

*Nunavut, Uqausivut, Piqqusivullu Najuqsittiarlavu* (Caring  
for our Land, Language and Culture): The use of land  
camps in Inuit knowledge renewal and research

by

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## **Abstract**

Sharing stories in Inuit culture has been the foundation of knowledge transfer for generations. This is my story of learning, of research, learning through relationships, and learning from the land through the stories of Elders and youth of Gjoa Haven, Nunavut, during Elder-youth land camps to learn about caribou in 2011/2012. Using the *Qaggiq* model, I explore how *nuna* (land) connects us with *iliqqusiq* (culture), *uqausiq* (language), and *unipkaat* (living histories). The land camps are a place for knowledge renewal, to build and strengthen the connections between generations, and a place for communities and researchers to connect.

Learning on the land provides the place for strengthening *inuuqatigiittiarniq* (relationships), *inuusiqaqttiarniq* (living a good life) and allows the youth to experience how the land provides *niiqiqainnarniq* (sustenance). Storytelling connects us with others and by listening carefully there are many lessons that can guide youth in living a good life.

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## Table of Contents

<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>List of Figures</b> .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>1 Chapter: Pigiarningat - The Beginning</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>2 Chapter: Kinavunga: Situating Myself</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>3 Chapter: Tukisigiajjuitiit – Context</b> .....	<b>17</b>
3.1 Nunavut .....	17
3.2 <i>Uqsuqtuuq</i> : Gjoa Haven, Nunavut .....	25
<b>4 Chapter: Qaujisarnirmut Tunngavigijakka – Methodologies</b> .....	<b>28</b>
4.1 Nunami illinniarniq: Learning from the Land .....	28
4.2 Qaggiq Model.....	40
4.3 <i>Sananiq</i> - Craft Epistemology .....	48
<b>5 Chapter: Qaujisarnirmut Atulauqtakka - Methods</b> .....	<b>54</b>
5.1 Project Background .....	54
5.1.1 Piliriqatigilauqtakka - Those I worked with.....	55
5.2 Aulaarniq (Being on the land): Land Camps .....	57
5.2.1 Pilot Camp 2011.....	58
5.2.2 The 2012 Camp.....	61
5.2.3 Pre- & Post-Camp Workshops.....	65
5.3 Complementary Methods .....	67
5.3.1 Interviews.....	67
5.3.2 Mapping .....	68
5.3.3 Verification Workshop.....	69

5.3.4	Ethics & Liability .....	70
5.4	Bringing it all together.....	71
5.4.1	Iterative analysis.....	71
5.4.2	Coding.....	72
5.4.3	Personal Narratives & Reflection.....	73
5.4.4	Organization & Presentation of Discussion .....	73
<b>6</b>	<b>Chapter: Isumaqaqsuurtigijakka: Analysis .....</b>	<b>75</b>
6.1	<i>Najursiniq</i> and <i>Pittiarniq</i> .....	75
6.2	<i>Qaggiup Tunngavinnig</i> - The 4 Pillars of the Qaggiq Model.....	78
6.2.1	<i>Unikkaat</i> - Living Histories.....	78
6.2.2	<i>Nuna</i> : The Land.....	90
6.2.3	Uqausiq: Language.....	103
6.2.4	<i>Iliqqusiq</i> : Culture .....	110
6.3	Bringing it all Together .....	114
<b>7</b>	<b>Chapter: Nuqqavissara: Conclusion.....</b>	<b>127</b>
7.1	Challenges .....	129
7.2	Moving Forward.....	130
	<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>134</b>
	Appendix A - List of Camp Participants .....	134
	Appendix B - Interview List.....	134
	Appendix C Interview Guide.....	137
	Appendix D - Ethics Clearance Form.....	142
	<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>143</b>

## List of Figures

Figure 1: The NS Curve The NS “Power Curve” .....	19
Figure 2: -"-miut" groups.....	26
Figure 3: Qaggiq Model, Venn diagram format .....	43
Figure 4: The <i>Qaggiq</i> Model .....	46
Figure 5: Map of camp locations .....	59
Figure 6: David Siksik & Youth.....	60
Figure 7: Elders and youth gather in the large tent.....	61
Figure 8: Boats Leaving Gjoa Haven .....	62
Figure 9: Bob Konona demonstrating how to skin a caribou .....	63
Figure 10: Siksik working with a group of youth.....	64
Figure 11: Drying the caribou skin .....	64
Figure 12: Pre-camp meeting.....	65
Figure 13: Youth pre-camp workshop .....	66
Figure 14: Cleaning Fish.....	83
Figure 15: Plucking geese.....	84
Figure 16: Preparing food.....	85
Figure 17: Carrying their catch.....	85
Figure 18: Starting a fire.....	88
Figure 19: Lighting the Qulliq.....	88
Figure 20: Simon translating.....	107
Figure 21: Skinning Caribou.....	108
Figure 22: Sharing a meal.....	118

## 1 Chapter: Pigiarningat - The Beginning

This is my story, a story of learning, of self-learning, of learning through relationships, and learning from the land. My story finds its grounding in the stories of the people of Gjoa Haven, Nunavut whom I had the pleasure of working with throughout this Master's research. The stories shared with me came through collaborative research effort that focused on the local research priorities of caribou, community and well-being. Elders, youth and hunters, through their stories, share their love of the land, and they emphasize the importance of learning from one another and from the land. Being on the land together, learning about caribou, hearing the stories of generations that came before us has provided youth with the beginnings of a foundation in Inuit culture. Here I will share the stories of those I worked with, of our time on the land and the lessons that I too have taken away from this experience.

I spent a lot of time trying to figure out where to start this story and I am not sure there is a beginning point. Although this is a thesis, I will approach it as telling a story. This is my own story, connected with the story of others, and told within my understanding. *Nalunaqtuq* is “that which causes a state of confusion” (Qitsualik, 2013). This thesis writing process is just that, *nalunaqtuq*. However, as Tamalik McGrath (2011: 310) conveys the words of Nilaulaaq Aglukkaq, *nalunaruirumaaqtuq* means “things come clear eventually, on their own”. It is through *ujjiqsuiniq*, “being observant”, she explains, that one can find clarity and understanding. As I listened to interviews, thought back on my experiences, read as much as I could - through being observant – this story

became more clear, in other words *nalunahuaruniiqput* “it is no longer as confusing as it once was”.

I found it challenging to find my voice in the telling of this story. Trying to figure out how I can share the stories of others while also speaking of my own experiences, both in the project and my personal experiences. I had concerns about making the story too personal which can also be difficult to write about. However, I found guidance and encouragement in the words of Aupilaarjuk and Tamalik, in Tamalik’s dissertation.

Aupilaarjuk talks about thoughts as originating from our heart to inform our brains. This is true to my experience of knowing too and I have taken a relational and not a cerebral approach to academia. Heart-generated thoughts are all about relationships – with people, with past/present/future, with the environment, with and within the cosmos – thus my commitment to a relational paradigm. In this paradigm there are many layers to cycle information through, all within a web of accountability. (McGrath, 2011: 173)

As I was trying to figure out how to share the stories that had been shared with me and tried to find my way to share what I had learned. I spent a lot of time worrying about how I was going to write an academic piece when I did not consider myself to be an academic. My way of understanding the world and the things that I held important were not always shared by my fellow students at the University. The years of my Undergraduate and Graduate career have often been spent explaining myself in this way. My experiences with the North, on the land, mean that I look at the North as home and not just a place to go to do research. Finding my voice in process has meant sharing my story within the stories of others, in relation to all that has happened throughout this research project. Throughout this process I have also felt accountable to all those that I have worked with. With this, I feel there is the added accountability to my own community and to my territory, Nunavut.

Writing this thesis brings together the stories of others while intertwining my own experiences both past and during the research project. I discuss the relationships that I built during my short time in Gjoa Haven as it is these relationships that have helped to make this thesis possible. It was also through these relationships that I grew to understand what it was that I wanted to talk about. It was through listening to the stories of others that brought about these ideas. Even after leaving Gjoa Haven, while working at Nunavut Sivuniksavut (as described in Chapter 2), I taught students from Gjoa Haven that had participated in the camps.

I began working on this Master's project back in 2011 when I joined a research team working in the Hamlet of Gjoa Haven, on King William Island, in the Kitikmeot Region of Nunavut (Figure 5). As part of this team, I travelled to Gjoa Haven in the summers of 2011 and 2012, to work with a group of Elders and other community members that were interested in developing a research project that emphasized land camps to connect Inuit Elders and youth, with a focus on learning about caribou. As I began work on this thesis I was reading Janet Tamalik McGrath's doctoral dissertation entitled *Isumaksaqsuurtigijakka: Conversations with Aupilaarjuk Towards a Theory of Inuktitut Knowledge Renewal* (McGrath, 2011). I began to draw connections to the *Qaggiq model* (presented in Chapter 4) and the land camps. I began to see the *Qaggiq model* manifest at the land camps. Through this thesis, my goal is to outline the connections between the *Qaggiq model* and the land camps. The questions guiding me in this inquiry are:

- 1) How can the *Qaggiq model* be put in to practice through land-based, Elder-youth camps to promote Inuktitut knowledge renewal?

2) How do land camps, based within the *Qaggiq model*, support the well-being of individuals and communities?

Throughout this thesis I look to the importance of land camps in the transfer of Inuit knowledge from Elders to youth. I look specifically at land-based learning as it is *nuna*, “the land”, that is discussed within the *Qaggiq model* as an important aspect of knowledge renewal, and this is also reflected throughout Indigenous literature that I draw from to support my own learning and understanding.

I will begin this thesis in Chapter 2 by introducing myself to you, the reader. This is an important piece within Indigenous research, situating yourself within the research (Absolon, 2011; McGrath, 2011; Kovach, 2010; Battiste & Henderson, 2000; Wilson, 2008). No research is truly objective, as humans we are always engaged in research and learning with some level of subjectivity. The practice of situating myself allows the reader to know more about me, why I am doing this research, and why I have approached it in the way that I have. This personal introduction is then extended in Chapter 3, where I also provide some context and history from Nunavut and related to the community of Gjoa Haven.

Land-based learning has grown in popularity in recent years, schools across southern Canada are beginning to recognize the importance of young people being connected to the land around them. These are teachings that have been ever present in Inuit and other Indigenous communities. A short review of literature relating to land and land camps is presented in Chapter 4, providing an overview of land-based learning from other Indigenous perspectives along with contributions to Indigenous knowledge renewal.

Indigenous methodologies help to describe my worldviews and the approach that I have taken in my research. Therefore, in Chapter 4 I also outline some of the foundational aspects of Indigenous methodologies, which have informed my research process. This provides a connection to other Indigenous ways of knowing and the importance of relationality in a context of learning, especially on the land. Here I discuss the broader renaissance of Indigenous thought in academic institutions. From this growing body of literature, I was ultimately introduced to the *Qaggiq* model, and through this realized that Inuit voices were still not prominent or recognized broadly in the academic realm. Therefore, in Chapter 4 I introduce the *Qaggiq* model, as well as describe the process of interviewing and engaging in land camps that supported my learning and my analysis shared in this thesis.

In Chapter 5 I provide an overview of the larger project within which I was working in Gjoa Haven, part of my supervisor's project to learn about connections between caribou, community and well-being. I describe those who I worked with, and the kinds of methods we used. The main emphasis was on the Elder-youth land camps, but complementary methods such as interviews, mapping and verifications workshops also contributed to the iterative analysis shared in this thesis.

After listening to the interviews of Elders and youth and having participated in two land camps, the concepts of *najursiniq* and *pittiarniq* emerged as guiding principles, and these are introduced in Chapter 6. Following these I have broken down the discussion to reflect the four pillars of the *Qaggiq* model: *Unipkaat* "living histories"; *Nuna* "land"; *Uqausiq*, "language"; and, *Iliqqusiq* "culture". The living histories are conveyed through the interviews and through stories told at the camp, whether these were personal

experiences shared by people or the stories and legends that have been passed on through generations. Stories are told of the land, in Inuktitut (the Inuit language), to teach the *iliqusiit* or culture and values.

The discussion throughout this thesis confirms that the land camps, such as the camps in Gjoa Haven, allow for the renewal of relationships in the community. Building these relationships while on the land allows those participating to have access to the *unipkaat*, *nuna*, *uqausiq*, and *iliqusiq*. As explained through the *Qaggiq* model it is this access and agency that then feeds knowledge renewal, and it is this that I try to synthesize in the concluding Chapter 7. Well-being of the individuals and the community is improved through *inuuqatigiittiarniq*, “living in harmony with others” and *inusiaqattiarniq*, “living a good life”.

Access to land camps and other land-based programming provides youth with access to their culture through Elders and other adults passing on their knowledge. The land and understanding our Inuit culture and living histories can contribute to *annagunarninga* (GN and NTI, 2005) or the resilience of youth. Therefore, I see the land camps, such as those I was a part of in Gjoa Haven, as the embodiment of the *Qaggiq* model. The land camps allow for relationships to grow, building a stronger collective thus supporting *inuuqatigiittairniq*. Youth are experiencing life on the land, actively participating in knowledge renewal at the community level. Making these connections in turn supports the youth in *inuusiqaattiarniq* or learning to live a good life. Being on the land and being immersed in Inuit culture and language can support youth in not only growing to be the next generation of knowledge holders but to support their well-being through connection to the land, the environment, and to other people.

## 2 Chapter: Kinauvunga: Situating Myself

Before I begin sharing the stories of others, I first want to share my own. I undertake this exercise to introduce myself to you, the reader, in the hope that by sharing my own story you will come to understand how it is that I relate to the stories of others that I share throughout this thesis. Through this introduction I describe myself to you as I relate to my community and my relations. As Margaret Kovach highlights,

For many Indigenous people, this act is intuitive, launched immediately through the protocol of introductions. It shows respect to the ancestors and allows community to locate us. Situating self implies clarifying one's perspective on the world. This is about being congruent with knowledge systems that tell us that we can only interpret the world from the place of our experience. (Kovach, 2009: 110)

My experiences through my relations and communities in which I have lived and worked undeniably help to form my understanding of the world today, and shape how I interpret the knowledge that is shared with me through the stories of others. As I go on to discuss the teachings and stories that have been shared with me in interviews and camps, I must be clear that my interpretations are based on my own relations to the stories. As Margaret Kovach (2009: 14) also states "Sharing from my own story is a conscious way to illustrate 'self in relation'." By sharing my own story first, it is my hope to show why it is that I interpret things in the way that I do. I am telling my interpretation of the stories that have been shared with me in Gjoa Haven. I am expressing my experience within this project and providing my thoughts and understanding.

When we self-locate, we represent our own truth. We represent our own reality. In Indigenous circles one rarely sees an Indigenous person speak on behalf of another nation or another person. Instead, we generally hear people stating up from that they are expressing

only their own experiences and opinions. They represent only themselves because, as the old cliché goes, you do not know another person's journey unless you have travelled in his or her moccasins. (Absolon & Willet, 2005: 110)

I am sharing the stories of others from my understanding and experience. I cannot tell this story exactly as they did and my interpretation differs from anyone else. Shawn Wilson (2008) discusses how a storyteller imparts their experiences and life into their stories. This allows the listener to understand how the story fits into the life of the storyteller. This he says, makes it easier for the reader to take in the knowledge from the story. By introducing myself it is my hope that the reader will gain some understanding of why this research is important to me and how I have come to gain knowledge through this process.

My name is Rebecca, however, I am also known by other names depending on who it is that you talk to. I am also known as *Panigakallak*, *Aluki* and *Qaqqasiralaq*. These are three people that I am named after, my namesakes. Namesakes are an important part of Inuit culture. Often, newborn children are named after those who have passed on around the time of their birth. Whether it is a family member, friends, or other people from the community names are passed on to the newborn child. It is believed that the child takes on the spirit of their namesake and would then possess their characteristics or skills. Naming also brings about connections and builds relationships with other families. Maggie Putulik (2015) describes the importance of *attiiniq* "names and naming" in *Sivumut: Towards the Future Together*, a collection of essays by Inuit educators. As she explains:

Naming a newborn child after a particular person allows relationships to be built between the newborn child and the person the child is named after. When a child is named after a deceased person, it is a way for the

living relatives to start healing from the loss. It is a blessing to be able to give a newborn child a name of an individual who meant the world to a family. (...) The intricacy of names and naming in Inuit society is unique because it creates many links and ties to immediate families and people that may not be related to a child. (Putulik, 2015: 72-73)

Through my namesakes I am linked to other families just a Putulik describes.

Some people call me *Anaana* - or mother. To others I am named after an Aunt, sister, or friend that they held dear. I am at times greeted with love and endearment from people that would not be close to my family if not for the name I was given at birth.

When asked where I am from I often reply that I am from *Panniqtuuq* (Pangnirtung), Nunavut. This is where my Mum's family is from but my Mum, Meeka, was born in a place called *Iqalujjuaq*, near *Panniqtuuq* in Cumberland Sound on the eastern portion of Baffin Island. This was one of the camps that my grandparents, Siloah and Metuq would visit in the late summer and early fall. Metuq passed away before I was born and my *Anaanakuluk*<sup>1</sup> passed away just a few years ago. My Mum comes from a large family with seven sisters and three brothers, so, as you can imagine I have many cousins. Family gatherings have to be hosted at the community hall to accommodate everyone.

Although I say that I am from *Panniqtuuq*, I often follow that by explaining that I grew up in Scotland, where my Dad's family originates from. My Dad, Donald, was born in Edinburgh and later moved to Aberdeenshire to the family farm just outside of Newmachar. This is the same farm where I spent the first ten years of my life. My

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<sup>1</sup> *Anaanakuluk* literally translates to "dear mother" this is the *tuqlugausik* or kinships term that we use within our family for our late Grandmother, Siloah Metuq.

grandfather, Duncan Mearns, passed away when my Dad was in his late teens. I spent a lot of time with my Granny, Rosemary, when I was a child. I have many fond memories of being on the farm. I spent a lot of my time playing outdoors with my siblings and with friends from surrounding farms and from Newmachar. We worked in the garden with our Granny and would go with our parents when they had work to do on the farm.

Growing up on a farm began my connection to the land. This meant working with and taking care of the land on which we lived. Much of what we ate and our livelihood came from the farm. We planted vegetables and picked the berries and fruits as they grew. It was a different way of relying on the land than what I would later experience living in Nunavut; harvesting had a whole new meaning.

Living in Canada, particularly in Nunavut, I have been afforded a great deal of opportunities. I completed high school in *Panniqtuuq* and in 2000/2001 went on to attend Nunavut Sivuniksavut (NS), an eight-month college program for Inuit students, located in Ottawa. The NS program was established in 1985, at this time the Nunavut Agreement<sup>2</sup> was being negotiated and there was the need to prepare Inuit as administrators for this new claim. The NS Program covers a variety of subjects including: Inuit History, the Nunavut Agreement, Inuit-Government relations, Contemporary Issues, and English. All courses are accredited through Algonquin College. At the end of each year, students travel to visit Indigenous peoples in another part of the world. In 2001, my class traveled to Japan and met with Ainu on the northern island of Hokkaido. I later went on to teach at NS which I will discuss further, later in this chapter.

