Ashevak by her given name only, I use Ashevak to reflect how she has been written about most recently and to be consistent with my use of last names throughout the rest of the thesis. I do, however, recognize the difficult relationship between Inuit and surnames, which were enforced by federal policy and not traditional to their naming practices. Ashevak, moreover, was the surname of her husband Johnniebo (as well as a number of his siblings) and the first name of his father. Here, however, I will defer to first names when clarity is in question. My understanding of the Ashevak genealogy comes from Pitseolak and Eber's rendering of Pitseolak's family tree in *People From Our Side* (Pitseolak's wife, Aggeok, was the sister of Johnniebo Ashevak). For a history on 'Project Surname', see Valerie Alia, *Names, Numbers and Northern Policy: Inuit, Project Surname, and the Politics of Identity* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 1994).

<sup>241</sup> Marcus, *Relocating Eden*, 14.

<sup>242</sup> One of the most reproduced photographs of all time is Dorothea Lange's *Migrant Mother* (1936). While this image has been subject to much critical analyses, Derrick Price and Liz Well's case study outlining the differing methodological approaches that may be used to analyze *Migrant Mother* is a particularly useful text. Price and Wells, "Thinking about photography: debates, historically and now," in *Photography: A Critical Introduction*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 1-64 (London & New York: Routledge, 2009). See especially "Case Study: Image Analysis: The Example of *Migrant Mother*," 39-49.

<sup>243</sup> The photograph is reproduced digitally on LAC's online database. Richard Harrington, "[Kinariyuak (left) and her child, Kipsiyak (right).], 1950, Library and Archives Canada, MIKAN no. 3193999. The mother and child were named through LAC's "Project Naming" initiative that identifies anonymous Indigenous figures in historical Canadian photographs. A number of Gilliat's photographs are part of this project. <http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/aboriginal-heritage/project-naming/Pages/introduction.aspx>.

<sup>244</sup> Monk cited in John Goddard, "A Picture and a Thousand Words," *Toronto Star*, February 27, 2005.

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<sup>245</sup> Langford, "Richard Harrington's Guide," 40.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

<sup>247</sup> Gilliat, September 29, 1960, 'Arctic trip diary.'

<sup>248</sup> Many of these images were also included in the NFB Still Photography Division's supplementary prints, which were made available for individual purchase to publishers. Gilliat kept most of these supplementary prints in her collection and used them to continue to circulate her prints. Gilliat's note on the top right hand corner of the first page of supplementary prints for the Kenojuk story includes her Nova Scotia address, indicating that, even years later when she was no longer freelancing, Gilliat was trying to sell and publish her Arctic images. The supplementary prints also included images of other women performing 'traditional' labour. A woman identified as Taktu, for example, uses an *ulu*, or woman's knife, to separate seal fat from skin; while another woman, Nepachee, stretches and prepares a seal skin for cutting stencils (colour images are available on LAC's website by searching for their MIKAN numbers, 4324316 and 4324297 respectively). These additional images demonstrate the myriad roles of women in Inuit society.

<sup>249</sup> Close, *Framing Identity*, 103.

<sup>250</sup> See the Canadian Museum of History for a number of Peter Pitseolak's photographs of Kenojuk Ashevak.

<sup>251</sup> Gilliat documented the names of both Ashevak's children, Angaco and Adlareak, and these were included in the captions for the NFB supplementary prints. Yet these names were not published in the photo story. Additionally, Gilliat and Hinds both recorded Ashevak's story: Testing positive for tuberculosis in the early 1950s, Ashevak spent a number of years (variously recorded as 3-5) in a Quebec hospital. When she returned to the North, another Inuk woman and artist, Sheouak Petaulassie (or Sheowak as recorded by Gilliat and Hinds) gave Kenojuk her son, Angaco, to help her and Johnniebo Ashevak start a family. Hinds, "Women Artists of Cape Dorset," no date, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 1 file 12, 'Articles about Artists in Cape Dorset,' LAC.

<sup>252</sup> Lutz and Collins, *Reading National Geographic*, 192-214. I am complicating Lutz and Collins' methodology by analyzing a group or series of photographs rather than just one image. Any one of the Kenojuk photographs can be analyzed by tracing multiple gazes; however, as I have argued throughout this thesis, I think it is important to look at more than one image together (that is, when others are available).

<sup>253</sup> Ibid., 214.

<sup>254</sup> Azoulay, *The Civil Contract of Photography*, 14.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid.

<sup>256</sup> Printmaking was, after all, another facet of Arctic co-operatives.

<sup>257</sup> Barthes, "The Photographic Message." In *A Barthes Reader*, ed. Susan Sontag (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993), 204.

<sup>258</sup> Azoulay, *The Civil Contract of Photography*, 156.

<sup>259</sup> In her diary, Gilliat copied verbatim a book review by Edmund Carpenter that harshly criticized a German publication about Inuit arts. Carpenter was particularly critical of author Henry Schaeffer-Simmern's use of government sources which were misleading and ignorant of "Eskimo language and self-definition." The reviewer also questioned Schaeffer-Simmern's characterization of 'authenticity': "My

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objection to the use of the word 'Eskimo' here does not rest on any defense of 'pure' Eskimo art, nor on any hostility toward commercialization, but arises from the familiar question: do we accept the Eskimo on their terms or on our terms?" Gilliat expressed similar feelings throughout her time in the Arctic and afterwards when she attended the first print show in Ottawa. Thus, although Gilliat was a white woman wielding a representational tool of the colonizer, we might view her photographs as an empathetic attempt to accept the Inuit artist, Ashevak, on her own terms. Gilliat, no date, 'Arctic trip diary.'; Edmund Carpenter, review of *Eskimo-Plastik aus Kanada*, by Henry Schaeffer-Simmern, *American Anthropologist* 62, no. 2 (April 1960): 346-48.

<sup>260</sup> Lutz and Collins, *Reading National Geographic*, 197.

<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.*, 198.

<sup>262</sup> Notably, a photograph taken the following year by NFB photographer B. Korda captures an unidentified Inuk man looking at the photo story "Kenojuak—Poet of the Arctic" displayed on an outdoor notice board in Cape Dorset. Such a public display would have allowed Ashevak to see her own self thus disrupting the traditional photographic contract in which the subject is rarely afforded this opportunity. This photograph, moreover, also demonstrates what Lutz and Collins refer to as the refracted gaze in which the Other sees oneself and as others see them. While beyond the scope of my analysis here, Korda's photograph, (LAC MIKAN no. 3603901) adds yet another dimension to our reading of the images of Ashevak.

<sup>263</sup> Azoulay, *The Civil Contract of Photography*, 144.

<sup>264</sup> Mary T. S. Schäffer Warren, photograph of Leah, Frances Louise, and Sampson Beaver, 1906, Mary Schäffer Fonds, Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies, Banff, Alberta, V527/PS 1-5 V527/PS 1 – 5.

<sup>265</sup> Azoulay, *The Civil Contract of Photography*, 152-3.

<sup>266</sup> Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherdale, "Introduction," in *Contact Zones: Aboriginal and Settler Women in Canada's Colonial Past* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005), 4.

<sup>267</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>268</sup> Loren Lerner, "Kathleen Daly's Images of Inuit People: Professional Art and the Practice of Ethnography," in Huneault and Anderson, *Rethinking Professionalism*, 226-27. In Lerner's words, Clifford desires an "ethnographic practice that takes into account colonial history and attempts to overcome it," 250. Also, see James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988).

<sup>269</sup> For a formative text theorizing primitivism and its entanglement in modernity, see Hal Foster, "The 'Primitive' Unconscious of Modern Art, or White Skin Black Masks," in *Recodings: Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics* (Seattle WA: Bay Press, 1985), 181-208.

<sup>270</sup> Lerner, "Kathleen Daly's Images of Inuit People," 241.

<sup>271</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>272</sup> A similar argument has been made by a number of other scholars including anthropologist Christopher Pinney who writes, "It is precisely photography's inability to discriminate, its inability to exclude, that makes it so textured and so fertile." Christopher Pinney, "Introduction: How the Other Half Lives," in *Photography's Other Histories*, 6.

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<sup>273</sup> Gilliat also recognized the ‘excesses’ of photographic imagery. In a story about her in the *Ottawa Journal*, the journalist makes note of the fact that Gilliat did not think of herself as an artist because the “camera often lets you down.” In Gilliat’s conception, an artist is one who has vision and control over her art making, whereas a photographer is never in full control over her technologies or product. Gilliat’s statement more implicitly recognizes the fact that photographs a) do not always turn out as intended; and b) can mean different things in different viewing contexts. However, her hesitation to call herself an artist might also be contingent on her gender. Being an artist, a term most often reserved for the ‘male genius’ type, also implied a certain ego that Gilliat did not approve of. Blaire McKenzie, “Camera-toting Travels to the North Takes Rosemary Gilliat Among Eskimos,” *The Ottawa Journal*, June 8, 1963.

<sup>274</sup> Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 29.

<sup>275</sup> Gilliat, September 1, 1953, ‘Canada 1952-53.’ Gilliat wrote these words in anticipation of her first trip to the North.

<sup>276</sup> Pollock, *Differencing the Canon*, xvi.

<sup>277</sup> Elizabeth Edwards, “Introduction,” in *Anthropology and Photography 1860-1920*, ed. Elizabeth Edwards (New Haven & London: Yale University Press in association with The Royal Anthropological Institute, London, 1992), 14.

<sup>278</sup> Laura Ann Stoler, “Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance,” *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 87-109.

<sup>279</sup> Stern, “The History of Canadian Arctic Photography,” 51-2.

<sup>280</sup> Jane Lydon, who has written about visual repatriation projects in the Australian context, argues that the very term ‘repatriation’ is complicated when dealing with photographic objects that are inherently multiple and were not made by Indigenous peoples to begin with (i.e. are not artifacts or human remains). Repatriation is still widely used to discuss photo-based projects, and thus I use it here. But I also adopt Lydon’s term ‘returns,’ which suggests not that ‘original’ objects are restored to their makers or homeland but that photographs are reintegrated into their rightful source communities. Lydon, “Return: The Photographic Archive and Technologies of Indigenous Memory,” *Photographies* 3, no. 2 (September 2010): 177.