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<sup>2</sup> The Nunavut Agreement - Previously referred to as the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement, recently Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. has moved to change the terminology describing the agreement.  
<http://www.tunngavik.com/blog/news/terminology-change-to-use-of-terms-nunavut-agreement-and-inuit/>

After the year away at school I returned home and worked first in finance at the Hamlet Office, the Municipal Government in *Panniqtuuq*. I then went on to work as a bookkeeper/administrator at the local arts and crafts *Uqqurmiut* Centre. In 2003, I left home to join the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). I spent four years policing in different communities across Nunavut. Then, in 2007, I left the RCMP and went off to university, something I thought I had been missing since leaving school.

All of these experiences have contributed to who I am today. Some have changed the way I look at the world. My time in the RCMP especially, has made me face challenges that I never thought I would have to experience. Responding to calls, as a police officer, brings you into people's lives often during very difficult situations. I had seen firsthand the issues that exist within many of our communities. The issues that are so often the focus of media coverage and continuous research questioning why things are the way they are in our communities. When I left the RCMP I had in mind the idea that I wanted to do more to address what was going on. Rather than being the reactive entity that is often the case in policing in small communities, I wanted to shift this focus. I wanted to look rather at how we can support proactive approaches to crime prevention within our communities. I wanted to focus on positive aspects and strengths of our communities through our culture, land, language and living histories.

I left the RCMP in 2007, to pursue post-secondary education. After a failed request to take education leave I instead tendered my resignation. I knew at this point that my resignation from the RCMP meant that I would not return to working as a police officer. I departed my posting in Kimmirut, NU at the end of August that year and made my way to Ottawa to attend Carleton University. I entered a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology, and

my first year of studies was a big adjustment for me. It had been quite some time since I had been in school. I did not do very well in that first year. Thankfully, my grades improved through my upper years as I became more familiar with the University and found that I could write of things that interested me. As I entered my second year, I switched my major to Sociology as well as declaring minors in Aboriginal Studies and Law.

Throughout my undergraduate years I maintained part-time employment. Up until about my third year I worked at the RCMP Headquarters in Ottawa as a Junior Paralegal within the Legal Services Unit. This allowed me to rely on my experience in the RCMP while also putting to practice my research skills that I was gaining through my university courses. I was then hired as a Research Assistant at the Inuit Qaujisarvingat (Inuit Knowledge Centre) at Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, the national Inuit organization of Canada. It was at this time, in 2011, that I entered the Master of Arts program in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at Carleton University. I continued working part-time and completed my required course work at the same time. I spent just over a year at Inuit Qaujisarvingat until I saw a job opportunity for an Instructor at Nunavut Sivuniksavut. As I explained earlier, I had attended NS out of high school, and welcomed the opportunity to return in a teaching capacity.

I began teaching full time at NS in the fall of 2012. I taught Inuit History and the intermediate Inuktitut course. I worked with a wonderful group of people, both my colleagues and the students. Watching and supporting the students, as many of them spent their first year away from home and trying to overcome the challenges of living on their own in the city, was inspiring. The instructors and other staff are there with the

students as they experience it all, at times this included struggles as well as successes. Taking the teaching position at NS meant working full time. This also involved working several evenings and weekends throughout the year. One other responsibility I held at NS was to oversee the cultural performances and student presentations. This meant that I would accompany the students to performances, a responsibility shared with my colleagues. The additional time spend at work meant that it was no longer feasible to continue as a full time MA student.

After accepting this job at NS, I put in a request to switch to part-time studies at Carleton. This request was denied, due to a technicality in the interpretation of the University guidelines. According to these guidelines, because I had entered a full-time program I had to complete my program at full-time standing. The guidelines provide an exception to this in extenuating circumstances. However, my request to change to part-time status in order to teach and mentor fellow Inuit students was not considered to fall within this interpretation. I knew that it would not be possible for me to be starting a new job while also trying to finish my thesis as a full-time student. I made the decision to withdraw from the MA program to focus on the teaching at NS. I did not want to leave my research unfinished or the commitments in Gjoa Haven incomplete. After a lot of discussions with the University and with a great deal of support from my supervisor and the Department I returned as a part-time student in 2014, a year and a half after withdrawing. I knew it would be a challenge for me to complete my thesis part-time, but this was an important personal goal and I wanted to complete my contribution to the Gjoa Haven project.

In total, I taught at NS for three years and gained confidence in teaching and leading groups of students. For as long as I was living in Ottawa I was looking for a way to get home, back to Nunavut. I wanted to be closer to my family, to spend time with my nieces and nephews, and to spend time with them on the land. Short visits home in the summer and at Christmas did not allow me to spend much time with them.

In the summer of 2015, one year after returning to my MA part-time, a job opportunity at the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) was brought to my attention. I was encouraged to apply for the position of Inuit Impact Benefit Agreement (IIBA) Manager. This was my chance to move home. I submitted my resume, was interviewed and within the span of two months I was on a plane moving back up North, this time to Iqaluit. It all happened very quickly and as everything fell into place I knew that it was where I needed to be. I was so happy to be going home and starting a new job that would introduce me to new opportunities and challenges.

QIA is the regional Inuit organization representing Inuit from the 13 communities in the Baffin region of Nunavut. QIA is party to an IIBA with Baffinland Iron Mines Corporation for the Mary River Project, an iron mine located on northern Baffin Island near the community of Pond Inlet. The IIBA, was signed between the parties in 2013. An Inuit Impact Benefit Agreement is required for any major development project to go ahead in the Nunavut Settlement Area as outlined in Article 26 of the Nunavut Agreement. The IIBA outlines the obligations of each party in relation to impacts and benefits of the project. The IIBA aims to ensure mutual benefit to both Inuit and the company. It outlines the requirement for Inuit involvement in employment and contracting opportunities which is one of the main benefits from the project. The IIBA

also covers the use of Inuit knowledge in understanding the impacts of the project. The role of the IIBA manager at QIA is to work with the Baffinland IIBA Coordinator to oversee the implementation of the agreement.

Both the teaching position at NS and working as the IIBA manager meant a rather steep learning curve for me. They are both positions that have required a great deal of time commitment. They have both been jobs that are a great challenge but have taught me so much. All of this to say that I have not always found a balance between work, school, and life. This has meant that my thesis has taken me a lot longer to write than I thought it would. As much as I have wanted to just give up on writing this throughout the last five years in the program, I have known that I must complete it. It is not something to be left unfinished. This is my story that I must complete, it is something that I have made and want to share. Having to put it aside for such long period of time meant some difficulty in getting back into the story and finding my own understanding within the project.

All of this has brought me to today, trying to put my thoughts on paper while trying to convey the culture and places that I have grown. These experiences have shaped who I am and influence my understanding of the world. My experiences play a role in my learning though this project. I carry my own story with me, and this shapes not only who I am but how I take in and apply the teachings that have been shared with me through others' stories.

I entered this research project as both an insider and outsider, both in the University and in Gjoa Haven. There was not a large number of Inuit students attending Carleton University while I was there, especially once I entered the Graduate program. University classes could feel quite isolating at times. As many Indigenous students have

experienced, there were times that I felt tokenized as an Inuk student or felt like my approach to research and learning was very different and not that well understood. Spending the time to try and educate others about where you are from and explaining the everyday experiences of the North can become tiresome.

It often takes a little time for people to realize that I am Inuk, I have the Scottish fair complexion. People are often quite surprised when I begin speaking Inuktitut. Often, the response I receive is: *Qallunaangusugirataarikki*, “I thought that you were a *Qallunaaq*”. When I first went to Gjoa Haven I was met at the airport by Simon Okpakok, the community researcher, and Mary Aqilriaq, who I would be staying with during my summer in Gjoa Haven. When I entered the airport I shook hands with Simon and he began speaking to me in Inuktitut and I responded in Inuktitut. At this point Mary had started laughing. As she spoke to me she continued to laugh, she had expected an older, white woman. As she had been told that a researcher was coming into the community. Much to her surprise I was a younger, Inuk woman. She laughed at her own preconception of what a researcher would be. She was delighted that she would have an Inuk staying with her that also knew Inuktitut. I was proud to be breaking the mould, an Inuk doing research with Inuit in Inuktitut, grounded in my own culture and experiences of the North as home.

### **3 Chapter: Tukisigiajutiit – Context**

#### **3.1 Nunavut**

Before continuing with my story I would like to put it in the context of Nunavut and why I entered University. As I have explained I did not spend my childhood in Nunavut, having grown up in Scotland. I was young when we moved to *Panniqtuuq* and it was here that I spent my teenage years. Although I do not want to go into great detail of the struggles faced in our communities I shall give a short summary. Throughout some of my Undergraduate classes I tried to write about Nunavut from a different lens, based on my experiences, in an effort to focus on the great and positive things that go on in our communities.

When you look at the statistics in the North you are met with the highest suicide rates in the country, low educational attainment, high rates of unemployment and high rates of crime (ITK, 2016; White, 2011). These statistics are often the focus of media coverage of the North and the topics of research in the Arctic. Although these are important issues that need to be discussed and addressed, there should be care taken to not make this the single discourse.

Inuit and others in the communities are well aware of the issues as they are lived each day. While teaching Inuit History I gained even more of an appreciation for the ways that everyday life in Inuit communities has changed in such a short time.

Life could be difficult in the past but the challenges our people faced were very different than those facing families today. Our ancestors were strong and resilient, and persevered through hardship, which is why we are here. We must provide our people who are struggling — especially our young people — with the support they need to be strong and resilient throughout their lives. (ITK 2016, pg. 3)

Through experiences at University, as an Educator with Students on Ice<sup>3</sup>, as an Instructor at NS and now as IIBA Manager I have been in situations where I am presenting on cultural awareness. It is common that questions are raised about statistics and why things are so bad in northern communities. I do not have a definitive answer for why, but I think if we look at the history within our communities it gives you an idea of the trauma and dramatic changes that have happened over a relatively short time period since *Qallunaat*<sup>4</sup> started coming to the Arctic. It has brought me to a place of understanding. Although it may sound rather cliché, it is important to understand where we have come from to understand where we are and where we are going.

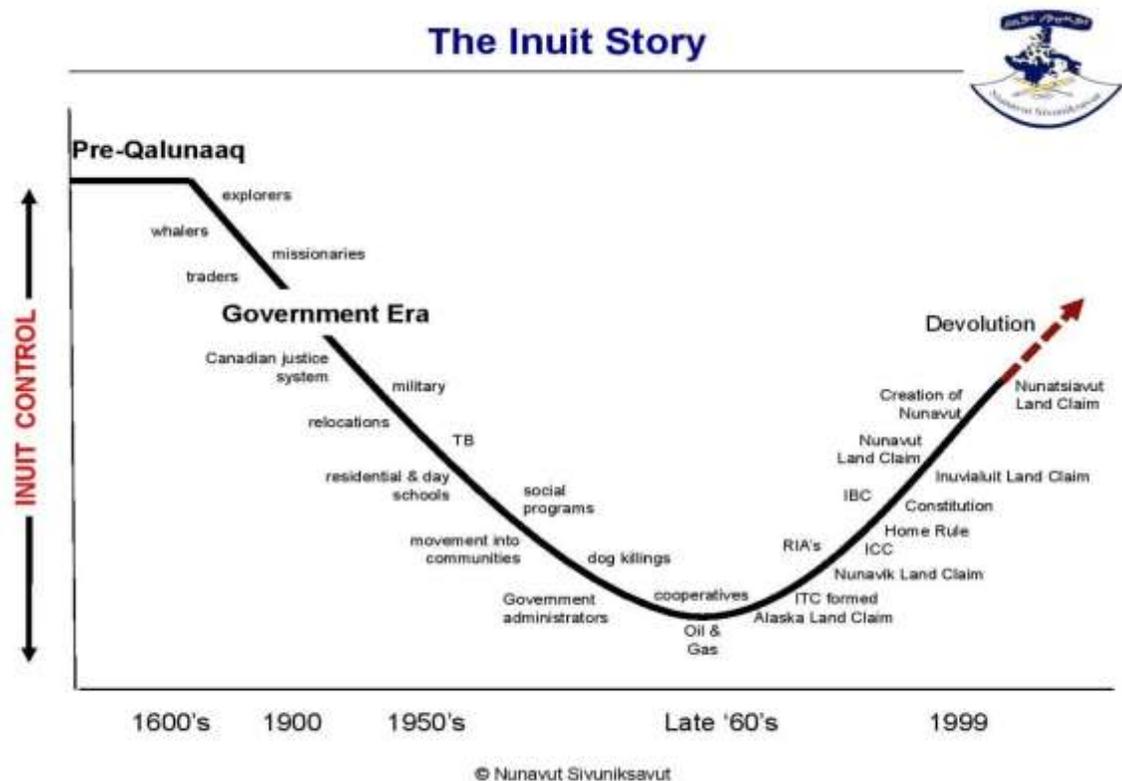
I spent my three years at NS teaching Inuit History, from pre-contact to the height of Government intervention in the North (Figure 1). I remember taking this course when I attended NS, and like many other NS students, I was in awe of everything that has happened to our communities. Much of this is not taught in this way in high schools

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<sup>3</sup> Students on Ice is a non-profit organization that operates a ship-based education program for students aged 14-18. They travel to both the Arctic and Antarctic. To date I have been on three expeditions, two to the Arctic and one to the Antarctic.

<sup>4</sup> *Qallunaat* – Plural of Qallunaq – Inuktitut term referring to a non-Inuk.

across Nunavut, and is not always talked about at home. The course opens the student's eyes to the history that has gone relatively untold for decades.



**Figure 1: The NS Curve**

The NS “Power Curve” - the framework for teaching at Nunavut Sivuniksavut - it depicts the loss of control and power by Inuit through colonization and the efforts to regain control of their homelands. Used with permission from Nunavut Sivuniksavut, 2016.

The story of changes in our communities are discussed through the impacts that each group has had on Inuit society. The changes that took place were drastic and in some cases extremely traumatic. Through the span of about three generations Inuit went from living on the land and being self-sufficient to living in communities and being highly dependent on the Canadian government (Wachowich, 1999; Marcus, 1995; Matthiasson, 1992). This rapid change is important to understanding the current situations in our communities. This trauma is carried forward through the generations and can still have negative impacts today.

Prior to contact (Figure 1), Inuit lived a nomadic life following the seasonal migrations of the animals that provided sustenance. Inuit lived in small camps, often with a leader that was the one that made final decisions for the group. Ann Mikijuk Hanson (2010) recalls this being an easier time; living in a smaller group meant that maintaining balance and social cohesion was far easier. Inuit have lived and survived in the Arctic for millennia (Watt-Cloutier, 2015). Living off the land is not an easy task to undertake. Inuit survived because of their connections to the land, the animals and other people around them. Knowledge of the land, environment, and animals as well as cultural values were passed down over generations allowing for the continuation of our culture and language (Bennet & Rowley, 2004; Oosten & Laugrand, 1999; Petrone, 1988).

Inuit hold a vast knowledge of the land surrounding them, through keen observation of weather patterns, animal migrations and seasonal changes they learned to live in this environment that is often described as harsh, inhospitable, and desolate (Krupnik, et al, 2010; Bennet and Rowley, 2004; Dahl, et al, 2000; Petrone, 1988). But through this understanding of the environment one can see the beauty and richness that it provides. Rhoda Innuksuk explains that:

We Inuit were the original occupants of this land, and moving around was our way of life. Inuit were wealthy people, because they knew the land and they knew the animals. We were very different from what we turned out to be a short time later. (Innuksuk, 2010: 74)

Change was quick to come to the Inuit settlements. Although early contact had little impact on the everyday lives of Inuit it was just the beginning of a drastic influx of change. It began with the Explorers (Figure 1), Europeans that were in search of the fabled Northwest Passage, a new route to the riches of the “Orient”. Martin Frobisher was the first of such explorers to enter the Arctic waters in 1576. He entered what is now

known as Frobisher Bay, in the hopes that this was the entrance to the Northwest Passage. The ships' logs report encounters with the local inhabitants and stories are told of English men going missing at the hands of the Inuit (Francis, 1986). Many other explorers would come to the Arctic in search of the Northwest Passage, and it was not until 1903-06 that Roald Amundsen would successfully navigate the NWP. Amundsen's success in both the navigation of the NWP and later expeditions to the South Pole can be attributed to the skills that he learned from the Inuit that lived in the region around Gjoa Haven (Cooke, 1981; Brice-Bennett, 1976).

With the mapping done by explorers and the stories of the vast riches of the Arctic other groups were attracted to the North (Petroni, 1988; Francis, 1986; Cooke, 1981). Contact between the *Qallunaat* and Inuit grew more steady throughout the nineteenth century when whaling camps were established in several locations across the North (Figure 1). American and Scottish Whalers came to the North in search of bowhead and beluga whales (McElroy, 2008). In places such as *Panniqtuuq*, Cape Fullerton, Lancaster Sound and Herschel Island, many Inuit were hired to work on the whaling ships and often paid in the form of food goods or ammunition and firearms. Whaling in the Arctic was very lucrative and whale oil and baleen were brought back to European markets. The beginning of World War I brought the end of the whaling era. By this time whales stocks were depleted and replacements for whale oil and baleen had been found, in their place mineral oil and plastic had come into use (Morrison, 2003; Eber, 1989; Francis, 1987; Ross, 1975).

Contact between Inuit and Qallunaat intensified in the early twentieth century and rapidly changed the Inuit way of life. Following the whalers came the missionaries,

traders, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), and the Government (Figure 1). At the end of the whaling era, Inuit had grown accustomed to the use of rifles for hunting and the goods that had been provided by the whalers. The trade of skins and furs replaced the hunting of whales (Crowe, 1991). However, around this time the Government had also introduced welfare, education and other social services to the small Inuit populations across northern Canada. In the early years that the RCMP were in the North they were tasked with administering Government services more so than policing (Dahl, et al, 2000; Marcus, 1995; Petrone, 1988; Diubaldo, 1985).

Trading (Figure 1) with the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), and other smaller trading companies, led to changes in the way that many Inuit hunted. The majority of HBC trading posts were established across the Arctic between 1911 and about 1930. The HBC was interested in buying fox furs and later seal skins. Inuit began trapping foxes to a greater extent than they ever had before. Fox fur may have been used for clothing but was not hunted regularly for the most part. Efforts before had been placed on hunting game for subsistence but now with the option of economic gain and the ability to trade for other goods many Inuit began trapping. The trading of furs was entirely dependent on the global market for furs (Crowe, 1991; Newman, 1991; Ashlee, 1984; Williamson, 1974; Usher, 1971). The market for furs crashed just after the Second World War and again in the 1970s. This had great ramifications on the lives of Inuit that were now dependent upon the trade goods from traders. Many families has settled around the trading posts, forming many of the communities that we see in Nunavut today (Hicks & White, 2001; Irwin, 1989).