<sup>281</sup> Laura Peers and Alison K. Brown, “Colonial Photographs and Post-Colonial Histories: The Kainai-Oxford Photographic Histories Project” (paper presented at the conference for the Centre for Canadian Studies, University of Edinburgh, May 5-6, 2005). Peers and Brown also edited a volume detailing the importance of collaborations between museums and the source communities of their collections. The essays in this publication are interdisciplinary and global in scope. Peers and Brown, eds. *Museums and Source Communities* (London: Routledge, 2003).

<sup>282</sup> In May 2015 “Project Naming” was expanded to include photographs of First Nations and Métis.

<sup>283</sup> Alia, *Names, Numbers, and Northern Policy*.

<sup>284</sup> I have decided to use outdated place names in an effort to reflect the colonial context of these images’ making and to maintain congruity with Gilliat’s own writing. However, it is both necessary and important that in the present and in efforts towards settler decolonization, that we talk and write about Inuit territories, and those of Indigenous peoples more generally, with the names bestowed upon them by their true owners.

<sup>285</sup> Natasha Mablick cited in “Views from the North Atlas,” <http://viewsfromthenorth.ca/about.html>.

## Illustrations



**Figure Intro.1** “This Weekend and Next: Rosemary Travels,” *Weekend Magazine*, date unknown. Library and Archives Canada, Rosemary Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 3 file 5, ‘Arctic Trip Diary.’ Image Source: LAC.



# *your* **Weekend** MAGAZINE



*Successful, but feminine: photographer Gilliat and golfer Post*

## *Women At Work*

Being one of those people who believes in, and campaigns for, the equality of women, I get awfully bored with the endless male arguments about how women can't do this or that. The war of the sexes is an eternal topic and an intriguing subject of conversation. Sure, most of us recognize the inescapable differences—and most of us are pleased about that—but it is just silly to always make comparisons on the basis of sex rather than the individual's ability.

Several thousand books have been written on this subject and I don't intend to pursue it here. But I would like to draw your attention to a couple of remarkable women featured in this issue of *Weekend*. First there is photographer Rosemary Gilliat, whose nature pictures appear on pages 14 and 15. Being a woman doesn't seem to hamper her in one of the most exacting of photographic specialties. It is one which requires professional skill, determination and patience. And being either male or female doesn't seem to have much to do with it. The simple fact is that Rosemary is a fine photographer, not just a good woman photographer.

Or take our cover girl this week, Sandra Post. Maybe she can't belt a golf ball as far as Jack Nicklaus but she can certainly wham it further than I can and besides she knows where it is going. She too brings skill and determination to her profession.

One of the tired male arguments hinges on women's physical incapacities. Need I remind the Canadian man that our women skiers and swimmers have made us males look a little weak in recent years? Need I also say that Rosemary and Sandra happen to be two very feminine people?

**Figure Intro.2** “Women at Work,” *Weekend Magazine*, date unknown. Library and Archives Canada, Rosemary Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 1 file 29, ‘RGE notes on career/resume personal.’ Image Source: LAC.



**Figure 1.1** Rosemary Gilliat, *Camp at the freezer site in Kangiqsualujjuaq, Quebec*, July 16-August 9, 1960, 35 mm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010835807. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image Source: LAC.





**Figure 1.2** Rosemary Gilliat, *Man canoeing, Kangisualujjuaq, Quebec*, July 16-August 9, 1960, 35 mm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010835962. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.



**Figure 1.3** Rosemary Gilliat, *Landscape near Cape Dorset*, ca. 1960 [June 17-October 20, 1960], 35 mm colour transparency. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010799875. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image Source: LAC.