Moving into communities with the presence of trade post managers and the RCMP brought about changes in the leadership of communities. This changed the dynamics of the communities, those that were once leaders were now looking to the Qallunaat as they provided payments and goods that people had now come to rely on. Inuit had entered into the trade economy changing the way people hunted together. It was no longer hunting to provide for your family and others. Inuit were hunting and trapping to trade, many successful hunters and trappers managed to purchase rifles, ammunition and even boats with their furs (Crowe, 1991; Newman, 1991; Ashlee, 1984; Williamson, 1974; Usher, 1971).

Contact with the explorers, whalers, traders, missionaries and others had not only changed the way of life and Inuit beliefs. There were also impacts on the health of Inuit. Contact with new people brought Inuit into contact with illnesses and diseases that were not present, to which they had no immunities. This brought about health epidemics such as the outbreak of Tuberculosis (TB) in the 1940s and 50s. During early contact with the explorers and whalers, even illnesses such as the common cold could be fatal for Inuit (Grygier, 1994; Petrone, 1988).

The children that grew up in these settlements had a far different experience from that of their parents. The adults that had moved into the settlements had been born on the land and lived a relatively traditional way of life. They had encountered the Qallunaat but were still very capable of sustaining themselves. The generation that was to be raised in the settlement would be different. Throughout the 1950s, schooling was introduced with the establishment of Federal Day Schools in some communities (Matthiasson, 1992; ICI, 1979). Students were forced to leave their families to attend residential schools in

places such as Chesterfield Inlet, Churchill and Iqaluit (Walton & O’Leary, 2015; Petrone, 1988). Learning took place in the school in the Euro-Canadian fashion rather than the experiential learning that was practiced on the land by Inuit. Also, if children did not attend school then parents would face losing their family allowance. These education interventions also began to impact family dynamics and child rearing practices. Inuit children, for generations had learned from their parents and other kin, and were now being sent to school to learn from the Qallunaat. Inuit children learnt of things that were not applicable to the way of life in which they had been raised, things that were foreign to the world that they knew. The family connections and transmission of knowledge was to change forever (Walton & O’Leary, 2015; McGrath, 2011; Evic, 2010).

The Inuit learning cycle was at the heart of the Inuit way of life for centuries. During the twentieth century it was undermined, primarily through the introduction of institution based education in the Arctic. This disruption has had profound consequences, leaving younger generations insecure about their connections to Inuit language and culture (Evic, 2010: 55).

As emphasis was placed on schooling within the Euro-Canadian institution many Inuit children lost the deep connection to the land and Inuit way of life of our elders. Inuit children were being taught cultural values that were different from those of their parents. They were learning to live within this new way of life, the Qallunaat way.

In some cases, children were forced to attend school away from their families. Residential schools had been established across the country. The experiences at residential schools differed for many, some had good experiences and were excited to learn, some experienced home sickness, and others unfortunately suffered abuse at the hands of those that were supposed to be teaching them and, in the absence of their parents, caring for them (TRC, 2015; Walton & O’Leary, 2015). As people began to

come forward and share their stories of residential schools it was clear that there was a great deal of healing that needed to take place. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established in 2008 and for four (4) years documented these experiences. People shared their stories and as an outcome, 94 calls to action were provided in the final report to guide the reconciliation process for Indigenous peoples and settler-Canadians.

Inuit had in essence lost control over their everyday lives (Dahl, et al, 2000; Petrone, 1988). They were no longer the autonomous people that they had once been. Religion, education, justice, and social systems had changed and were imposed from outside Inuit culture (Figure 1). Inuit had left behind their own spiritual beliefs and converted to Christianity. The education of their children was now in the hands of others and curriculum was based within very different worldviews.

Inuit, who had once had their own systems in place to guide every aspect of their lives, were forced to adapt to a new way of being and living. The changes that have taken place have been swift, within 2-3 generations, and at times traumatic. Inuit were essentially made to believe that their culture, language, and way of life was insufficient - that there was a better way to live. Each community has their own stories but most follow a very similar trend as Figure 1, and Gjoa Haven is no exception.

### **3.2 *Uqsuqtuuq*: Gjoa Haven, Nunavut**

The Hamlet of Gjoa Haven sits on the southeastern shore of King William Island (Figure 5). In Inuktitut Gjoa Haven is known as *Uqsuqtuuq*, which refers to a place of “a lot of fat”, and as such the name is indicative of the abundance and use of sea mammal oil and blubber in the area. The name Gjoa Haven derives from the ship *The Gjoa* of the Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen. He and his crew overwintered in the area in 1904-

05 and learned a great deal of survival skills from the Inuit as he and his crew lived with them through the winter months (Brice-Bennett, 1976).

Although there were various seasonal camps located on King William Island, the Hamlet of Gjoa Haven was established in 1927 around the Hudson’s Bay trading post and the church, as was the case for many communities in the Arctic (Brice-Bennett, 1976). Inuit from the surrounding camps settled in Gjoa Haven through the 1940s – 1960s (Aqilriaq, 2012; Siksik, 2012; Konona, 2012a; Aglukkaq, 2012; Kogvik, 2012). The community is now home to Inuit who came from to different homelands, or “-miut” groups. This suffix is added to place names to refer to an area where a person is from (Bennett & Rowley, 2004; Correll, 1976). For instance, the *Nattilingmiut* are those known as the people from the place where there are seals, *Utkuhiksalingmiut* are people from the Back River area and were more reliant upon caribou and fish as they lived inland much of the year (Figure 2).



**Figure 2: -"miut" groups**  
 “miut” groups as depicted in a display at the Nattilik Heritage Centre in Gjoa Haven. Photo taken by Rebecca Mearns, February 2016.

The historical context of Gjoa Haven reflects the stories of much of the Arctic region. They too were affected by the impacts of explorers, traders, missionaries, and government administrators. This living history was shared throughout this project and provides insight into the changes that people have experienced over the last approximately three generations. Elders and the middle generation in Gjoa Haven shared stories of being born on the land and growing up learning how to survive on the land from their parents. Some recalled trading fox and other furs with George Porter and Angulalik, further west of Gjoa Haven (Aaluk, 2012; Akoak, 2012; Kogvik, 2012). At that time, students from Gjoa Haven were sent to Inuvik and Yellowknife to attend residential schools throughout the 1950s and 60s. Some spent a few years in Inuvik until the school was opened in Gjoa Haven in about 1966 (Aaluk, 2012). Once the school opened students still had to leave their community to attend high school in Yellowknife.

Today the populations of Gjoa Haven has grown to 1279 people of which approximately 95% are Inuit, and where the median age in the community is approximately 21 years of age, matching the median age in the territory. (Statistics Canada, 2011). The Quqshuun Ilihakvik and Qikiqtaq High School are the elementary and high schools located in the community. There are just under four hundred students enrolled in the two schools (GN, 2017). The Nunavut Arctic College also has a small Community Learning Centre where programs such as the Nunavut Teacher Education Program are offered.

## **4 Chapter: Qaujisarnirmut Tunngavigijakka – Methodologies**

### **4.1 Nunami illinniarniq: Learning from the Land**

The land is where learning takes place, it provides a foundation for learning while also being the teacher. Land camps provide for place-based learning in the context of understanding the environment around us. It is now a place for reconnecting and rebuilding the relationships with others and with the places from which Indigenous peoples have been removed and may feel distanced from. Land-based programs are being established to support wellness and Indigenous ways of life.

[The Chisasibi land-based healing program] is the first formal and structured land-based program in Eeyou Istchee (Cree ancestral territory). The program promotes personal, family and community wellness from a perspective rooted in *iiyiyu pimaatisiwin* (Cree way of life). Its mission is to strengthen the ability of participants to lead a healthy, fulfilling and resilient life. Ultimately, the program aims to improve the mental health of individuals so that they can effectively participate in the life of their family and community and make positive contributions to the collective development of their Nation (CNC, 2012). (Radu, et al., 2014 88)

As much as the land is a place to build relationships with others, it is also a place for self-reflection. The land and land camps can support Indigenous peoples in understanding themselves in relation to all that is around them. Land-based programs, such as those discussed above by Radu et al. (2014), are a place for promoting wellbeing for individuals which overall contributes to a healthy community. By reconnecting with the Cree way of life and being on the land individuals learn the values that support the skills to lead a healthy life, living in a good way.

To live a good life or to be living in a good way is linked to being on the land and being able to hunt, fish and gather other foods. Radu, et al, (2014) describe that this is the case in the Cree understanding of living a good life. It implies that the person has access to good food from the land. The health and wellbeing for a person is linked to the land.

The use of land camps for Indigenous learning and healing have become more prevalent within the past decade. Land-based programs such the Heiltsuk youth Koeye Camp in Bella Bella and their community school (Davis, 2011), or the Dechinta Bush University (Ballantyne, 2014; McDonald, 2014), or the land camps, promoting health and well-being, led by Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre (Healey, et al, 2016) are examples of programs that promote cultural continuity while bridging the ways of understanding. Land camps have been engaged to provide Indigenous peoples with access and agency in land-based activities. Many communities have experienced a disconnection from the land through colonization. As a result, the younger generations are often not fully engaged in land-based practices such as harvesting.

Heiltsuk social development program wanted to reconnect Heiltsuk youth with the land. In one generation, traditional harvesting practices had declined alarmingly. As a result, traditional knowledge, skills, and stories were not reaching the next generation, which was not gaining experience of being on the land and the ocean. Moreover, there were strong indicators of social disruption among the youth, including substance abuse. The social development programming began with the plan to construct a number of cabins throughout the traditional territories and to use them as the basis of youth on-the-land activities. Koeye became one of the sites of interest for a youth camp. (Davis, 2011: 22)

As Davis goes on to explain the Koeye River held both a cultural and spiritual significance to the Heiltsuk. Although the Koeye camp initially began in an effort to support at risk youth, it has expanded throughout the years to offer multiple programs to youth. The Qqs Project Society is a Heiltsuk First Nations non-profit organization that is focused on youth, culture and environment as stated on their website.

Our mainstay has always been our summer science and culture camps. Young people of all backgrounds can benefit from a greater connection with their culture and environment. Looking farther ahead, we see that our

culture and environment will one day be in the hands of our young people. Far beyond simply keeping kids out of trouble, we are creating a generation of leaders who will be invested in the things that make us strong. They in turn will lead the next generation to even greater strength. (qqsprojects.org, 2017)

Land camps are not a nostalgia to the way things once were, rather they are preparing Indigenous youth to be grounded in their cultural knowledge and land that they come from. Spending time on the land, hunting, trapping, fishing and learning from their Elders helps youth to build or strengthen connections to the places that have been home to generations before them. It is recognized that the youth will be the ones to carry this knowledge on to future generations. Leanne Simpson shares the importance of learning from the land. She shares a story from Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg or the Mississauga Ojibwe people (part of the Anishinaabeg Nation).

Our ancestors' primary concern in "educating" our young people was to nurture a new generation of Elders – of land based intellectuals, philosophers, theorists, medicine people, and historians who embodied Nishnaabeg intelligence in whatever time they were living in because they had lived their lives through Nishnaabeg intelligence. (Simpson, 2014:13)

The youth will one day be the ones to pass on the living histories of their lands. For Indigenous intelligence and knowledge of the land to live on it has to be done through sustaining the relationships between generations and with their homelands. Therefore, rebuilding the connections to homelands for the youth that have grown up in a very different way than their Elders, is important in many Indigenous contexts.

For Indigenous peoples the connection to the land can promote a healthy sense of self. Understanding our place within the environment around us and the importance of respecting not only the environment but the responsibility to all that we share the land with.

Indigenous people's sense of self is planted and rooted in the land. The sacred bond with the land is more substantial than a propertied relationship and entails responsibility to all living forms that are sustained from the soil: grasses, medicinal plants, fruit bushes and trees, insects that live off the plants, birds that in turn eat the insects, four-leggeds that forage on the grasses and hedges, and animal hunters that prey on smaller animals. (Wilson, 2001: 91)

I will later discuss this responsibility to all other living things within an Inuit context. It is a value that is shared amongst many other Indigenous societies. That everything is connected and is connected to knowing and being in the world. The land, and the nature of Indigenous understandings of the world, are inseparable from our knowledge and awareness. It is therefore understandable that in order to revitalize Indigenous knowledges that the land must be a part of relearning and renewal.

Just as Simpson emphasizes the land as pedagogy, Maureen Hogan, a professor at the University of Alaska Fairbanks and Sean Tokpok, an Inupiaq doctoral student, share their experience in Hogan's Indigenous epistemology course. Tokpok shares how he developed his own Inupiaq methodology. Hogan and Tokpok (2014) recount the teachings of Oscar Kawagley in discussion of the foundations of Yupiaq philosophy. *Ellam Yua*, as they explain, is the creative force that is found everywhere in nature. However, this too is linked to the term *Ella*, which describes everything from the weather, to awareness, to the universe and sky. Inuit have a very similar root word, *Sila*, which is defined in much the same terms as *Ella*. *Sila* is described by Qitsualik (2013: 29) as a super concept that is "arguably the most important concept in classic Inuit thought...occurring in senses that are intellectual, biological, psychological, environmental, locational, and geographical". Just as it is explained about *Ella* that there

is no encompassing term that is found in the English language, this is similar with *Sila*, and makes it difficult to meaningfully translate such concepts into English.

The land is our source of being and of knowing, not just the land but all the other living things that are found there. When described in our own languages and within our own ways of knowing and being, one can understand the importance of the land in learning and being. Arguing the importance of land camps in English falls short of the intellectual importance that is expressed in Indigenous languages. Indigenous knowledges, histories, languages and ceremonies cannot be removed from the land; all are interconnected. Hogan and Topkok explain this understanding of the world from a Yupiat perspective relying on the teachings of Oscar Kawagley.

All things are connected, so knowledge is holistic rather than compartmentalized. The Yup'ik rely heavily on observation as a way of knowing for survival, but unlike many Western scientists, “the Yupiat [also] accept that which is unknowable, uncontrollable, and immeasurable” (1999, p.14). This awareness reflects a much broader-yet-deeper epistemology than most of my students are used to, as well as a healthy tolerance for ambiguity. (Hogan & Topkok, 2014: 58)

From an Inuit perspective, Qitsualik (2013) describes the land in a very similar way as *nalunaqtuq*, “it is not completely known”. There is ambiguity, however, as being on the land allows you to begin to understand and be accepting of what is unknown or uncontrollable. The land and environment are far beyond our control. Through observation and being on the land people can gain some understanding of patterns and places, but the land also teaches us that we must be tolerant of that which we cannot control or expect. This helps us to take what comes our way and figure out how to approach a situation, such as a change in weather.

Learning from the land means being grounded in the teachings within the pedagogy of the land. The knowledge that has been passed down through generations is immersed in an understanding of the land. Leanne Simpson explains the importance of teaching the next generation of land base intellectuals to support the continuation of our Indigenous ways of knowing and how this supports decolonization.

We cannot carry out the kind of decolonization our ancestors set in motion if we don't create a generation of land based, community based intellectuals and cultural producers who are accountable to our nations and whose life work is concerned with the regeneration of these systems, rather than meeting the overwhelming needs of the western academic industrial complex or attempting to "Indigenize the academy" by bringing Indigenous Knowledges into the academy on the terms of the academy itself. (Simpson, 2014: 13)

In many Inuit communities, such as my own, land programs have been offered for years through elementary and secondary school. While growing up in *Panniqtuuq* I had the opportunity to attend both spring and fall camps as part of school. The length of time spent at the camp would depend on the grade level of the students. Once we were in high school we would spend a week out at the camp, going on day trips hunting and fishing. As the years go on, the school faced funding issues to keep the program going. The camps are a community priority so a great deal of fundraising is done at the community level to ensure that the spring camp program continues. Tamalik, as she describes the Aupilaajuk's recounting of how tools are produced reflects the current situation of land camp feasibility. In order for schools to run land programming there is a need for funds to hire guides and to provide camp supplies. However, the teachings that are inherent in the time spend at camp do not require money.

Land skills training is economic as well as spiritual and cultural in nature. Aupilaarjuk's tools require very little, if any money to produce. The

southern curriculum prepares students for the wage economy. The Nunavut curriculum works to offer skills for both, but a great deal of pressure is on the school system to be on par with the South too, so that students leaving for school are prepared for higher education. Land education is not delivered on its own terms; rather it is made to fit into the school structure. (McGrath, 2011: 260-61)

The land programs that I attended throughout my own schooling in *Panniqtuuq* were just a short time during the school year. We would return to our regular classes once the camp was finished. It was structured into the school year but was not the basis for much of the learning that took place in classes. Although it was an important time in the school year it was not linked to the classroom work that we were involved in before or after the camp.

The approach to land-based education and camps differs in each community. While I was in Gjoa Haven in 2012 the students partook in the land camps facilitated through the research project, and were provided credit for the time they spent out on the land as part of Career and Technology Studies credits. This was not the case for the 2013 land camp, where it took place independently of the school with the support of the local *Tahiurtiit* (Justice) committee. The schools in Gjoa Haven, much like other schools across Nunavut, have some land programs of their own. These are often ranging from day trips to about weeklong trips for the older students. These land programs engage the Elders from the community.

But once again, why the land? Why land camps? In Gjoa Haven, during the planning workshops for this project, land camps were identified as the preferred place for knowledge transfer to take place (Laidler & Grimwood, 2010). Being on the land is seen as critical to imparting the skills that will prepare youth to become *Inummarik*. (Qitsualik, 2013; Takano, 2005). Takano (2005) worked with the *Paariaqtuqtut* land program in

Igloolik, NU, organized by the *Inullariit Society*. This program emphasizes the importance of land skills, as well as Inuit knowledge and values to be passed on to youth. This knowledge allows youth not only to be skilled in surviving on the land, but also prepares them to live as strong and resilient individuals within their community. Learning on the land provides young people with the skills to cope with life in the community and helps to broach the rapid social change that has been, and still is, experienced.

For elders and other community members, being on the land would deliver everything necessary to learn as a whole person, an Inuk. This involved land-skills, values, knowledge and other interrelated elements they would need in order to fully sustain their lives in contemporary Igloolik, not only physically but also emotionally and spiritually. The implication was that learning through the land would equip young people to cope with life in the midst of rapid social change. (Takano, 2005: 482-483)

Being on the land is integral to becoming a person. Growing up with the knowledge gained in this process is inseparable from the land. Being and becoming Inuk is tied to place and the living histories within place. Connections between generations and an understanding of these living histories can prepare youth to be successful individuals and build their connections within their communities. In the context of the Igloolik camps the Elders and community members described the importance of land.

Inullariit and the community members regarded 'being on the land' as fundamental to keeping the culture intact. Therefore, it was inseparable from 'being and becoming an Inuk' which was supported by an awareness of connection with time, place and the 'web of life'. (Takano, 2005: 482)

As in the context of other Indigenous peoples, it is recognized that for the renewal of Inuit knowledge there is a need for access and agency of young people in practicing their culture, knowledge and language. To do so means having access to the current generation of knowledge holders and access to the land.

Access to elders' land knowledge is urgently required by Inuit youth to facilitate their own enhanced agency. Where the school system fails to do this, they fail to prepare Inuit youth to have access to their homeland skills and competencies. They also fail to support their wellbeing and survival in their land and beyond. The results of this are evident in the increased dependence on welfare and the rising poverty levels in the north. (McGrath, 2011: 260)

I believe we are moving towards teaching our Inuit youth that there are multiple ways to be successful. Being successful is not only measured by financial gain or a piece of paper that confirms your western education. Being well versed in the Inuit language, culture and understanding of the land is also a measure of success. For some, it means finding a balance of living within two ways of knowing, being and doing. Success must be measured within its own context, being a competent Inuk is no less a success than being able to write a thesis.

#### **4.2 Indigenous Methodologies**

Wilson (2008) defines a research paradigm as a set of beliefs that guide our actions, including: ontology (the way we view reality); epistemology (how we think about/know our reality); axiology (ethics and morals); and methodology (how we gain knowledge about our reality). As described by Indigenous scholars there are interconnections between epistemology, ontology, methodology and axiology (McGrath, 2011; Wilson, 2008). Wilson (2008) describes an Indigenous epistemology and ontology as being made up of our relationships and the axiology and methodology as being the accountability to our relationships. Within Western research contexts these are often presented separately, but are inseparable according to Indigenous approaches to research (McGrath, 2011; Wilson, 2001; 2007; 2008; Rigney, 1999).

Throughout my undergraduate studies and early in my Master's program I had to take a series of required theory courses. I tried to make my work fit within these theoretical frameworks but when writing about the realities in Nunavut it was often difficult to reflect my understanding of the world. Although I do not solely identify as Inuk, and have been brought up very much in western schooling, it just never felt quite right.

To access higher learning, Indigenous people are entering into colonial spaces, an experience akin to living in another's house. Such a metaphor suitably, and poignantly, encapsulates what it means for Indigenous people to participate in western academia. (Kovach, 2009: 55)

As I began writing and reading I found myself drawn to the writing and stories of other Indigenous scholars. Their descriptions of Indigenous research made sense to me. I could relate to their experiences, their research journeys, and the stories that they share to explain it all. They created the space for me to express my experiences in a way that made sense to me; I could tell my story. I questioned whether it would be alright if I relied on Indigenous scholarly work as I wrote my thesis. Do I need to validate the Inuit knowledge emanating from this project within the western academic ways of knowing? I had spent six years already trying to make my reality fit within other research paradigms.

We exist and we are here. Our knowledge is valid, real and concrete. I do not make comparisons with eurowestern methods of searching. There is no need to. There are many pathways to knowledge. (Absolon, 2011: 12)

Although I wanted to solely rely on sources from Indigenous scholars there are instances where I have quoted non-Indigenous authors and researchers. However, it is Indigenous methodologies that have guided much of my research. More specifically, the *Qaggiq* model, which I will introduce shortly, is the foundation for this thesis. I am still,

however, completing my thesis in the western academic way. I have tried to intertwine stories and my experience in a way that allows me to share in my own way. This is far removed from the tradition of researcher being objective.

Indeed, the weed of unconscious hypocrisy too-often invades the garden of intellectual endeavour, especially when a dominant power — believing in its own myths, such as that of objectivity — sets cultures on the scale for comparison. (Qitsualik, 2013:25)

Rather, in line with Indigenous methodologies, this project has brought me into new relationships. I have met Inuit in a community that is not my home. I have worked with the community in a project that was developed by them. The focus on land camps allowed for relationships to be developed within the community but also allowed me to connect and build relationships with the groups as well. Building these relationships is key to knowledge sharing.

All of our stories teach that in Indigenous methodologies, relations, interrelations and inner relations are all crucial to knowledge production – whether Indigenous epistemology meets western traditions or where western traditions come up to meet Indigenous epistemologies. We have all deeply engaged in the transformation at such intersections of being and knowing. There is a lot required of us in this process, as Wilson states, “[i]f research doesn’t change you as a person, then you haven’t done it right.” (McGrath, 2011: 172)

Throughout Indigenous methodologies, and in Tamalik McGrath's dissertation, there is a great deal of emphasis placed on relationality and how our knowledge lives on through the relationships that we build with others. The quality of these relationships is vital. The principles of *pittiarniq* and *suliniq* along with *Inuuqttigiingniq* provide this foundation. In other words, to maintain healthy relationships one must be good to others (*pittiarniq*) and be truthful (*suliniq*) (McGrath, 2011). There is much to learn from our

Indigenous communities, from our Elders, and from our youth. There are also many ways in which we can learn from one another.

We can access this vast body of knowledge through our cultures by singing, dancing, feasting, dreaming, participating in ceremony, apprenticing with Elders, practicing our lifeways and living our knowledge, by watching, listening and reflecting in a good way. Ultimately we access this knowledge through the quality of our relationships, and the personalized contexts we collectively create. (Simpson, 2014: 94)

Our stories, our songs, our culture, the skills required to be *Inummarik*, or a skilled whole person, provide so much knowledge. Relationships are key to access these teachings. Our relationships with others are what guides us through our learning experiences. Also, the relationship to place is important, allowing knowledge to be passed on through generations. Places such as where land camps take place, allow different generations to come together in context, providing access to the natural world and the stories that live there.

The foundations of Indigeneity are these: values that privilege the interrelationships among the spiritual, the natural, and the self; a sacred orientation to place and space; a fluidity of knowledge exchange between past, present, and future; and an honouring of language and orality as an important means of knowledge transmission. (Greenwood & de Leeuw, 2007: 50)

At the basis of Indigenous methodologies is the understanding that all is connected. Inuit knowledge comes from the careful observations of the world that surrounds us thus leading to the understanding of who we are and how we are a part of the world that surrounds us. Jackie Price (2007) explains the importance of both the practical experience of learning hands-on and learning through relationships with others. Being on the land and participating in harvesting activities or other camp tasks allows for

hands-on learning while also listening to the stories of the Elders to understand their perspectives.

Inuit study their environment and their interactions with the land, weather, animals and other individuals. Inuit need to be alert throughout their experiences, providing Inuit the opportunity to understand the technicalities of the experience. This alertness is necessary, as I argue knowledge is created through intellectual reflection on action resulting from practical experiences or experiences resulting from natural occurrences. As both the technicalities of an experience, and the knowledge gained from it are shared amongst Inuit through dialogue and interaction, this ensures that individuals are aware and open to different experience, realities, and perspectives. (Price, 2007: 35)

Knowledge, worldviews, and values are built within the context of the land, language and the relationships with all around us, including: *naalangniq* “listening”, *pittiarniq* “being a good person”, *ujjiqsuiniq* “being observant”, and *suliniq* “truthfulness”. The land camps in Gjoa Haven were an opportunity for youth to engage in these methodologies, in particular places and with particular people. Their practical experience of the land and hands-on experience of land-based skills through their interactions with the Elders contributed to their own knowledge production. The land and the Elders were the teachers in these instances. This helps to build the experience of the land for the youth, which they will reflect on as they continue to come to know.

### **4.3 *Qaggiq* Model**

In 2011, Janet Tamalik McGrath defended her doctoral dissertation at Carleton University. Tamalik grew up in *Talurruaq* “Taloyoak” and *Kangiq&iniq* “Rankin Inlet”, Nunavut where her parents had moved to work. Tamalik has been immersed in Inuktitut language and culture as she grew up and is devoted to language revitalization and cross-cultural synergies. I had met Tamalik about ten years prior while I was attending NS. She

was teaching Inuktitut at the time, and as NS students we attended one of her classes at Carleton University. When we met again at the beginning of my Undergraduate studies she invited me to attend her defense and provided me with a copy of her thesis upon its completion. As I listened to her describe the *Qaggiq* model and the work she did with Aupilaarjuk (an esteemed Elder, philosopher, hunter, and Inuit knowledge holder) from Rankin Inlet, NU, I was excited to read about this model. Together they developed the *Qaggiq model*, a framework for Inuktitut knowledge renewal, and I realized it was what I had been searching for throughout my university career. I was able to connect with what Tamalik had written and the knowledge that was shared by Aupilaarjuk.

This was the space that I had been looking for; the *Qaggiq* model had created the opportunity for me to work within a framework that I was familiar. Although I had found some connection with other Indigenous methodologies, Tamalik's *Qaggiq* model resonated with me, defined my own experiences. It was something that I connected with as I read, and it helped me explain what I had been thinking about but had been unable to articulate.

For me, the academic environment in practice, created paralysis because there was no real conceptual space for Inuktitut epistemology. I have felt Inuit culture to be tokenized, idealized, and objectified; in academia it was not the lived experience that it was for me. There are different streams of study: Inuit Studies, Inuit-Related Research, Critical Inuit Studies – but I had to ask, “Where are the Inuit?” Until very recently, they were not in academia; and there are still very few particularly in graduate studies. (McGrath, 2011: 174)

As Tamalik states, there are not a large number of Inuit students in graduate studies. Of those that are, we are separated across institutions and disciplines. Of my undergraduate classes, it was often only in my Canadian Studies classes where I had

other Inuit in the class with me. In some of my Sociology classes there were one or two other Indigenous students.

In the early years of my undergraduate studies I took both Theory and Methods courses. In my sociological theory course, I read the likes of Marx, Weber and Durkheim. Although I found some interest in what I was reading, I often had trouble connecting this theoretical thought to my own experiences. My methods courses introduced me to both quantitative and qualitative research methods. However, the focus on being objective in research and the methods of research were disconnected from how I had learned throughout my life.

In my research proposal for this thesis I described my methods within my understanding from course work. I had listed methods such as: participant observation, in-depth interviews, participatory mapping, workshops and focus groups. However, my methodology was based in the *Qaggiq* model and Indigenous methodologies. Although this does describe what I have done in this research project, I want to redefine how I explain the research methods.

When I read of Inuit it was from an outsider perspective. For years Inuit Studies has been dominated by Western scholars writing about Inuit. This takes me back to Tamalik's quote above, where are the Inuit in all of this? The *Qaggiq* model answered this question for me. Here was Inuit knowledge presented, the space has been made for other Inuit scholars to begin exploring and defining Inuktitut knowledge renewal. Tamalik claims in her dissertation that knowledge renewal requires an understanding that there is a need to renew relationships. As Tamalik states,

The *Qaggiq* Model of dialogue is an example of a conceptual shared-space for inter-group, intra-group and intergenerational

relationship renewal. I developed the model through an Inuktitut language and epistemological-centered approach to research in order to understand the complex interrelationships between Inuit traditional and modern circumstances. (McGrath, 2011: 314)

Through her conversations with Aupilaarjuk, Tamalik worked to present a model for Inuit knowledge renewal based in Inuit knowledge. The *Qaggiq* model focuses on the interconnections of Aupilaarjuk’s triad, which includes: *Inuusiqattiarniq*, “the Individual”; *Inuuqatigiingniq*, “the Collective”; and, *Niqiqainnarniq*, “Livelihood” and the Indigenous peoplehood matrix of Corntassel and Holm, which includes: language, living histories, land, and ceremony (McGrath, 2011: 252). Tamalik adapted the Indigenous peoplehood matrix to reflect Inuit philosophy. Rather, she replaces ceremony with culture which resonates more with Inuktitut and Inuit philosophy (Figure 3). Inuit abandoned ceremony and rituals, as Tamalik explains, through the introduction of Christianity (McGrath, 2011: 217)

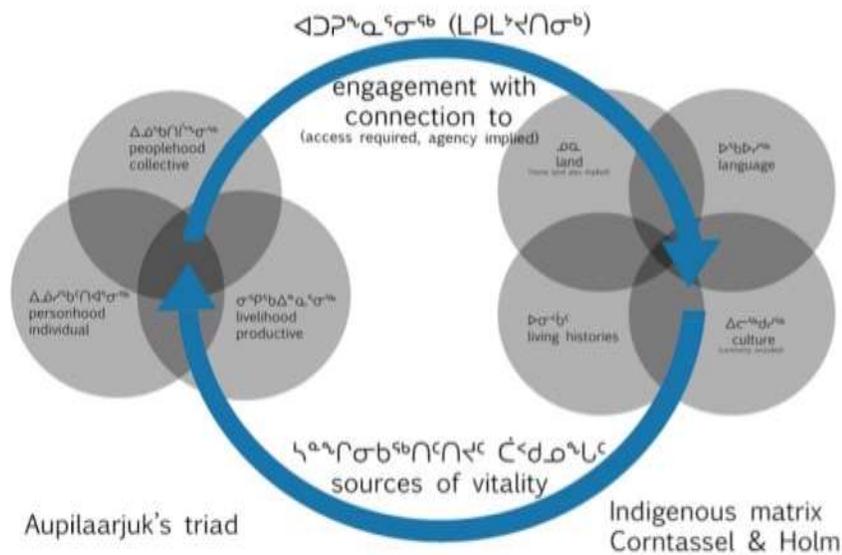


Figure 3: *Qaggiq* Model, Venn diagram format McGrath, 2011: 252

Aupilaarjuk's triad demonstrates that in order for there to be a strong collective, or community, there is a need for healthy individuals that are contributing to the collective. There is also the need for a source of livelihood, in Inuktitut Aupilaarjuk refers to *niiqainnarniq* or "always having meat". When Inuit lived on the land solely in a subsistence economy this source of livelihood would have come from the land and the animals. Today, living in a mixed economy, the sources of livelihood can come from different sources including wages; however, it comes back to being able to sustain the individual and the collective.

*Inuusiqattiarniq*, "living a healthy or good life", is just one piece of the relationships that make up Aupilaarjuk's triad. Living a good life is as important to the individual well-being as it is to being part of a healthy collective. It is implied here that to be of good character, or to lead a good life, then the person has a solid foundation of values that have come from listening well to their parents and to others. Through living a good life, you are also to be good to those that are around you. The benchmark, as you could call it, to living a good life in Inuktitut terms would be to become *Inummarik*. Therefore, the triad is central to supporting the pursuit of being *Inummarik*. Rachel Qitsualik also defines what it is to be *Inummarik*, and why it is an important model.

The *Inummarik*, too, is a ghost-concept, a model alone, though it is one toward which Inuit have aspired since ancient times. This model is the free human, sovereign over the self, respectful of the self-sovereignty of others. It is the human whose awareness not only renders self-sovereignty possible, but comprehends how self-sovereignities — those of others in society — synergize toward a system of self-perpetuating health. (Qitsualik, 2013: 32)

In Qitsualik's explanation, it is evident that to be *Inummarik* is to be self-aware but also to be aware of others. It is how you understand your well-being and knowing that you too

contribute to the health and well-being of others. In turn, your individual well-being is based on the relationships with those around you, treating others well and adhering to the rules and values of society will support your own well-being. All is connected and is equally important, just as Aupilaarjuk's triad is inseparable from the Indigenous peoplehood matrix.

The combining of Aupilaarjuk's triad and the Indigenous Peoplehood matrix demonstrates the critical importance of *access* and *agency* for continued knowledge production and Inuit societal wellbeing. (McGrath, 2011: 254)

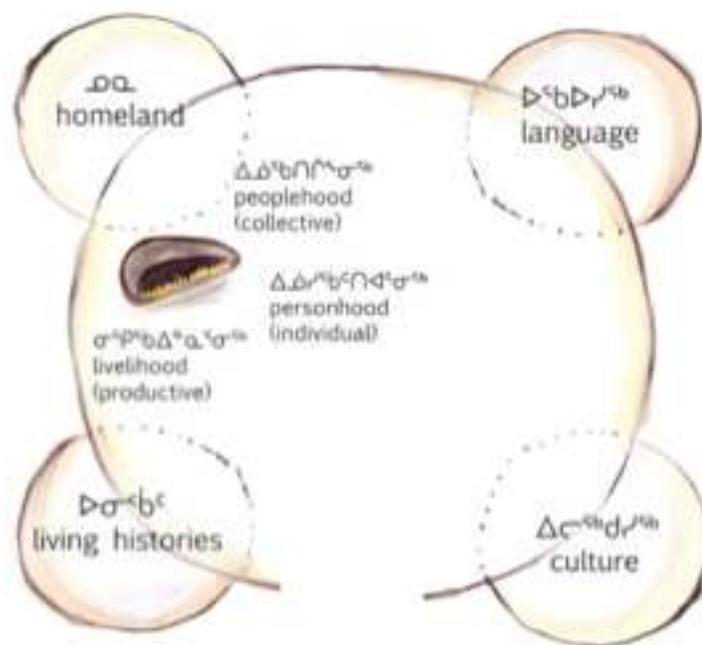
Figure 3 also demonstrates the importance of access and agency to the four pillars: *Nuna* (land), *Uqausiq* (language), *Iliqqusiq* (culture), and *Unipkaat* (living histories) for knowledge renewal. Knowledge renewal and ongoing knowledge production can support the well-being or vitality of individuals and society.

As Tamalik and Aupilaarjuk continued their conversations (McGrath, 2011) the venn diagram in Figure 3 is further refined into the *Qaggiq* model. A *qaggiq* is a large *iglu* (snow house) that was often used as a place for a group of people gather for different occasions, such as celebrations.

*Qaggiq* is a space for gathering, renewing relationships, refreshing skills through games, a place where stories and songs are shared, and community is affirmed. If there are tensions, they will be brought out appropriately because the wellbeing of the group relies on harmony. (McGrath, 2011: 239)

Aupilaarjuk describes one particular way of building a *qaggiq* where four smaller *igluit* (plural of *iglu*) provide the foundation for the walls of the larger *iglu*. Therefore, this *Qaggiq* model (Figure 4) has the four smaller *igluit* that provide a strong foundation for the larger structure. *Nuna*, *Uqausiq*, *Unipkaat*, and *Iliqqusiq* are the foundation for

Inuit knowledge. Within the *qaggiq* is the *qulliq*, the “soap stone lamp”, which was the source of warmth and light during the cold winter months. The *qulliq* represents Aupilaarjuk’s triad, where the stone base of the lamp represents *inuusatigiingniq* (the collective), as it holds the wick that produces the flame that represents *inuusiqaattiarniq* (the individual), and also holds the oil or *niquqainnarniq* (the livelihood – which also feeds the flame of the individual) (McGrath, 2011) (Figure 4).



**Figure 4: The *Qaggiq* Model**  
McGrath, 2011: 252

This representation of the *Qaggiq* model further demonstrates how we are all so interconnected. For the *Qulliq* to burn and provide heat and light you need the base, the oil and the wick. The stone base is also not a lamp without the oil and the flame. For there to be oil and a wick there needs to be access to the sources of livelihood on the land. To understand how to collect the oil and the wick there must be an understanding of the

land and how it provides livelihood, and this would come through the culture, language, and living histories of the collective. This knowledge exchange happens through our relationship to others.

In the metaphor of *Qaggiq*, the *qulliq* that is lit within provides the warmed space for engagement of knowledge relating to land, language, stories and ceremony to support survival. Collective areas of knowledge are shared and reaffirmed in the gathering of people. The gathering of people represents the renewal of relationships. This also represents knowledge renewal, as knower renewal is supported. Both shelter and warmth are required for gatherings of people, thus the *qaggiq* and the *qulliq* work together, much like the two sets of concepts work together to bring people back together. (McGrath, 2011: 247)

The *Qaggiq* model can thus be described as creating a conceptual space in which Inuit knowledge renewal can take place but also a space in which *Qallunaat* (non-Inuit) can learn, through listening, experience and observation, to support this renewal. This is what McGrath refers to as a *Qaggiq* dialogue, which encompasses fully participating in the Inuit renewal process.