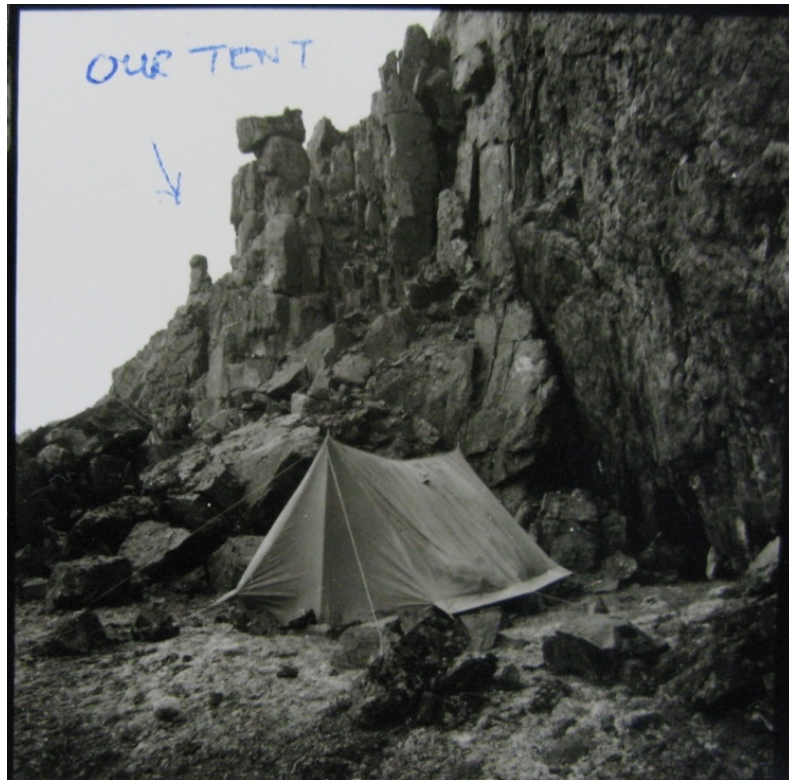


**Figure 1.4** Rosemary Gilliat, no title [Barbara Hinds et al. on a boat], no date [June 17-October 20, 1960], black and white gelatin silver print. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: Dalhousie University Archives, Barbara Hinds Papers, MS-2-130\_2009-003\_3\_38\_2\_003.



**Figure 1.5** Rosemary Gilliat, no title [Barbara Hinds and Pitsulak on a boat], no date [August 15-19, 1960], black and white gelatin silver print. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: Dalhousie University Archives, Barbara Hinds Papers, MS-2-130\_2009-003\_3\_38\_5\_001.





**Figure 1.6** Rosemary Gilliat, *Seal Hunt at Frobisher Bay*, no date [August 15-19, 1960], black and white gelatin silver contact print. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, MIKAN no. 4879523. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: Author



**Figure 1.7** Moshah [?], Rosemary Gilliat Eaton, Barbara Hinds, Sarpinak, Spyglassie, Mosese and Pitsulak on "Spyglassie island," near Iqaluit (formerly Frobisher Bay), Nunavut, August 18-19, 1960, black and white gelatin silver print. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010978037. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.





**Figure 2.1** Kananginak Pootoogook, *The First Tourist*, lithograph, 1992. The Canadian Museum of History, 1992-015, S93-5459. ©Dorset Fine Arts. Printed with the permission of Dorset Fine Arts (2016). Image source: CMH.



**Figure 2.2** Rosemary Gilliat, *Johnny holding up Arctic char, Kangiqsualujjuaq (George River), Quebec*, July 16-August 9, 1960, 35 mm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010835975. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.



**Figure 2.3** Rosemary Gilliat, *Keith Crowe (right) and Johnny (left) carrying arctic char to a walk-in freezer, Kangiqsualujjuaq, Quebec, July 16-August 9, 1960*, 35 mm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010835967. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.





**Figure 2.4** Rosemary Gilliat, *Two women cleaning Arctic char on an outdoor counter while a young girl looks, Kangiqsualujjuaq, Quebec, July 16-August 9, 1960*, 35 mm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010835974. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.



**Figure 2.5** Rosemary Gilliat, *Maggie*, the wife of Willy Eetok, cutting fish with her daughter Elizabeth on her back, *George River [Kangihsualujjuaq]*, Québec, August 1960 [July 17, 1960], 6.0 x 6.0 cm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010975364. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.



**Figure 2.6** Rosemary Gilliat, *Joan Ryan ringing a school bell, Kangiqsualujjuaq, Quebec*, July 16-August 9, 1960, 35 mm colour slide. Library and Archive Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010835976. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.





**Figure 2.7** Rosemary Gilliat, *Children in a swimming hole, Kangisualujjuaq, Quebec*, July 16-August 9, 1960 [July 24, 1960], 35 mm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010835979. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.

## Ilkalupik: King of the Arctic



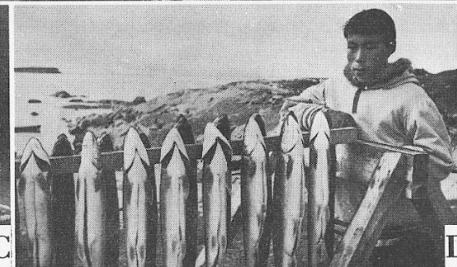
Arctic char from Canada's north is adding to the taste thrills of many southern gourmets who specialize in epicurean delights. Fashionable clubs and restaurants in New York, Chicago, Boston, Detroit and major Canadian cities offer the delicate-tasting char to their discriminating clientele. In the past couple of years, three Arctic fisheries have been established. The fishing, freezing and shipping of char to southern markets has given a small group of Eskimos a new source of income in a land where the traditional means of making a living is rapidly changing through contact with the civilization of the white man. For a limited number of Canada's 12,000 Eskimos this added income, which reduces their dependence on the vagaries of a fluctuating food supply, is now a reality. In the frigid waters of the Arctic Lakes char reproduce at a comparatively slow rate so the fish are never likely to be in abundant supply. Eskimos call the char "Ilkalupik", which means *special fish*, and, at \$1.25 a pound, the succulent char seems slated to hold its lofty position for some time to come. First overseas shipment of char went to Paris for a banquet of the French Nature Protection Society—a body that takes pride in serving its members something new, if possible exotic, in the way of foods. To those in the know, Arctic char is just that.

Yes, sales will provide Inuit money but the goal here is really to wean them off government support.