Everyone in contact with Inuktitut knowledge systems needs to enter into this dialogue to understand their role and responsibilities as this dialogue is about accounting relationally. Relationships in this framework involve people-to-people, and people-to-environment-and-cosmos. The ethics and responsibilities within those relationships, in the Inuk way are mapped out in language, living histories, stories, songs, ritual – in a word: *iliqqusiq* (culture). (McGrath, 2011: 255)

The project in Gjoa Haven is an opportunity to begin a *Qaggiq* dialogue between researchers and project collaborators to facilitate shared learning through the application of the *Qaggiq* model within an Elder-Youth camp setting. Being on the land allows for this learning to take place in connection with the environment and the cosmos.

Healey and Tagak (2014: 8) discuss the concept of *Iqqaumaqatigiinniq* “a concept that all thoughts, or all knowing come in to one.” The stories that have been shared through the interviews and the experiences of the camp and my time in Gjoa Haven come into one through these living histories. Land, culture and language are all conveyed through our living histories. Through each interview it becomes apparent that all of these pillars of the *Qaggiq* model intersect and support one another. At the centre of all this we have the individual, community and livelihood that serve to ensure the continuation of all these things.

Throughout the interviews and during my time at the camps the stories that were shared often flowed together with peoples’ stories intertwining. Mary Aqilriak talked about when she and her husband moved to Gjoa Haven. He was picked up by a plane that was bringing the children to residential school. One of those children was our translator for the interview, Simon Okpakok. So as she told the story she referred to part of Simon’s story as well. Our stories come in to one especially within our communities. To hear this history directly from those that experienced it is so different from learning it from a book or in a class. I was teaching Inuit History at NS at the time that I began working on this thesis. As I listened to the stories the Elders told me I could relate that to what we were teaching in the history class at Nunavut Sivuniksavut (Figure 1). These stories intersect but they also connect to a broader history of the North that brings together so many.

#### **4.4 *Sananiq* - Craft Epistemology**

*Sananiq* refers to the act of “making things” (McGrath, 2011), and this thesis is just that, something that I have made. I have learned to make many things throughout my life. I learned to bake and cook when I was young and was taught to sew many different

items such as parkas, mitts, and hats. *Sananiq* has always been calming and almost therapeutic for me. All these things that I have learned to make have been taught to me by others. Whether baking with my Granny or sewing and crocheting with my Mum; it has been through these relationships that making and learning has taken place.

(...), *sananiq*/craft for me, is a metaphor for thinking, thought and knowledge. These processes – of craft and making - are primarily relational and social and thus they are transmitted through *relationships*. Knowledge produced is intended to be practical and thereby facilitate community and social wellbeing. (Tamalik, 2011: 284)

*Sananiq* for me has informed much of the Inuktitut knowledge that I have received over the years. It has taken place in different situations with different people at different times in my life but has always involved the building of relationships with other Inuit women. I first began to learn to sew traditional garments in sewing class when my family moved to Pangnirtung. The sewing teacher was an Elder from the community and I remember sewing mittens out of duffle with embroidered flowers as decoration on the back of the hand.

I recall learning to sew a parka in my adolescence. I had often watched my mother sewing and admired the beautiful products that she created for me that were so warm. I wanted to make a parka of my own and asked my Mum to help me do so. As I had observed her sewing I had some idea of how it was done and she simply guided me through the process. She advised me of how to cut out the pattern ensuring enough room between the layers to allow them all to fit together. Parkas are now made with store purchased textiles as opposed to the skins that were once used by Inuit. Several layers go into making a parka to ensure warmth but it is also light to allow for ease of movement.

I completed my parka with my mother's guidance and in the end I had a product that I had made and was also able to use. This felt like such a great accomplishment as I remember the pride that my mother expressed in my completion of the project. I have made many parkas since then, and as I continue to develop my skills I begin to explore different patterns and materials to use. Sometimes I include seal skin or I make different types of garments to wear for different occasions. For instance, for my graduation from my undergraduate studies I designed and made a pull over top that I wore for my Indigenous honouring ceremony. It was a plain black pull over shirt that was trimmed with seal skin at the bottom hem and around the collar. I now use this shirt on other occasions and I take great pride in telling people that I had made it for such an occasion. I will describe to people how my mother had taught me the skills that I have in sewing thus connecting me to my relations.

Learning other sewing skills has allowed me to build relationships with others that I have met during my time living in and travelling in the Arctic. I worked in the community of Kimmirut, NU on southern Baffin Island for about a year, and it was there that I learned to prepare seal skins and caribou skins and made my very first pair of *kamiit* (seal skin boots). I attended a sewing group with a number of women from the community. As the Elders who taught the course would show us how skins were prepared they would also tell stories. For me, this allowed a connection to be formed as I gained an understanding of their lives that had been spent on the land in the area surrounding Kimmirut. This supported building relationships not only between us but between the land and the environment that surrounded us. In each case the knowledge that is passed on in the craft making has come from those before us. Our ancestors relied

on *sananiq* for survival and through relationality this knowledge has been passed on through generations.

One evening I was sitting, crocheting, thoughts of my thesis rolling around in my head. The dread of looming deadlines, the worries of trying to represent the stories of others, being behind in the work that I was supposed to be doing. There are some things I can make with such ease and precision, like taking a single length of yarn and weaving it together to make something beautiful and practical. It was my Mum who had taught me to crochet, so in each item that I make there is a piece of the knowledge that she has passed on to me. There is a connection, stitches, holding that relationship together.

Making or writing this thesis was a very different experience of *sananiq*. At times I find myself trying to maintain those connections between the community of Gjoa Haven and with the University. It is something that I have struggled with throughout this process. Trying to write and tell a story while being so far removed from it has been difficult. Trying to write about being on the land and learning on the land, trying to write about my culture and language while sitting in the city seemed impossible to me at times. As Rachel Qitsualik (2013: 27) states, “Large urban environments, as opposed to fluid “wilderness” or “nature,” engender radically different expectations from the world; different realities, so to speak.” Processing the experiences from one world and reality while trying to live and work in Ottawa had challenged me greatly. Even when I moved back to Nunavut I had the challenge of balancing work, family time, and my thesis. Being out on the land, being with family, or even crafting were often far more appealing than sitting in front of a computer.

Throughout my time working on this I have gone from being a full-time student, to withdrawing from my program, to being a teacher at Nunavut Sivuniksavut, returning to the Master's program part-time, and finally moving back North to work for an Inuit organization. There were times where I was frustrated, overwhelmed and ready to walk away from the whole thing. But there was always the thought of this unfinished work. I was listening to the interview with Simon Okpakok, the community researcher who worked on the project with us, and as he spoke of making things I could easily relate to what it was he was saying.

At a young age I started to make things, miniature hunting tools. That is what I had to learn and I've been told that if you start something you have to complete it, even if you don't like what you make, finish it because if you leave it it is going to get harder and harder to make for you.  
(Okpakok, 2012)

These words have pushed me to continue to work on this thesis to complete it, this thing that I am making. There were many bumps along to road as I tried to get words onto paper to share what I have learned and what was shared with me during my time in Gjoa Haven. There was a time during this process that I did have to set the thesis work aside and focus on other things. Simon's words rang true and it was certainly harder to pick up where I left off and push on to try to complete my work in a timely manner. There were times where I did not like what I was making and where I wanted to walk away from it all. I came back to this quote many times and I have to thank Simon for sharing this lesson. I am so thankful that he did as it has enabled me to find my focus and to draw meaning from what I have been working on while listening and learning throughout the research process.

In the end it is my hope that, much like weaving together the crocheted yarn, that my thesis will bring together these stories, along with my own to share a piece of what I have learned. The hope that I can make something that is beautiful in a way but practical as well.

## **5 Chapter: Qaujisarnirmut Atulauqtakka - Methods**

### **5.1 Project Background**

This Master's research was part of a larger project funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) that had emerged from an earlier SSHRC Research Development Initiative grant. My thesis supervisor, Dr. Gita Ljubicic, initially worked with Wally Porter (the Kitikmeot Inuit Association Community Liaison Officer in 2010) to facilitate a research planning workshop in Gjoa Haven that was a catalyst for the whole project.

In February of 2010, the research planning meeting took place in Gjoa Haven. It was here that community members identified concerns surrounding research, especially research on wildlife. Through the workshop a joint research process was developed along with community research priorities being identified as: 1) establishing a semi-annual Elder – Youth camp; 2) passing on cultural values and skills to Inuit youth; 3) understanding gender roles and generational communication in the context of changing lifestyles; 4) evaluating caribou health; 5) evaluating caribou food quality and access; and, 6) understanding the benefits of country food for Inuit health and diet (Laidler and Grimwood, 2010).

Through workshop discussions and with feedback from the Elders three main objectives of the SSHRC research project were developed: 1) investigate cross-cultural applications of Indigenous research methodologies in an Inuit context; 2) explore the role of place in northern education, Inuit identity, and human-animal relations by evaluating place-based learning from varying gender, age, and cultural perspectives; and, 3) understand how community-driven research and education can foster community health

and prosperity through practical, policy, and theoretical analyses. These objectives, in unison with the research priorities of the community, have guided my research and work throughout this project.

With these research priorities and objectives identified, Gita submitted a proposal to SSHRC for project funding. The proposed research project was entitled “Connecting Inuit elders and youth: Learning about caribou, community, and well-being.” and was to be conducted in partnership with the community of Gjoa Haven and the Kitikmeot Inuit Association (KIA). I joined the research team at the beginning of the project in 2011. I had the opportunity to review the SSHRC funding proposal as well as the Nunavut Research Institute (NRI) research license process and the ethics application to Carleton University, all of which I discuss further in this chapter.

### **5.1.1 Piliriqatigilauqtakka - Those I worked with**

When I was first introduced to the project and the Gjoa Haven research priorities I was especially interested in the land camps and how these camps can be utilized to pass on cultural values and skills to the youth. The importance of land-based programs is often discussed throughout Nunavut, and many schools and communities in Nunavut incorporate land-based elements to learning. However, there was limited literature discussing why this was important in the Nunavut context.

Working on the project also meant working together with both people from the community and other researchers. I will share a little about each of the people that I worked with throughout this project.

Gita Ljubicic is an Associate Professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at Carleton University, the Project Leader and my Thesis

Supervisor. Gita was teaching a Northern Lands class during my Undergrad, and I decided to take her class as she had worked on sea ice research in *Panniqtuuq*, where she had stayed with my parents during her field work. She was well known by people in Pang, either as *Sikuliriji* (the one who studies ice) or *Gitakutaa* (Gita who is tall). When I completed her class I was in the third year of my undergrad and she encouraged me to consider pursuing a Master's degree. We discussed the SSHRC project proposal that she was working on, and so it all went that we ended up working together on this Gjoa Haven project.

Simon Okpakok is an independent interpreter/translator, educator, hunter, Elder, and Inuit knowledge holder in Gjoa Haven, originally from *Utkuhiksalik* (Back River), to the south of Gjoa Haven on the mainland. He has worked with us throughout the life of the project as a mentor, coordinator, and guide, and we could not have made it happen without him. He joined the project as Research Coordinator and worked within the community to ensure that planning meetings happened and was instrumental in camp planning and facilitation. He also provided his amazing talent as an interpreter at the camps, in meetings, and throughout the interviews. He has provided a great deal of guidance to each of us as we worked together on this project.

Sean Robertson joined the project as a Postdoctoral fellow in 2012 and shortly after started a faculty position at the University of Alberta in the Faculty of Native Studies. He conducted fieldwork and camps in the summers of 2012 and 2013. Sean and I worked together on the camps and on interviews in the community in 2012, and in verification workshops in 2016.

Each of us brought our differing experiences to this project and each of us has a different perspective on these experiences. Although we were all taking part and working together on the same project the outcomes and what we have learned are as diverse as the group itself. While I focused on the land camps and interview discussions of Inuit knowledge transfer between generations, others focused on other aspects of the camps and drew different learnings from the interviews. Gita has worked with Simon to develop a series of articles regarding caribou herds, herd health and the connections to the community on King William Island. Sean's focus has been discussing therapeutic landscapes and the healing that can take place on the land.

## **5.2 Aulaarniq (Being on the land): Land Camps**

In the early planning workshops Elders and hunters emphasized the importance of caribou to community health and diet, and in passing on cultural skills and values (Laidler & Grimwood, 2010) They wanted to share their knowledge of caribou, and the priority in this was to share their knowledge with youth in context, on the land. Learning skills on the land is directly connected to harvesting and preparing caribou for consumption, and sharing the harvest with others. Therefore, facilitating land camps became the primary emphasis during research visits. Three Elder-youth camps were facilitated in each summer between 2011-2013. As I have previously discussed, I had withdrawn from the University in late 2012 to early 2014. It was for this reason that I did not participate in the 2013 land camp. Through the workshops and project planning the Elders and hunters emphasized the importance of land camps with Elders and youth as a way to share Inuit knowledge.

The youth were expected to observe and participate in all aspects of the camp, including helping in setting up camp, fetching water, picking plants for building a fire, and by working together to support life in camp. The land camps were a place where we all worked together, everyone is expected to be respectful and to help others when needed. Learning and teaching can take place fluidly.

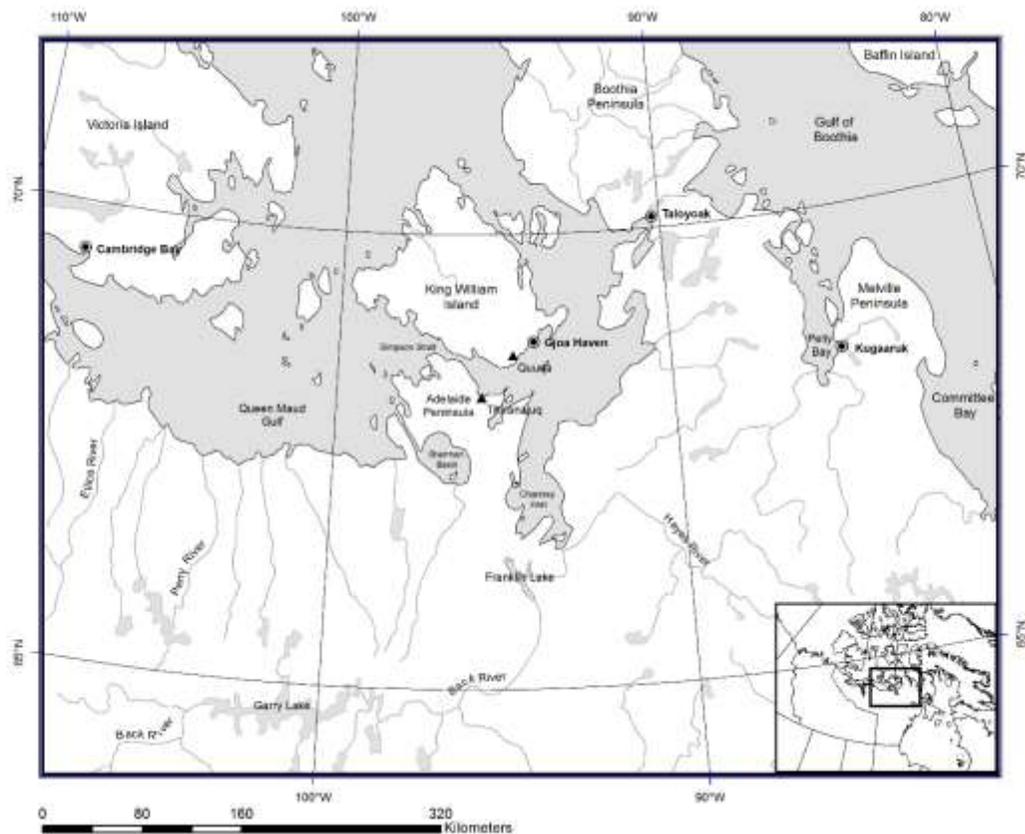
### **5.2.1 Pilot Camp 2011**

I made my first trip to Gjoa Haven in the summer of 2011 from August 16<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>. The purpose of this trip was to conduct a five-day pilot camp with the Elders and youth. Pre-planning took place in Ottawa with Gita, where we worked together to plan travel, accommodations, and to go over the goals of the work that I would do during my time in Gjoa Haven. She was about to have her first child, so I travelled to the community on my own to conduct the pilot camp with the community collaborators.

Upon my arrival in Gjoa Haven I met with the Elders group that would be leading the camp planning and activities. Planning meetings were held to discuss where the camp would be held, and the number of people involved and camp activities. Because of the short duration of the camp and the weather at the time it was the decision of the group to hold the camp closer to the community, and so we stayed on King William Island rather than going to the mainland.

The camp took place from August 23<sup>rd</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup> at the *Quuqa* River on King William Island, to the southwest of Gjoa Haven (see Figure 5). There were a total of 22 people that attended the camp. This included 5 elders, 5 support staff (guides, boat drivers, camp cook, etc) as well as 9 students, 2 teachers and one researcher (myself). A full list of camp participants is provided in **Appendix A**. The camp was only 4 days in

duration because of a delay in leaving the community. Because of high winds and rough water, we were unable to depart when we had initially thought. Weather is a determining factor when it comes to travel in the North. The Elders and guides based their decision for departure on their observation of the weather to ensure the safety of all camp participants.



**Figure 5: Map of camp locations**

This map shows the location of the 2011 camp – *Quuqa* – southwest of Gjoa Haven on King William Island. The 2012 camp at *Tikiranajuq* was also southwest of Gjoa Haven, on the Adelaide Peninsula. Map created by Alex de Paiva

Camp supplies such as tents and coleman stoves for the cook tent were borrowed from Qikiqtaq High School. The youth participants for this camp were also from the high school. The camp took place during the week dedicated to Career and Technology Studies (CTS) courses. CTS courses are offered as part of the Alberta curriculum that is

utilized in Nunavut. The CTS courses are to provide students an opportunity to explore interests and career options while developing skills for future careers or further education (Alberta Education, 2017). The students that attended the camp would gain CTS credits for their attendance. The students assisted in loading the boats, unloading at camp, setting up tents, and cleaning up camp.

Each day at the camp, although not strictly structured, involved a variety of activities. The goal of the camps was to focus on the connection to caribou. However, during this camp no caribou were observed or harvested. The Elders instead took the students hunting for different wildlife. Everything that was harvested during the camp was prepared and consumed at the camp. As many of the animals harvested were small game they were used at the camp to feed everyone and we did not have food to bring back to the community.

Groups went walking with the Elders looking for wildlife and food sources. Over the days that we were there the students provided goose, ptarmigan and fish for us at the camp (Figure 6). The students both hunted and prepared the animals. The Elders guided



**Figure 6: David Siksik & Youth**  
David Siksik out hunting with a group of youth during the camp at *Quuqa*. August 2011.

them in how to pluck geese and how to gut and filet the different types of fish. The students observed and partook in all of these activities.

As it was a small group, the evenings were spent together in the large kitchen tent (Figure 7). It was here that the Elders told stories of their own experiences as well as different legends or *unikkaattuat*. All stories were told in Inuktitut and translation was also provided as some of the youth were not proficient in Inuktitut.