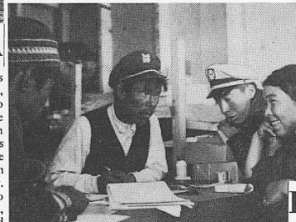
In photo at right, Eskimos stretch nylon gill net across the mouth of a small stream near Port Burwell on Ungava Bay. Catch is loaded aboard motor boats and sped to Port Burwell fishery where, last August, 18,600 pounds of choice-flavoured char filled the freezers to capacity. Here it is cleaned, flash-frozen, and loaded aboard refrigerated ships for transport to southern markets. Biological studies ascertain the quantity of char that may be taken without depleting fishing grounds.



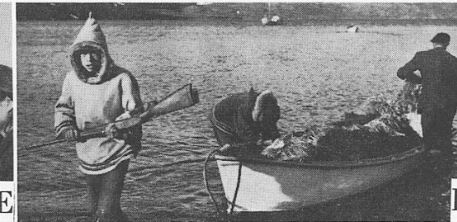
Cleaning char is done with meticulous care to assure fish reach market in top condition. At Port Burwell Eskimo child gets on-the-spot view of the operation.



A fisherman's dream is this rack of Arctic char beauties! Increasing numbers of sportsmen are being attracted northwards to Eskimo-operated tourist lodges near Frobisher Bay and at Camp Dorset by the spunky, fighting char.



Henry Anatuk takes the order of a young Eskimo mother at co-op store at Port Burwell. Here, skins, carvings and work done at the summer fishing camps, are exchanged for pipes, tobacco, sugar, tea and other necessities.



On Labrador coast, Eskimo fishermen unload char nets from their canoe. Everyone works hard during brief char-fishing season—mid August to end of September. Rifle ensures a daily diet of fresh meat while at the fishing grounds.

Did they really have enough to eat though?

National Film Board of Canada Photos by Rosemary Gilliat.

**Figure 2.8** Photo story 277, "Ilkalupik: King of the Arctic," January 24, 1961, photographs by Rosemary Gilliat. Library and Archives Canada, National Film Board of Canada Fonds, R1196-0-7-E. ©Government of Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.



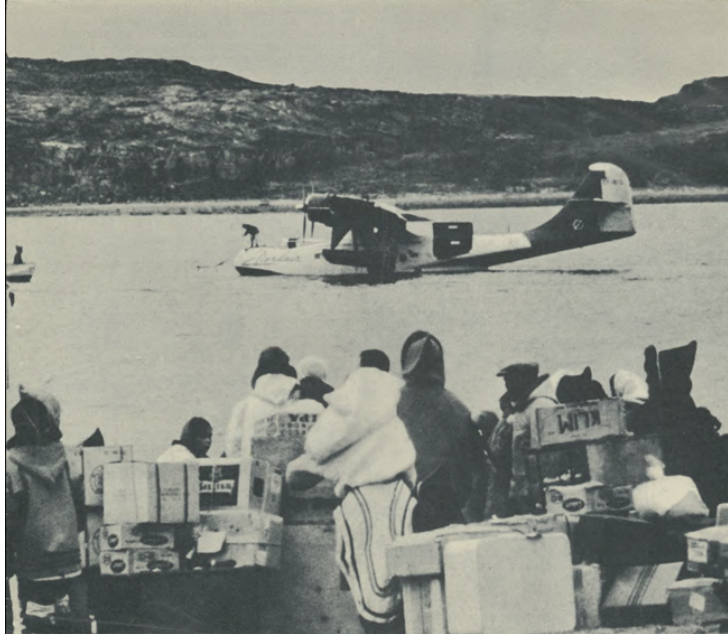
Sur la Terre de Baffin, bloquée par les glaces de l'Arctique pendant plusieurs mois, cette jeune femme doit faire face aux difficultés les plus insolites pour organiser la vie de sa famille



Un jour, un vieux esquimau lui a demandé d'écrire à la reine Elisabeth. Il désirait une photo de la famille royale.

## Elle fait ses emplettes une fois l'an seulement

«Je m'ennuie terriblement de Cape Dorset», écrivait un jour Alma Houston revenue pour quelques jours seulement à Ottawa. «Malgré tous les inconvénients qu'il y faut surmonter, j'aime ce lieu et j'aime ses habitants.» Une fois l'an seulement, un navire ose s'aventurer jusque-là.



Dans sa petite maison blanche et grise, à deux étages et au toit d'un vert joyeux, Alma Houston vit heureuse et ressemble à toutes les ménagères du monde. Une chose, cependant, la différencie d'elles: Alma habite à Cape Dorset, un village qui ne groupe que quelques maisons sur une île de la Terre de Baffin, face aux eaux gelées du détroit de l'Hudson prises par les glaces pendant sept mois de l'année et charriant, même en juillet, d'énormes icebergs.

La population permanente de Cape Dorset se monte à 20 personnes non indigènes, les Houston inclus. Autrefois artiste, James, le mari d'Alma, est maintenant fonctionnaire. Il travaille au Département des affaires et ressources naturelles du Nord. Le couple a deux enfants: John, 6 ans, et Sam, 4 ans. En été, la population s'augmente de quelque 350 Esquimaux nomades qui plantent leurs tentes sur les rivages rocaillieux des environs et qui, sitôt l'hiver revenu, transportent leurs camps à plusieurs milles vers l'intérieur. La chasse et la pêche conditionnent leurs déplacements.

Mais Alma, d'un naturel optimiste, garde le sourire malgré tous les problèmes qu'elle a à résoudre. Ainsi celui de l'eau. L'été, elle est pompée dans une rivière voisine et arrive jusqu'au logis. En hiver, c'est autre chose: chiens et traîneaux font le transport de solides blocs de glace pris dans le lac le plus proche et il faut les faire fondre. Dans ces conditions, prendre un bain est un luxe.

Un autre problème est celui de la nourriture car, aussi paradoxal que cela puisse paraître, pendant les grosses chaleurs de l'été arctique, les provisions se corrompent facilement. C'est pourquoi, Alma rêve souvent d'une immense armoire frigorifique dans laquelle elle pourrait tout entasser. Elle rêve aussi d'un ravitaillement plus fréquent. Car, si on ne l'avions pas encore dit, ce n'est qu'une fois l'an qu'un bateau peut atteindre Cape Dorset et approvisionner la petite colonie. Il faut prévoir des achats pour douze mois et organiser judicieusement l'entrepôt des marchandises.

Pour corser les menus, ou simplement les compléter si le navire tarde à venir, grâce à son ingéniosité de cuisinière, Alma combine l'art, dont elle a appris à fond tous les secrets dans sa Nouvelle-Ecosse natale, avec les recettes esquimaudes. Elle a découvert que le phoque, apprêté comme il convient, vaut bien un bon bifteck. Et, lorsqu'elle a recours aux boîtes de conserves, elle varie les plats en les accompagnant de certaines algues blanches et accommodées en salade.

L'une des contributions d'Alma à la cuisine esquimaude est le porridge bread qu'elle confectionne selon une recette de son pays. Au début, les indigènes considéraient avec méfiance l'étrange mélange de beurre, de farine et de mélasse. Maintenant, ils s'en régalaient comme d'un gâteau. Son mari, par contre, n'a pas obtenu le même succès. En effet, un jour qu'il avait voulu faire goûter un morceau de fromage doux à un Esquimau, l'homme y avait mordu à peine et était sorti en courant pour le cracher.

Alma a son jardin: ce sont des serres dans lesquelles elle fait pousser des légumes et des fleurs. Parmi les choux, les laitues, les épinards, les bettes, les oignons et le persil, elle y fait fleurir des attirrhinums et des soucis. Elle a ainsi réalisé

**Figure 2.9 a** “Elle fait ses emplettes une fois l’an seulement,” words and photographs by Rosemary Gilliat, publication unknown, date unknown. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, box 1, file 29, ‘RGE notes on career/resume personal.’ Image source: LAC.



A Cape Dorset, la vie est dure et les saisons rigoureuses. Pour avoir son jardin, Alma Houston a fait construire des serres. Grâce à elles, elle retrouve dans le paysage désolé de l'Arctique un peu de l'enfance qu'elle a vécue dans les prairies de la Nouvelle-Ecosse.

un programme ambitieux. Chaque été, lorsque le soleil brille vingt-quatre heures sur vingt-quatre, ou presque, elle transporte dans son jardin de la terre nouvelle et prépare les couches sans ménager l'engrais. Les graines lui sont fournies par la ferme expérimentale de l'agriculture de Fort Simpson.

Les divertissements, quant à eux, ne posent aucun problème. Parfois l'on passe un film, mais Alma a des livres, un tourne-disque et la radio. Les soirs d'été, de temps à autres, les Esquimaux dansent et comme ce sont aussi de merveilleux conteurs, il arrive souvent que l'on passe des nuits entières à les écouter.

Depuis dix ans qu'elle vit à Cape Dorset, Alma a appris la langue du pays et s'est si bien familiarisée avec ses habitants qu'elle ne voudrait plus être ailleurs.

Ecrivain public à ses heures, postière, animatrice de l'artisanat féminin, femme de lettres aussi, elle médite après le premier ouvrage qu'elle a fait publier sur la

vie en Arctique, d'en écrire un autre dans lequel elle rassemblerait les innombrables légendes que lui ont racontées ses amis. Elles appartiennent, estime-t-elle, à l'histoire du Canada et il serait grand dommage de les voir disparaître.

(Reportage et photos-couleurs R. Gilliat)



Sam, le benjamin de la famille Houston, né dans le pays, se mêle volontiers aux enfants esquimaux pendant l'été. Mais à bien regarder, n'a-t-il pas l'air esquimau ?



Revêtu de la superbe «parka» en peau de phoque qu'elle a confectionnée et brodée elle-même, Alma aime faire des promenades en famille.