**Figure 7: Elders and youth gather in the large tent.**  
Each evening everyone at camp would gather to hear stories from the Elders.  
August 2011.

### **5.2.2 The 2012 Camp**

The second camp that I attended was in 2012. For this camp both myself and Sean Robertson traveled to Gjoa Haven. Gita also joined us for the planning and pre-camp workshops. This camp was to be longer in duration and would take place on the mainland as this is where we would be more likely to hunt caribou. This camp was to last nine (9) days and involved a larger group of youth. The camp again took place in collaboration

with the school, 17 students from Qikirtaq High School attended the camp. Five Elders and five support staff, along with one teacher and two researchers made up the camp. A full list of participants is outlined in **Appendix A**.

Some people also brought along their families; this added to the numbers but was agreed upon by the planning group. Families travel out on the land together and it was this reason that others came along, which brought the total number of people at the camp to just over 30. Although this was our second round of planning and preparing for a camp there were still adjustments to be made given the size of the camp and the distance that we would be travelling from the community.

We travelled by boat to *Tikiranajuq* (Figure 8) on Adelaide Peninsula on the mainland, southwest of Gjoa Haven. This area was chosen as it was a good caribou hunting area. The location was chosen during our pre-planning workshop with the Elders and guides that would be attending the camp. Because of the larger group of people



**Figure 8: Boats Leaving Gjoa Haven**  
Travelling to Tikiranajuq, August 2012

attending the camp there was a large amount of supplies to be purchased and we needed to ensure that there would be enough space for everyone in the boats.

Working with a larger group proved more challenging. For example, with the larger numbers we could not all gather in the kitchen tent as we had the year before. Coordinating teachings with the larger group was also challenging. In some cases the youth would be split into smaller groups to take part in learning activities with the Elders.

During the post-camp workshops (2012) and during the February Verification Workshop (2016) the Elders stated that they found it better to work with a smaller group of youth when teaching skills. A smaller group meant that the youth got to experience more hands-on learning opportunities and thus were more engaged in the activities. The larger group would become distracted if each youth was not able to be directly involved, and so may not have taken away as much from the experience.

Being on the mainland meant there were a lot more caribou around than in 2011 on King William Island. This allowed for hunting, skinning, butchering, meat preparation and skin preparation and drying skills to be taught. The students were keen to participate in all the steps. The Elders would demonstrate and youth would get their turn at helping



**Figure 9: Bob Konona demonstrating how to skin a caribou**  
A large group surrounds Bob as he demonstrates how you begin skinning the caribou, starting at the hooves. August, 2012.

with the process (Figure 9 and Figure 10). The women provided guidance to the female youth on how the skins are to be placed out to dry, in order to use them later for sewing (Figure 11).



**Figure 10: Siksik working with a group of youth.**

Siksik worked with a small group of youth to skin a caribou that he had harvested on our way to Tikiranajuq, August 2012.



**Figure 11: Drying the caribou skin**

Women work together to prepare the caribou skin to dry. It is placed fur side down so the skin can dry. Small stones are carefully placed around the edge of the skin to keep it in place as it dries. August, 2012.

### 5.2.3 Pre- & Post-Camp Workshops

Before each land camp, planning sessions were held with the camp planning group, the Elders, guides and other camp staff. These sessions allowed for discussions on camp location as well as setting out expectations for the camp activities (Figure 12)



**Figure 12: Pre-camp meeting**

A pre-camp meeting was held to discuss the camp location. Bob Konona points out *Tikiranajuq* on the map. August, 2012.

There was also a session with the youth participants to discuss their learning goals and expectations for the camp, as well as to talk about what was expected of them in their participation in the camp (Figure 13). Throughout the three years, the planning committee progressively formalized their approach to camp planning. By the third year, the 2013

camp they had met a total of six times to plan and discuss the location, travel safety, camp life and the learning goals for the camp.



**Figure 13: Youth pre-camp workshop**

Youth participants meet to discuss goals, objectives, and expectations for their time at camp. The youth developed a list of what they hoped to learn during the land camp. August, 2012.

Following the completion of each camp there were post-camp workshops to debrief and discuss any changes that would be made for future camps in the approach that was taken. Each of these workshops were recorded to capture the suggestions that had been provided. A post-camp workshop was also conducted with the youth to get feedback on their experiences and what they had enjoyed or would have changed. Youth were asked about what they learned, what they would want to learn next time and how to improve next year's camp.

After each camp a community gathering was hosted, inviting everyone to participate in a celebration for the completion of the camps. In 2011, a post-camp celebration was hosted at the Elder's *Qaggivik* building. We shared refreshments and played some games. There was also drum dancing and singing. The post-camp gathering in 2012 was a way to share the caribou that had been harvested with other community members. The 2012 gathering was hosted as a potluck, we gathered at the community centre, shared food, played games, and shared drum dancing and songs.

### **5.3 Complementary Methods**

#### **5.3.1 Interviews**

During the 2012 trip to Gjoa Haven a total of thirty-one (31) interviews were completed. Of these I took part in the interviews of twenty-one (21) people. This included three (3) youth that were camp participants, fourteen (14) Elders (some that were part of the camps and others that were not) and four (4) adults of the generation between the Elders and youth. The interviews took place with individuals, in private, at the Elders centre in Gjoa Haven. The list of interviewees is attached as **Appendix B**, this can be referred to for full information on the interviews cited throughout the thesis.

A set of questions were used to guide these semi-structured interviews covering a range of topics. Each interview started with getting to know the person, talking about their life story, where they were born and where they grew up. Questions also covered teachings from their parents, what they thought of land camps, and observations of caribou. The interview guide is attached as **Appendix C**.

For this thesis, I decided to only rely on the twenty-one interviews that I had been part of, as I feel more comfortable sharing their stories in the context of how they were

shared with me. If I am to share these stories, then I feel that I must have been involved in listening to the stories first-hand. It was important to me that I had been a part of the interview that I was to be sharing. I personally did not feel comfortable interpreting and sharing the story of someone that I did not get to sit with and get to know first-hand. Especially when the stories that I am telling are intertwined with the relationships that I had with the people, I need to be able to speak to the experiences that we shared.

### **5.3.2 Mapping**

Participatory mapping was a part of each of the interviews. A base map of the Gjoa Haven area with a mylar sheet over top was used for each interview, and interviewees were invited to mark areas of importance as they told their stories. The maps included travel routes, hunting areas, camps where people had lived, as well as caribou migration routes and other areas that people felt were important to indicate. People could draw freely on the maps to assist in sharing their stories. The maps helped in gaining further understanding of the knowledge of caribou populations in the area and some of the personal context shared in oral histories.

Some were more comfortable with the maps than others, so it varied how much people relied on maps to help express their stories. The mapping was an interesting part of some of the interviews, and in the cases of those that used the maps it was impressive to see their knowledge of the area. I have not relied heavily on the maps in this thesis but it was a great learning experience for me to use maps in the interview process.

Through the interviews where maps were used it provided context to the stories that people shared. Seeing the locations on the maps as they described the places that they traveled throughout the year gave me an even greater appreciation for how the Elders

lived and travelled on the land. Many covered an expansive area travelling on foot. Through this I gained an understanding of how the Elders have such a connection and understanding of the land. If you have taken the time to walk such distances you are closely observing and learning the landscape that surrounds you.

On their maps people also identified places which held great meaning to them. For example, many Elders grew up on the land, and they indicated their birthplaces and areas where they were raised; these places were often discussed with endearment. People would also map out areas where they would hunt and where they were successful in hunting. The mapping, for me, provided an understanding of the connection to the land and how important the land is in providing sustenance and a way of life.

### **5.3.3 Verification Workshop**

In February, 2016 I returned to Gjoa Haven with Gita and Sean to facilitate verification workshops with a group of Elders. With the help of Simon and Lorraine Pukiqnaq we held two days of meetings at the Nattilik Heritage Centre. This was an opportunity to discuss findings with David Siksik, Donald Kogvik, Susie Konana, Salomie Qitsualik, and Mary Aqilriaq, Elders who had all been part of the project throughout the years. This allowed us as a group to discuss the outcomes of the interviews and land camps, and how results would be reported.

During the verification workshop we discussed methodologies, caribou, and well-being. Through this process, we were able to confirm that what we had learned through our interviews and the land camps had been recorded and interpreted appropriately. Further, I had the opportunity to discuss the *Qaggiq* model with the Elders and how I was using the model in my research and writing about the land camps. In discussing the

*Qaggiq* model the group agreed that this was good model to use in discussing the importance of land camps. They stated that the *Qaggiq* to them represents gathering, eating together, and celebrating, just as the land camp is a place to gather and learn.

#### **5.3.4 Ethics & Liability**

The project was reviewed by the Carleton University Ethics Review Board which provided ethics clearance for the project to proceed. I participated in the development of the proposal for ethics clearance with Gita. The ethics clearance was successfully renewed each year of the project (**Appendix D**).

I found this to be an interesting process. It had me thinking about how ethics clearance is received from the University when you are working with a community thousands of kilometers away. Although Indigenous peoples were involved in the development of the Tri-Council ethics guidelines (Canadian Institutes of Health Research et al., 2014) it is still far removed from the community. Gita had put a lot of work into developing the research project with the Elders and others from Gjoa Haven. They were fully engaged in developing the project and guiding the research objectives and the purpose of the land camps. However, it is the University ethics board that ultimately decides if this is ethical research.

In Nunavut, all research projects require licensing from the NRI, whether natural, social, or health sciences research. The research license process requires providing the project information and the ethics approval from the University. In the application process the community contacts must also be included. The research license number for this project is 04 058 12N-M.

As part of the research ethics process, all individuals invited to be involved were asked to complete consent forms for interviews and waiver forms to attend the land camps. Explaining the consent forms, the reason that we have them and how information is shared and stored was challenging at times. As the interviews were recorded there are options to store in different locations for different levels of access, whether at the community or territory level. Also, if there was permission to store them for future University students to access. The forms were translated for the unilingual Inuktitut speakers; however, time was also taken to explain the information in Inuktitut to the Elders.

When describing the liability and risk forms to the Elders they discussed how the approach to risk differs between the University and the understanding of risk at the community level. The liability forms that have to be signed by all participants lists all the possible risks of being out at camp. The Elders discussed if you are to talk about bad things happening, especially while traveling on the land, then you are inviting those things to happen. They fully understand the risk associated with travelling by boat and on the land; however, these are not explicitly discussed. Rather, there is the expectation that you are prepared and will take care as you are travelling.

## **5.4 Bringing it all together**

### **5.4.1 Iterative analysis**

When I started my analysis of the interviews, it had been some time since I had written my research proposal and my initial research questions. I decided that instead of going back to the questions I had drafted in the first year of my MA, I would begin by

listening to the interviews and drawing out the themes as they came to me. This is how Tamalik described working with her interviews with Aupilaarjuk.

In my case, I was working with a traditional elder and in an Inuktitut epistemological and ethical framework; as I worked with the data I was very careful not to decide on what the inquiry was – beyond *naalangniq*, (listening in right relation) – and so I did not commit to a question as I worked with the data. (McGrath, 2011: 163)

As I listened over and over again to the interviews many talked about their love for the land, the teaching of *pittiarniq* from their parents, how to live a good life and how to be a good person. Time and again people discussed how being a good person means being good to others, respecting other people and animals as well. As I was listening and quotes came up I considered to be interesting or important to my research I would code that quote (see next section for details). As I continued to do this throughout the interviews the themes began to emerge.

From *naalangniq* came the coding matrix; rather than starting with a coding matrix I allowed the stories to guide my analysis. As I listened and different themes were revealed I added them to my coding. I did rely on the pillars of the *Qaggiq model* and Aupilaarjuk's triad to guide some of my coding. As I would be working within the *Qaggiq model* throughout my thesis, I wanted to continually connect back to the model.

#### **5.4.2 Coding**

I used the qualitative analysis software Nvivo Version 10 for Mac to review and code the interview transcripts. I initially found it challenging to figure out my approach to using software to support interview analysis. I decided to use the transcripts with the English translations. Although I used the translations, I would listen to both the Inuktitut original story from Elders and would ensure that the English version reflected my

understanding in Inuktitut. At times through the interviews we had discussions with Simon or Leonie Arluk (another interpreter involved in some interviews) as they interpreted the stories. As I am writing in English the coded transcripts in English made for ease of bringing quotes into the thesis.

The coding matrix I used emerged from my analysis of the interviews. In listening to the audio and going through the transcripts, the themes that emerged included: *Inusiqattiarniq* (living a good life), *Inuuqatigiittiarniq* (living well with others), Inuit knowledge, *pittiarniq* (being a good person), country food (the importance of food sources), learning by experience, caribou and the uses for caribou, and teaching youth.

### **5.4.3 Personal Narratives & Reflection**

Throughout this thesis, I bring in my own personal story and the stories of others. I am telling my story of research as I share the stories of others. I connect this to my own life and the things I have learned along my journey. I reflect upon this and relate these teachings from the Elders to the teachings from my family or my own experiences. This relational emphasis helped me in framing my analysis, but is also a way of being accountable to diverse relationships as a foundational aspect of working with Indigenous methodologies.

### **5.4.4 Organization & Presentation of Discussion**

My interpretation of the interviews, and what I have learned from this whole experience, is presented through the four pillars of the *Qaggiq* Model: *Nuna* (Land), *Unipkaat* (Living Histories), *Uqausiq* (Language), and *Iliqqusiq* (Culture). Through my participation in the land camps and in reading Tamalik's dissertation I thought about how the land camps, and what is taught and learnt at these camps, contributes to Inuktitut

knowledge renewal through the framework of the *Qaggiq Model*. The land camps encompass all four pillars of the model and are grounded in the relationships of the participants. It was for this reason that I chose to discuss my learning process and experience through the *Qaggiq Model*.

## 6 Chapter: Isumaqsaqsiurutigijakka: Analysis

### 6.1 *Najursiniq* and *Pittiarniq*

In listening carefully to the interviews that had been conducted in Gjoa Haven I began to draw guiding principles that stood out to me in people's stories. The first concept that I came across through my analysis was *najurniq* or *najursiniq*. Throughout the interviews, we worked with maps to allow people to mark different areas of relevance as they were sharing their stories. While I was listening to the recording of Simon Okpakok's interview, he was sharing with us where he had grown up and the places where they used to travel as he was growing up. He began to describe the different areas in which they lived throughout the year. In Inuktitut, part of the year he explained to be "*June-qitinganik, october-mut tikittuguk najuqtauvattuq tanna*" (in reference to an area on the map). He continued, translating his own words into English, stating "from mid-June to October this is the area we stayed in." (Okpakok, 2012). The word that caught my attention in Inuktitut was *najuqtauvattuq*. *Najuqtauvattuq* can be translated to mean "the place you are staying or living" however the root word *najuq*<sup>5</sup> is also the root for the term *najuqsiq*, a term that can be used to describe "one having to watch over or care for another, a thing or a place".

I discussed the term further with one of my friends, Qajaq Robinson, to ensure that I was on the right track with my translation and understanding of the term. Qajaq's parents worked in *Iglulik* (Igloolik, Nunavut), her father was a teacher and her mother a librarian. She was raised in *Iglulik* and thus speaks Inuktitut fluently. She went on to

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<sup>5</sup> In Inuktitut root words can be completed with a number of different suffixes that transform the root word into a sentence. It is for this reason that I provide a root word followed by a dash.

attend the Akitsiraq Law Program, which was offered through the Nunavut Arctic College in partnership with the University of Victoria. Qajaq moved to Ottawa in 2011. She began working at the Borden, Ladner and Gervais law office in Ottawa and was recently appointed as a Commissioner to the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

Qajaq and I would spend evenings together after work making dinner and discussing everything from politics to pop culture. I could go to her to talk through my thoughts and ideas as I was working through my thesis. I brought up the terms *najuq-* and *najursiniq* one evening as we were having dinner, and described the context of the interview it had come up in. As she thought about it, she described there is a sense of welcoming and respect tied to the term and its translation.

There is an implied ethical relationship within the term *najursiq*, which implies there is a sense of responsibility and caring. I began to think about how this concept applied to the relationship that people hold with the land. Throughout the interviews, the Elders talked about living in areas with such endearment. As I understand it, people were not simply living in an area, they were caring for the land ensuring that they were maintaining a good relationship with all that was in their environment. The relationship to the land and the animals and to others you lived with were, and still are, integral to your own well-being or *inuusiqaqttiarniq*, “to lead a good life”.

This ties in to the second concept that came to me in the interviews, which is *pittiarniq*, a concept that many spoke about, both Elders and youth. *Pittiarniq* is one of four methodological principals discussed by Janet Tamalik McGrath (2011) as guiding her research. Tamalik states:

I use this term “ethics of accuracy” to describe something I have felt deeply and in relation to Inuktitut epistemology. I remember the phrase *pittiarluta kihiani* (only by our doing right or well). The root *pittiaq-* is both to do right and to do precisely, or well. This comes from a survival ethic: if a woman does not sew well, those she cares for could be put in great danger if their boots or clothes fall apart; if a man does not take precise care when hunting, he may not catch game, and his family may go hungry. (McGrath, 2011 p. 307)

*Pittiaq-* can refer to ethical relationships with others, with animals, or with the land, and to treat each and every one of these with care and dignity. *Pittiarniq* as discussed by Tamalik and as discussed by Elders throughout the interviews is of great importance. Tommy Tavalok discussed the importance of listening to one’s parents when being told to live well or to *pittiaq-*:

For some, when they don't want to hear and do not listen to their parents when they advise them to be good or to live well, it is said that their time here on earth is short. (Tavalok, 2012)

*Pittiarniq* ties in to living a good life or *inuusiqattiarniq* and *inuuqatigiittiarniq* (living well with others). This is not something that is taken lightly. Rather it is a guiding principle to living a long and healthy life. An individual’s well-being is inextricably linked to how well they treat others, animals, and their environment.

*Najursiniq* and *pittiarniq* are two concepts that have remained with me as I work through this thesis and try to share these stories, these living histories, as best I can. These are terms that I have heard growing up but are now guiding principles for this thesis. As I share the stories of others and write out my thoughts these terms remind me, I must do so in a mindful way. One must also be honest, another part of *pittiarniq*. Jackie Price is a PhD candidate at Cambridge University and works with the Qikiqtani Wildlife Board in Iqaluit. I first met Jackie while she was teaching at NS in Ottawa. When I run

into her in Iqaluit we share stories of trying to finish our writing, her with her dissertation and me with this thesis. Jackie completed her Master's thesis entitled "*Tukisivallialiqtakka*: The things I have now begun to understand: Inuit governance, Nunavut and the Kitchen Consultation Model". In her thesis, she makes links to the honesty and truthfulness implied when learning from the land.

Living and learning from the land means individuals must remember that honesty is necessary, because truth is always around you, and just as the land continues, knowledge also continues. Inuit have also understood that the land belongs to no one as it was free to be used by all people respectfully. This requires that all actions, whether individual or collective, be accounted for. (Price, 2007: 37)

I must be good and treat this shared history with the respect that it deserves, I am accountable these knowledges, to what I share here in this thesis, and to the people that have shared their knowledge with me. I am to treat those that I have worked with, and continue to work with, with respect and care. I am sharing these stories through my own retelling; through my understanding and through my experiences working with people in Gjoa Haven.