Figure 2.9 b

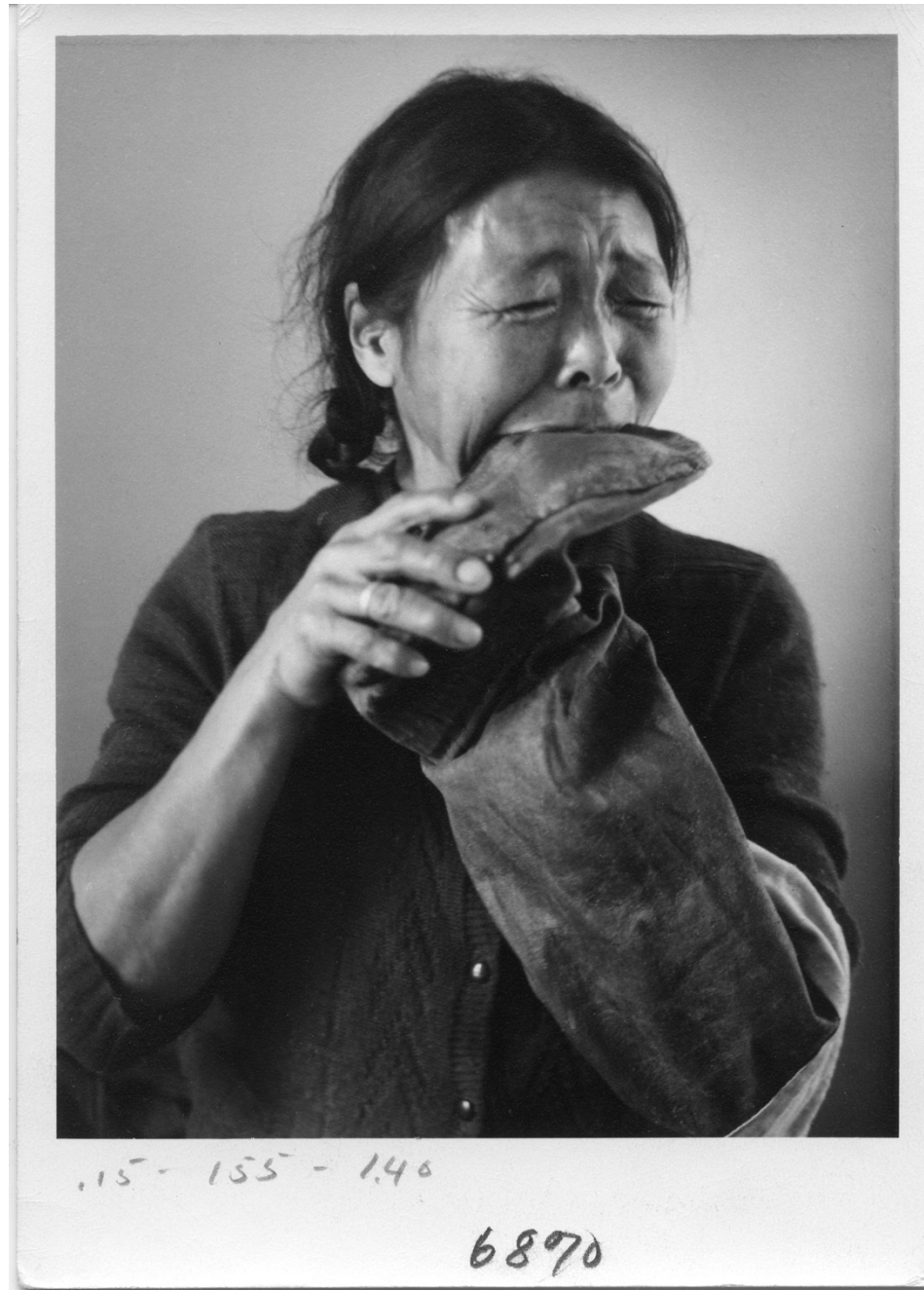




**Figure 2.10** Rosemary Gilliat, *Alma Houston Pinning a Medal onto Kingwatsiak's Coat*, no date [September 4, 1960], black and white gelatin silver contact print. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, MIKAN no. 4877954. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: Author.

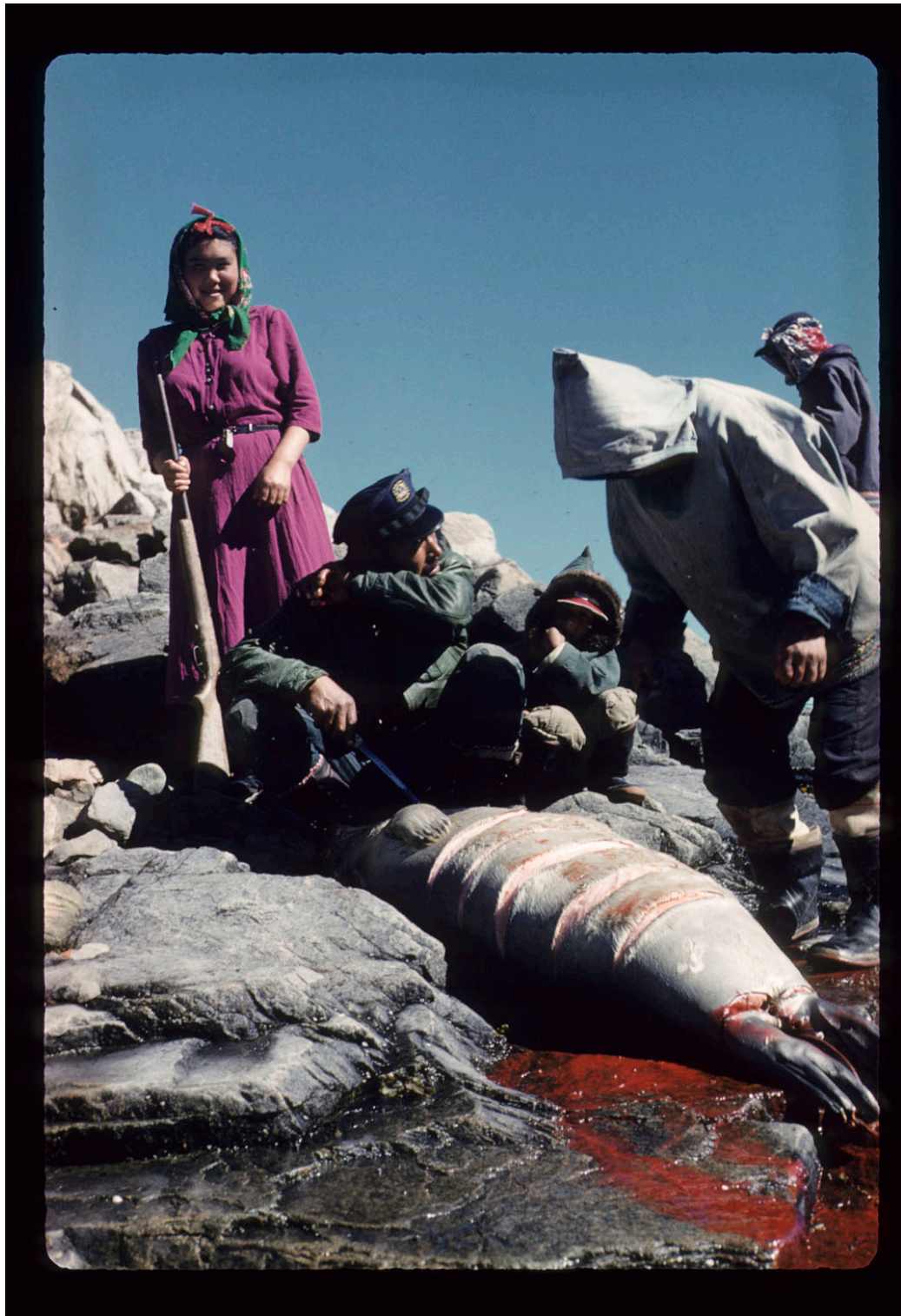


**Figure 2.11** Rosemary Gilliat, *Alma Houston and Kingwatsiak, Cape Dorset, Nunavut*, August 24-October 3, 1960 [September 4, 1960], 6.0 x 6.0 cm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010767680. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.



**Figure 3.1** Rosemary Gilliat, no title [likely Ikhalu, James and Alma Houston's hired help, chewing the hide of *kamik* in Cape Dorset], no date [August 30-October 3, 1960], black and white gelatin silver print. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: Dalhousie University Archives, Barbara Hinds Papers, MS-2-130\_2009-003\_3\_38\_3\_002.





**Figure 3.2** Rosemary Gilliat, *Group of people gathered around a dead seal, Ungava, Nunavut*, July 13-August 9, 1960 [July 27, 1960], 35 mm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010799964. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.



**Figure 3.3** Rosemary Gilliat, *Group of people gathered around a dead seal, Ungava, Nunavut*, July 13-August 9, 1960 [July 27, 1960], 35 mm colour slide, archival crop. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010799964. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image Source: Author.





**Figure 3.4** Rosemary Gilliat, *Cleaning the Station Wagon* [Helen Salkeld], August 1954, black and white gelatin silver print. Library and Archives Canada, Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e011161198. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.





**Figure 3.5** Photo story 289, "Kenojuak—Poet of the Arctic," July 11, 1961, photographs by Rosemary Gilliat. Library and Archives Canada, National Film Board Fonds.

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**Figure 3.6** Rosemary Gilliat, *Artist Kenojuak drawing inside her tent, Cape Dorset, Nunavut*, August 24-Oct 3, 1960 [September 29, 1960], 35 mm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Rosemary Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010835887. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.



**Figure 3.7** Rosemary Gilliat, *Kenojuak* and her husband, *Johnnybo*, with their children in their tent. *Cape Dorset on Baffin Island, Eastern Arctic*, August 1960 [September 29, 1960], black and white gelatin silver print. Library and Archives Canada, National Film Board of Canada Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e002265671. Public Domain. Image source: LAC.



**Figure 3.8** Rosemary Gilliat, *Artist Kenujuak carrying an infant on her back and exiting a tent, Cape Dorset, Nunavut, August 24-Oct 3, 1960 [September 29, 1960]*, 35 mm colour slide. Library and Archives Canada, Rosemary Gilliat Eaton Fonds, R12438-0-0-E, e010835916. ©Library and Archives Canada. Reproduced with the permission of Library and Archives Canada (2016). Image source: LAC.





**Figure 3.9** Kathleen Daly, *Povungnituk*, pencil on paper, 1960. Library and Archives Canada, Kathleen Daly Pepper Sous Fonds, R12301-2-X-E, e008300254. ©Ron Moore. Due diligence taken by author to obtain copyright permission. Image source: LAC.

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