In a relational model, people, kinships, relations, and knowledge-keepers are key. Care is taken to provide support for nourishing the networks of people, to facilitate a collective telling, retelling and transmission of living histories. (McGrath, 2011: 267)

*Takkua unikkaat najuqsitiariaqaqtakka* - I must care for these stories.

## **6.2 *Qaggiup Tunngavinngit* - The 4 Pillars of the *Qaggiq* Model**

### **6.2.1 *Unikkaat* - Living Histories**

As I share these living histories, I am aware that they are just that, living. Many of the interviewees are still around today. Sadly, there have also been losses during the time that I have been working on this project, over just a few years. This highlights the

tremendous importance of sharing these stories according to the ethics of care - *najursiniq* and *pittiarniq*. Given that I cannot share each story here in its entirety, I must take care in how I am representing the stories of those that I have worked with throughout this project.

Storytelling is part of Inuit culture, it allows one to pass on their personal experiences and to build relationships with others. It has been the way in which knowledge has been passed down through generations of Inuit. Through story-telling one can learn much about the storyteller as they impart their knowledge and experiences through their stories. Each listener has their own background and their own differing relationship to the storyteller, and this contributes to the interpretation each person will draw from the stories. The storyteller builds connections to others and between generations as they share their stories.

Stories remind us of who we are and of our belonging. Stories hold within them knowledges while simultaneously signifying relationships. In oral tradition, stories can never be decontextualized from the teller. They are active agents within a relational world, pivotal in gaining insight to phenomenon. Oral stories are born of connection within the world, and are thus recounted relationally. They tie us with our past and provide a basis for continuity with future generations. (Kovach, 2009: 94)

Stories and the lessons that can be drawn from them are therefore understood within the context of the relationship of the telling of these stories. Gwen Healy & Andrew Tagak Sr. (2014) discuss the use of storytelling in research and how it is particularly important in the context of Inuit communities. Storytelling has been emphasized as an important way of sharing and passing on our knowledge, language and culture. This is how our understanding of the world has been passed on through generations. Stories that teach aspects of behavioral norms, skills and values.

The Inuit have a very strong oral history and oral culture. The telling of stories is a millennia-old tradition for the sharing of knowledge, values, morals, skills, histories, legends and artistry. It is a critical aspect of the Inuit ways of life and of knowing, and allows respondents to share personal experiences without breaking cultural rules related to confidentiality, gossip or humility. (Healy & Tagak, 2014: 6)

Storytelling is a way to connect us to the past. To tell the stories of our ancestors and to carry knowledge forward means passing it on to the next generation. Songs, legends and stories of personal experience made up this living history. This oral tradition has been the vehicle for sharing worldviews, or ways of knowing and understanding the world. When listening carefully there are valuable lessons that can be passed on through storytelling.

Books, text, and film can tell the story of living histories on some limited level, but they cannot replace relationships as a primary means of transmission. Relationships required for living history transmission are primarily intergenerational. (McGrath, 2011: 268)

During my time in Gjoa Haven there was a lot of time spent speaking with people or visiting and listening to their stories. This allowed me to build relationships with some of the Elders as they shared their experience and spoke of their families. During my first visit to Gjoa Haven I stayed with Mary Aqilriq or *Quinarnaq* as she is known, and she also participated in the interviews and the 2016 verification workshop. She would share stories as we ate together and we would talk as we drank tea. She told me of her late husband, Judas Aqilriq, and how he was a terrific storyteller. He was known for his ability to recite the story of *Kiviug*. The story of *Kiviug* is known to be a lengthy recount of an Inuk man's travels throughout the world and his encounters. *Quinarnaq* spoke of her husband with such endearment and of his skill of storytelling. This is a skill that not

all are known for; many referred to *Quinarnaq's* late husband as a wonderful storyteller. This indicated to me the importance of storytelling.

Storytelling brings people together whether to pass time and provide entertainment or to impart lessons; often both are done simultaneously. The lessons that can be found within some stories are not always explicit, rather it is up to the listener to listen carefully and draw these lessons out. As I listened to the interviews and the stories people shared I further realized the importance of *naalarniq* (listening). I listened to each interview more than once, sometimes three times or more. For Inuit, as for many other Indigenous peoples, stories are to teach, more than just for simple entertainment. As you engage in listening to the story, you can engage in the implicit values through your own interpretation of the story.

Storytelling is employed to underline the Cree ethos of living a good life. Stories of bravery, survival, respect and forgiveness provide a foundation from which participants can draw strength and make sense of their particular personal contexts. (Radu, et al., 2014: 93)

The stories that were shared with me both through interviews and at the land camps allowed me to learn more about each individual, and as stories were told, I was drawing my own conclusions presented throughout this thesis. During one interview, we discussed the ways in which Inuit knowledge can be passed on to young people, and Mary Kamookak described the importance of story-telling:

When I was growing up, I've been counselled by my parents on how to live a good life, how to live a healthy life as well, perhaps one thing that can be used is storytelling to young people. Because storytelling has information that can be used to provide a knowledge to a young person how to live a good life, a life that's lived in harmony with other people, and how to share what the person had and how to respect people who are less fortunate than they are. Perhaps they may not be able to take it into consideration at the time, but it would be something that would give them

something to remember in the long run, or in the future. (Kamookak, 2012b)

Her words speak true to my experiences in listening to the interviews multiple times and having the time to think about and digest some of the things that people had shared. It was not until I had gone back to some of these interviews that the themes and teachings became clearer to me. The whole experience of working on this project in Gjoa Haven and the stories that were shared with me are something that I will now carry with me into the future. They are now a part of me and will affect how I live my life.

The stories shared, came together to tell the collective story of the area surrounding Gjoa Haven. It also shows how people came from a vast area of what is now referred to as the Kitikmeot region and settled in the community of Gjoa Haven. For example, David Siksik, Donald Kogvik and some others had lived around the area which was referred to as *Kuujjuaq* (big river) and known as Perry River in English. Elders such as Mary Aqilriak had lived in the areas near Back River. Their stories and memories cover vast areas surrounding Gjoa Haven in which they traveled, reaching from Cambridge Bay to Baker Lake to Taloyoak (Figure 5).

At the land camps the Elders had encouraged the students to ask questions, however, many were reluctant in the first days. Inuit youth often grow up being reminded not to ask too many questions, rather one is expected to listen well and observe in order to learn. One cannot be fully observant and listening carefully when they are talking too much or interrupting the learning process. The reluctance to ask questions also could come from a level of comfort on the part of the students. Some of the students were not confident in their proficiency in Inuktitut. Some felt intimidated to speak Inuktitut as they were worried that they may not know how to say something properly. As we got into the

last evening at the camp in 2011, the students began asking questions. As the relationships strengthened and the youth became more familiar with the Elders and the other camp staff, you could see that they were more comfortable in asking questions. The youth began to ask about specific stories or topics that they were interested in hearing about. This also helped the Elders and they were not always sure what the youth wanted to learn more about.

These relationships are what most interest me as part of the knowledge-sharing experience. The relationships between the Elders and the youth are central to learning and communicating what areas of interest the youth may have. The knowledge(s) and relationships between people, the environment and the cosmos are the basis for Inuit knowledge-centered research. It is through relationships that knowledge transfer and learning take place to support Inuit knowledge renewal. We should then support the building of relationships with people and the environment. It was also an opportunity for me to build relationships with the Elders and other camp staff, and this too strengthened over time as we lived, worked, and learned together on the land (Figure 14).

During the pilot camp in 2011, I shared a tent with Bob Konana (a key collaborator in the project and the leader of the local Elder's Group). Each night when we would return to the tent, he would prepare tea and share many stories with me. He helped



**Figure 14: Cleaning Fish**

Bob Konana demonstrates to the students how to remove scales from fish that were caught in the net at the Quuqa Camp. The students also gutted and prepared the fish to be dried. August, 2011.

me understand the area where we were camping and explained his relationship with the area. He, and other Elders involved in the project, emphasized the importance of sharing their knowledge with the youth and the importance of the caribou in the area. By focusing on the sharing of knowledge of caribou and other wildlife, we observe how knowledge transfer and sharing takes place in the camp setting.

The youth had the opportunity to learn from the Elders and put their newly acquired skills into practice. The moments where they got to help harvest and prepare the meals for all at camp were most memorable (Anavilok, 2012; Hunter, 2012). They were working together to prepare the meals for themselves and everyone else at camp (Figure 15 & Figure 16). They were also actively learning the process from hunting to preparing their catch. The youth can carry these experiences with them as they have tried things first-hand and so are more likely to remember them (Figure 17) (Okpakok, 2012).



**Figure 15: Plucking geese**

Youth learn to pluck and clean geese that were caught during their hunting trip. The geese were prepared for the evening meal at camp. August, 2011.

**Figure 17: Preparing food**  
Bob and Eva show the youth how to butcher the geese to be cooked. August, 2011



**Figure 16: Carrying their catch**  
Robert Hunter has help from other students to carry his first caribou back to camp at *Tikiranajuq*. August, 2012.

The most memorable are the stories of those I got to spend more time with beyond just in the interviews. The informal sharing of stories often differed from the formal recorded interviews. My favourite time during the land camps would be, in the tent at the end of the day, with the elder that I was staying with. During the pilot camp in 2011 with Bob Konana, and during the 2012 camp with Nilaulaaq Aglukkaq. In the evenings, I had the chance to converse with them in an informal fashion. They would share stories of their youth and other general information.

During the evenings Lorraine would come to the tent of Nilaulaaq and they would share stories which provided me with insight into the community. Nilaulaaq also shared some *unikaattuq* or Inuit legends. These make up my fondest memories of the camp and provided the time to build relationships with those I was staying with. These are the relationships that I hold closest with me, and that have provided me with a great amount of learning throughout the project.

Looking back and listening to the interviews conducted, I really wish I could have built this type of relationship with all that we interviewed. Through the continuity of land camps in a community, this could be an opportunity for relationships to continue to flourish and allow further knowledge to be shared through conversation of those involved. It is with these relationships you begin to learn more about one another but also to have a better understanding of what individuals have to share. Sharing becomes more open when the relationships have been developed, which became evident as we all shared more time together at the land camp.

All of the Elders recounted stories of growing up on the land and I could not help but be amazed by all that they went through, and yet they could find lessons and humour in the stories they shared. Many lived through hardships, life was not easy on the land. There were no conveniences that we know today, and I recall the late Suzanne Singuri discussing this with students at NS in 2014. She was an Elder from Pond Inlet, NU but lived in Ottawa for many years. She was demonstrating the lighting of the *qulliq* for the students. She talked of a time when she was young, the *qulliq* was their main source of light and heat. As she told them, today you can walk into a room and turn on a light or if you are cold you can simply turn up your thermostat. The *qulliq* however took time to

light and you needed to have an adequate amount of oil to keep it burning. If the hunting were scarce, then you would not have heat and light.

At the 2012 camp Nilaulaaq demonstrated to the students how to prepare and light the *qulliq* (Figure 19). The youth rendered oil from seal fat, from a seal that had been brought to camp by others. They also observed and helped to prepare the plants used for the wick of the *qulliq*. They removed the cotton from the arctic cotton plants and were told of the importance of removing all the other pieces of the plant. Nilaulaaq told the youth, if you do not take the time to make sure you have just the cotton part of the plant, if there are other particles left in there, you will wake up in the morning with soot in your nostrils. The other parts of the plant needed to be removed to ensure that you had a clean flame.

Nilaulaaq then used a flint to produce a spark to start a fire. Once a spark is produced, it is placed into a skin bag which is filled with moss, she carefully blows on the spark to ignite the fibers in the bag to produce a flame that can then be used to light the *qulliq* (Figure18). After watching this process, it provides a very great appreciation for the convenience of lighters and matches. Even more so, an appreciation for the skills and time that people put into preparing and lighting a *qulliq*.



**Figure 18: Starting a fire**  
Nilaulaaq demonstrates how to light the *Qulliq* using the method of a flint to start the fire. August, 2012.



**Figure 19: Lighting the Qulliq**  
Nilaulaaq lights the *qulliq* using without the use of a match or lighter. August, 2012.

Travel was predominantly by foot or on dog sleds and outside supplies were limited and therefore treated with great care. Mary Aqilriaq, discussed in her interview having a box of wooden matches and how they would split the matches in four with an ulu to make them last longer. If the matches were to get wet they would incorporate them into their braids in their hair in order to dry them. The matches were so important to them, something we take for granted today. Not knowing when they would be able to

trade for more matches, they would use them so carefully. The matches made it quicker to light a fire or the *qulliq* and by splitting them, they could have this convenience for a little longer. I was amazed by the sheer fact that they could light a match that had been split into four; I think of trying to light a wooden match and how many of them I have broken, while trying to strike them.

Finding humour in the stories that the Elders told was something that I especially enjoyed. Even as Mary recalled splitting the matches, she laughed as she spoke of how they would do all this just to conserve one little match, something that we would not even think of today. Laughter was shared throughout many stories and through many of our interviews. No matter the stories of hardship there was always the balance of humour mixed in to the stories that were told. Humor and laughter, I think, are very important to building relationships. Telling stories and laughing together brought me closer to many of the Elders. Although many of the Elders shared stories of hardships they were also able to tell stories filled with humour, perhaps a mechanism for resilience and coping.

Another story that Mary had shared with me was about when she first moved to Gjoa Haven. She had grown up in the *Utkuhiksalik* area (around Back River), and so she had grown up around fresh water. Not long after she moved in to Gjoa Haven she was visiting with some other women and had offered to make tea. She fetched some water, boiled it and made tea. She served the tea to those she was visiting with. As they took a sip it was quickly spat out, the tea was very salty. What she had not realized was that she had filled the tea pot with salt water from the bay. She laughed as she shared this story; as she had grown up near Back River she did not give a second thought to taking water from the shore.

Although people were telling their stories there was often more to it than just the story. When listening back to the things they shared and the way they talked about things gave insight into their lives and how they were raised; the things that were of importance in their lives. The importance of *naalarniq* came to light as I listened carefully to their stories. This meant listening time and again and to find the underlying values and lessons amongst their words.

*Unikkaat* or our living history is still an integral piece to our Inuit culture and as new generations come to live on this land they will hear the stories of our ancestors. The land camps have given the youth just a glimpse of life on the land. Although they have been taught the values implied within these stories, the explicit experience of the land will always be different.

### **6.2.2 *Nuna: The Land***

Inuit had lived long enough with the *Nuna* to know that, for everything they had learned about it, there was much more that could turn around and surprise them. (Qitsualik, 2013:27)

The land holds a great deal of importance for Inuit in the everyday life. Learning took place on the land long before the four walls of a modern classroom. Our culture, our knowledge and our worldview have been shaped through knowledge of the land. Living on the land and coming to understand the environment, Inuit have come to accept the *nalunaqtuq* nature of the land, as Qitsualik (2013) explains that there is a sense of confusion when it comes to the land. You can be observant and try to gain understanding but one cannot know everything about *nuna* or *sila* “the environment” as a whole.

The land has been the place where knowledge transfer took place for generations. Today, it is still recognized for the importance in cultural teachings. The land also

stretches beyond just the physical land: the water and in the winter, the sea ice, is an extension of the *nuna*. The waters and the sea ice are also traveled upon and are an important place for hunting and fishing. The understanding of the land and ice is through observation and the experience of living in an area (Arima, 1976; Laidler, 2006; Heyes, 2007; Heyes, 2011).

During the project planning the Elders and community members at the workshop put a lot of emphasis on the need for the land camps (Laidler and Grimwood, 2010). The land, although providing the foundation of our knowledge, it is also a place of well-being. With caribou being the focus of the research it was understandable, the land was to be an integral piece of the project. For Inuit, as for other Indigenous peoples, it is crucial that the land be the place where learning takes place, for culture to survive.

To create a nation of Kwezens – to survive *as Nishnaabeg* – we shouldn't be just striving for land-based pedagogies. The land must once again *become* the pedagogy. (Simpson, 2014)

Simpson discusses the land as pedagogy for Nishnaabeg intelligence and argues, through Nishnaabeg story-telling, the land is the process and context for Indigenous knowledges. I see the land camps in Gjoa Haven are also being part of the pedagogy for Inuit intelligence. A land-based pedagogy is an immersive method for teaching the skills, values and cultural intelligence to young Inuit. The land-based learning is hands-on, youth are learning through their experience of the land.

Despite long histories of displacement and encroachment experienced by all Indigenous peoples in Canada, the land continues to provide traditional foods essential to good health, a space for self-reflection and renewal, intense physical activity required in everyday life, joy and love in the interactions with family and friends, and experiential learning through interactions with nature and topography. The bush is often seen as a 'place of healing' that enables individuals and families to strengthen and renew

their physical and spiritual bond with the land. (Radu, House & Pashagumskum, 2014: 92)

Some young people do not have access to the land in the way that the Elders had. I find discussions of the land in the Arctic to be very interesting. To some the Arctic is a harsh, barren, wasteland where those who find themselves there often struggle to survive. When I spoke with the Elders, and even with the youth in Gjoa Haven, I am left with a very different feeling about the land. The land is described as beautiful, providing sustenance, spoken of with such endearment. It was spoken of a place of feeling well.

It makes them feel heavy when they stay in town all the time. But it's a lot better when they're out camping. They're mind gets clearer, more clear. Some days she said that it makes you feel so heavy, when they're in town most of the time. And she said herself when they go out camping or go out hunting, it makes you feel so much lighter. (Konona, 2012b)

*Nuna* is an integral part of everyday life for many Inuit and this was especially apparent in the interviews with the Elders. The land was not just simply a thing that was lived upon, but rather a part of their lives, of who they were. It was a place where they lived, learned and grew.

Going out to the land was usually associated with subsistence activities such as hunting and fishing. However, several interviewees said they sometimes went out just for the sake of it. Whatever the motivation, being on the land and subsistence were de facto an essential part of their life, and promoting relevant traditional skills was seen as vital. There appeared to be three reasons for this: food as local economy and as cultural significance; being and becoming an Inuk; relationships with the land and well-being. (Takano, 2005: 473)

When Elders talk of the land it is often with such endearment. They spoke of places that they can still picture, even if they had not traveled there for many years. For instance, when speaking of their birthplaces or places they had spent much time at while

growing up they described how they could close their eyes and still picture the place.

Jacob Akitchok (2012) talked about the areas where he had grown up, one being Itimnaarjuk, an place on Back River. This was a place that he described as hard to forget. When asked to explain why it was memorable or special his reason was that it had the best fish and was a place that he had fished with his Mother.

Being on the land was linked to well-being, both through building relationships with others while working on the land, and through a general sense of feeling good while being on the land (Akitchok, 2012; Aqilriaq, 2012; Kogvik, 2012; Siksik, 2012; Workshop, 2016).

When speaking of the land and different places it was often tied to the availability of game, in reference to how some places had the best fish, or the best water for drinking; places where the caribou would be, or places where meat and blubber were cached for winter time. Furthermore, the land was described as a place where they felt at home, they felt light and at peace. David Siksik (2012) was discussing places he had gone to hunt and fish. When he talked about being out on the land he talked about not being worried about things, or “*isumaalungnangittuq*”.

Robert Hunter, one of the youth, spoke of his experience being at the camp and being on the land.

It's sort of refreshing, getting off of work and all the things that you normally do every day. It's a good change, to get some fresh air out on the land, and when you're out there helping the elders, it gives you a good feeling that you're doing something for them after all they've done, they've done so much to teach you, when you were younger. It's basically giving back to them what they gave to us. (Hunter, 2012)

To be away from the community and the everyday norms of community living was refreshing for the youth. In this case, the youth are also beginning to build the connection

to the land and connecting it to feeling good, a feeling of refreshment. Robert explained the experiences at the land camp as a reciprocal relationship between the Elders and the youth. The youth are helping the Elders in an effort to reciprocate the learning that they had received. The Elders and the land have provided to the learning experiences of the youth at the camp.

I feel similarly. I have a continually growing appreciation for being on the land. Each time I go out boating, to the cabin, or go home to *Panniqtuuq* to go fishing I feel refreshed. Being out on the land is relaxing. It is time spent with my family and friends with no real agenda for each day. We might go out walking, hunting, fishing, or even berry picking. I have come to understand how the land can be healing. The feeling as described by Siksik is true in that you do not feel worried or stressed, rather, you feel light.

The land was also valued as it is the provider of sustenance. It was, for many of the Elders, their sole source of food and everything else they needed for survival as they were growing up. It was where they grew up, where they were taught, and where they lived. Living on the land is where they came to know and to understand the world around them. As many of the Elders shared their experiences and stories of the land I came to understand and feel the importance of the land as the Elders described. The land is held in high regard as it provides so much.

The land itself is something that's very valuable to Inuit because of a particular type of...a land has a usage to Inuit. Twigs that are called *avalariat* are very good for putting under the bedding, which actually keeps the skin dry the longest time. As well as, the land is used for cooking food. The land is used for medication. So because I'm a land person, I think about the land. But at this time it makes it so difficult to be

on the land, once again to experience the usage of the land that we had used in the past. (Aqilriq, 2012)

It takes experience and knowledge of the land to know what plants can be used for things such as medicine and cooking. Knowing that you can lash together twigs to make a mat to place under your skin mattress and blankets took ingenuity. The land provides sustenance physically but also spiritually. The land is a place where one can feel at ease. Although my time on the land is more limited than that of the Elders, I feel this sense of ease and enjoyment when I am out on the land. Whether it was at the Gjoa Haven land camps or being on the land with my family.

During my time in University, I missed being on the land. I would hear of my family out fishing, boating in the summer, spending time camping or being out snowmobiling and hunting. It was something that I longed for and missed so much.

When I need to find ways to balance the demands of contemporary stressors, like work and more complex lifestyles, I return to the land. I love to be where the earth touches my feet, the trees are visible and I can see the water. These do not exist in the hallways of academia. (Absolon, 2011: 17)

Since moving back North, I have had the opportunity to go out on the land with my family and have enjoyed every moment. To spend time together outside of Iqaluit is very calming. It also allows me to watch my nieces and nephews experience the land and gain knowledge.

The land extends to life on the sea ice during the winter months. Many people would spend the winter either near or on the sea ice. It was the time that many relied on sea mammals, such as seals, for sustenance (Konona, 2012; Kogvik, 2012; Siksik, 2012). Some places that the Elders would indicate as important areas, were not just on the land

but also on the sea. The sea ice thus becomes “a highway” for people in the winter (ICC, 2008: 13); a place that provides when things are more scarce on the land.

Being a land person, I'm attached to the mainland or the sea. I do enjoy the mainland a lot, but at times the mainland would become very bare, no animals or fish to catch, sometimes. That's one thing that I know. But the sea, although it looks bare, there are more animals that are more stable to catch even during wintertime, although you don't see the seals you can hunt them. So I do enjoy and feel attached to the sea ice more than the land itself because there's always an animal to catch although you don't see them. Once you get on the sea ice, you can catch an animal that you hunt. (Kogvik, 2012)

Kogvik says it so well and I think this can go for how the Arctic is often discussed: that although it looks bare there are animals to catch, there is a food source and you can survive there. Our *nuna* is far from a barren wasteland. The *nuna* and by extension the *siku* (sea ice), has provided for Inuit and has been home to the Inuit for thousands of years.

Traveling during different seasons was often done out of necessity. During the winter months, many would spend time near the shore or on the sea ice. The sea ice being an extension of the land through the winter allowed for travel and additional hunting sources. One can travel a great distance on the sea ice as it provides links to other places that may be too difficult to access over water or over rough or steep terrain. In Gjoa Haven, it provides a travel platform between the island and the mainland.

A lot of the travel that happened, as explained by many of the Elders, was by foot. Some indicated on the maps the routes that they would travel. They covered an incredible amount of distance through the year, without snowmobiles or other forms of transportation. Often just with a couple of dogs to help pull their belongings by *qamutik*

(sled). I could not imagine myself walking to all the places that they did, through all different seasons.

All I can say is that when I was growing up as a child, we had been on the move all the time on the land. That's a custom or a system that I have grown up with. What I can say for kids living in Gjoa Haven that they're not moving around. They're staying in one place, so they have no knowledge about what the land is all about. Because especially during winter time -- winter seasons -- they have no way of getting out of the community to travel, so they are stucked in the community, so they're lacking a knowledge of a land experience. (Kamookak, 2012b)

By always moving around, as Mary explains, you get to learn your surroundings. You are building your own knowledge of the land and gaining understanding of the environment that you live in. Young people today are not experiencing the land in the same way. Walking versus driving a snowmobile will provide a very different experience of the land. As I thought about this, I can imagine the time that you would be able to take in everything around you are you are walking. You are not speeding quickly through an area, rather you can take the time to be observant of the landscape.

During the summer when they're travelling -- as we don't have any brothers at all, so I was told to accompany my step-father. And I have travelled -- hunted with him -- during the time when the darkness start coming and coming. And a lot of times we walk a long distance, especially when the day light is going low, it would get dark, and as a person who's afraid of dark, I would try and keep up with my step-father. Although he has no toes, he's a very fast walker. So I would try and keep up with him. Perhaps I would fall back because of a long walk -- be tired from a long walk. Sometimes a ptarmigan would fly from right in front of me, and that would scare me, scare me. (Nimiqtaqtuq, 2012)

Listening to the Elders talk about the land and their connections to the land brought about many memories of my own time on the land both in Scotland and in Pangnirtung. I have most certainly taken for granted the time I have been able to spend

outdoors. As I had mentioned, I grew up on a farm. Our garden and the farm provided a lot of our food growing up. As a child I have memories of picking vegetables and fruit from the garden as we were playing outside. There was no need to go indoors to have a snack. The land was also a source of relationship building throughout my life. I worked in the garden with my Granny and helped my parents on the farm. They would teach us different tasks and we would take part in some of the work that needed to be done. We would help in everything from planting to harvesting. These relationships extended to the surrounding farms. My dad would help the other farmers and they would help on our farm, all working together as a collective to get work done. This also meant spending time on holidays and celebrations with our neighbours. There was connection to the community around us, where we lived, and what we consumed. This was obviously not something that I thought of at the time but as I listened to the Elders it helped me to reflect on my own experiences and allowed me to connect to their explanations of the land.

Being out at the camp brought back memories of being on the land in Pangnirtung. Camping, fishing, picking heather to build a fire and berry picking with my family. All these things that you do not think of much at the time but make for fond memories looking back. Being at the camp allowed for new experiences and allowed me to recall memories of being on the land. The same went for one of the youth participants. Abby had grown up with her parents and grandparents and being at the camp brought back memories of her family.

I thought of, I grew up with my grandparents so, every time she would dry caribou skin, she would go dry them outside the house, and she would tell me to help her so I would go help her do the skin drying and put sticks ... if there was no rock, we'd use sticks like pegs, pegs or legs and put them

on the ground and ... lots we went ... walked to go pick up *iqsut*, heather, and when I was helping ... I never helped picked up heather but when we walked inland with Adam [a teacher at the camp] we made a fire and I was really picking up *iqsut* and I really thought of my young years with my granny because I always used to walk with her behind – near the airport, just to go pick up *iqsut*. And all those years we had together, my young years, she used to always tell me to go help her go pick up heather or go help her dry the skin or go get snow, or just everyday things that she did. And with the camp, it made me remind me so much of my childhood years, and I wish that they were still there all right, but you can't get any younger. So it helped me remind myself when I was young, and I hope I teach my daughter the same things that I have been taught. I hope I could teach her more, because my mom doesn't sew and she doesn't ... she could really cook but she doesn't sew. She grew up with three older brothers, and she kind of grew up like a tomboy. So she didn't really do the stuff ladies usually do. So my granny taught me all of what she knew and she's still teaching me. I was happy to be at the camp. It reminded me lots of myself. (Anavilok, 2012)

Abby was working with as a summer student with KIA at the time, and was enrolled in the Nunavut Teacher Education Program with the Nunavut Arctic College in Gjoa Haven. She talked about how much she enjoyed being at the camp and learning from the Elders. Abby described her experience at the camp with such joy and had real appreciation for the opportunity to learn from the Elders while having the chance to try activities first hand. Being at the camp allowed her the time to learn from other Elders, as much of the skills she had learned were from her Grandmother. Working with the women at the camp brought new skills and new relationships for her, reminding her of her Grandmother while making connections with others. Being on the land was not only a time to learn, it also brought up memories and allowed her to reflect more on her upbringing.

There was a great amount of emphasis placed on the importance of the land camps to teach the youth about Inuit culture. There was also recognition that there are challenges in running these land camps as well.

I'm grateful for the land program that's being offered now because it is a good way of teaching our young people who are our future generation. And nowadays it's difficult to teach Inuit culture without provision of a funding. Without funding it's very difficult to teach our young people. So I'm very happy that the land program is being offered because it would teach our future generations that they can be taught Inuit culture, because they need to – our future generations need to hold onto our culture and tradition. And it seems to be the only way to teach them our ways of life as we elders are getting fewer, who have the knowledge of Inuit culture and tradition. So it is a good way of teaching our future generation by taking them out on the land and teaching them the skill and knowledge, tradition and culture. (Kogvik, 2012)

As many of the Elders that grew up on the land and lived through the transition to community life are passing on there is a need to learn as much from them as we can. Being on the land means being away from the community for a short time and to focus on building relationships and teaching in a way that is different from the classroom.

That's the teaching tool of the Inuit people. Once I went to a conference in Yellowknife. There were Cree and Inuit people meeting together. And one of the Cree people stated that being inside the classroom is like looking at the cover of a book. In order to learn what's inside that book, you need to be out on the land, to know exactly what the book is all about. Nowadays everything is just taught by a book cover, not what's inside. I've seen and believe that through experience, that's where the most effective learning takes place. Being out on the land is teaching what's inside the book. (Okpakok, 2012)

The land camps are a memorable time for the students. For some it was their first time harvesting a caribou, cleaning and drying seal and caribou skins, or lighting a fire using traditional implements. These are moments that the youth will carry with them. A

first catch is something very important. Many people can recall their first catch and it is a time of celebration for family and community. The camp is a place where the students can work with the Elders, and others, hands-on to learn the skills associated with being on the land.

What I'd like to see is that when teaching culture and tradition to a young person, the person who's being taught need to be looking at what's being done, how to do things. By observing it would provide a learning experience, a concrete learning experience for the young person. Although they're taught in the schools, verbally teaching the custom and culture does not provide any learning knowledge of [for] a young person. The only concrete learning can take place is when the person is observing what's been done and actually doing it themselves, would create an unforgettable learning experience. (Hiqiniq, 2012)

Jonathan Hiqiniq describes how this learning and the experiences on the land are unforgettable. Learning on the land is through observation and through hands-on application of the skills, which allows the students to learn in a manner that will be more memorable. During follow-up workshops, the youth were asked about things that they enjoyed at the camp. Many of them spoke of taking part in activities where they got to try new skills. Some of the girls listed cleaning seal skins or working on a bag that was made of loon skin and that is used in starting a fire. The bag holds moss to help in starting a fire with a flint (Figure 18). They then tried starting a fire with this technique to light a *qulliq*. The experience in the moment is where the learning is said to take place. Having a good understanding, and through acquisition of the skills, the youth will then be able to bring these skills on to the next generation.

In our culture, hunting has taught us to value patience, endurance, courage and good judgement. The hunter embodies calm, respectfulness, caring for others. *Silatuniq* is the Inuktitut word for wisdom-and much of it is taught through the experiential observation of the hunt. The Arctic is not an easy place to stay alive if one has not mastered the life skills passed down from

generation to generation. Mistakes can be fatal. But every challenge teaches a lesson, not only about the techniques of thriving in the cold world but also about developing the character that can be counted upon to stand up to those challenges. It is the wisdom of our hunters and elders that allowed us not only to live but also to thrive. As you are taught how to read the weather and ice conditions and how to become a great hunter of a great seamstress, you learn to become focused and meticulous, for your family depends of these skills for survival. This is the wisdom our hunters and elders have shared with our children for generations, and this holistic approach to learning is an essential part of Inuit culture. (Watt-Cloutier, 2015: ix-x)

The land camps are an important part of the learning and knowledge transfer between the Elders and the younger generations. There is a lot to be learned while on the land and Sheila Watt-Cloutier supports the importance of learning within a hunting culture (Watt-Cloutier, 2015). It is not only about the skills that it takes to be on the land, there are also values that go along with those skills. The land camps in Gjoa Haven were relatively short in duration. Although the youth were immersed in learning on the land, it is just the beginning of their learning about the land and how the land can contribute to them carrying on Inuit culture. *Nuna* is an integral part to teaching about Inuit culture and ensuring the continuation of our land-based culture.

(...) a space and a place for self-reflection. Through the vigorous activities necessary for survival on the land, the bush also provides strength and resilience that help individuals deal with contemporary community life (Radu, House & Pashagumskum, 2014: 94)

However, this means finding ways to teach the cultural values and finding ways to transfer them into new ways of living. The experiences on the land of the Elders differ greatly from those of the young people. The Elders lived and learned solely on the land. Many of the youth today spend much more time in the community than they do on the land. Their education is based more in western ways of teaching and the language is predominantly English.

Rasing (1994) states that Iglulingmiut in the past had exercised a high level of both self-control and social control, which enabled them to live in relative harmony and order. He suggests that it was a characteristic of Iglulingmiut hunters that they needed to control their emotions to increase their chance of success. The implication is that if young Iglulingmiut were trained to be adequate hunters, they might re-learn these qualities and the absorption of these skills might mitigate some of the social problems faced by young people. (Takano, 2005: 472)

Through spending time on the land with the Elders the young people are gaining experience and are introduced to a number of different and possibly new skills. The opportunity to connect and reclaim the skill, knowledge, values and culture can support in building ties in the community. The Elders and youth that have attended these camps now share a connection through their shared experience. The land has provided a place for them to come together, and thus to pass on the teachings.

### **6.2.3 Uqausiq: Language**

Inuktitut, the Inuit language, has seen a great deal of decline over years of forced assimilation and an education system imposed from outside Inuit society (McGrath, 2011; McGregor, 2010; Berger, 2006). Language can be a difficult, sensitive, and even contentious issue to discuss (Palluq-Cloutier, 2015). Inuktitut was not my first language, being raised in Scotland meant that I grew up speaking only English until the age of eleven. I am fortunate that we moved to *Panniqtuuq*, a community that is known as still possessing strong Inuktitut language. However, learning the language has taken me a lot of time and even to this day, I am still learning new terms and building my confidence in speaking with others. Since I appear to be non-Inuk, people often do not expect me to speak Inuktitut and so tend to be surprised when I begin speaking.

The main language at the land camps was Inuktitut and the majority of the interviews were conducted in Inuktitut. This was as much a language learning process for me as it was a research project. Inuktitut is spoken across the Arctic from Alaska to Greenland. However, there are variations in dialect and terminology and thus meanings can sometimes differ. Learning the terminology that was used in another Inuktitut dialect, meant identifying and adjusting to the subtle differences from my own more eastern Arctic dialect. Listening to the Elders speak so eloquently in Inuktitut about the land, the caribou, and teaching youth was inspiring.

I taught Inuktitut at NS, I would start the school year talking to the students about their comfort level in speaking the language. The group that I taught had a good level of Inuktitut understanding, but were often reluctant to speak. The reluctance seemed to come from the fear of being ridiculed for their pronunciation, or a perception that they lacked the vocabulary to hold a conversation. The NS program teaches Inuit youth about Inuit history from a perspective that is often different from that taught in high school in Nunavut. Building pride in their culture and identity, the students strive to learn more about where they come from and the language that is intertwined in our culture.

Gina Pizzo, a teacher and principal in our region [Taloyoak] for over two decades, concludes that it is a question of pride in one's culture; if it is not there, neither is the motivation to learn, whatever efforts are made on the students' behalf. Pizzo also notes that pride comes from a number of directions – home life, community life, teachers and school environments. However, she witnessed the most dramatic decline when the school switched over to English-only programming, a single generation impact that may take two or three generations to rectify. (McGrath, 2011: 263-4)

Through the introduction of the western school system and English language learning there was a steep decline in Inuit language use (Berger, 2006; Eegeesiak, 2010;

Palluq-Cloutier, 2015). Policies of assimilation saw Inuit children encouraged to speak English instead. In some Nunavut communities, the Inuktitut language has remained quite strong despite attempts to eradicate the language. In Gjoa Haven, many of the youth that attended the land camps did not speak Inuktitut, or only had a basic understanding. Those who knew the language were, at times, shy to speak to the Elders as they did not use Inuktitut as their first language. The way in which language is represented in the community and in the schools can have an impact on its continued use.

In a child's mind four days of English marks English as "important" and Inuktitut by inference, not as relevant to success. When those with good English language skills seem to have money and good jobs and those with good Inuktitut skills seem to be economically marginalized, it does not take much for a child to see English language and culture as "important" and Inuktitut language and culture as "unimportant" or worse, inferior. This is how a fully bilingual generation did not transmit their language skills to their children. (McGrath, 2011: 263)

Many Indigenous peoples are working towards language revitalization; just as they are in Inuit communities. Organizations such as Pirurvik, based in Iqaluit, have begun programs to promote and teach Inuit languages. These programs connect both the language and culture. Similarly, in Rankin Inlet, the Miqqut project promotes literacy through teaching sewing classes to Inuit women.

Many of these programs have been focused on language revitalization and cultural continuity, both of which were the target of historic assimilation policies. While attending Residential and Federal Day Schools, many young Inuit were forced to abandon the use of their language, and in the case of residential schools they were separated from their families for long periods of time (Indian and Eskimo Welfare

Commission, 1958; Vallee, 1962; ICI, 1979; Tungilik, 1992; AHF, 2004; Greenwald & Raymont, 2009).

*Uqausiq*: language, speech, way of speaking, Inuktitut language.  
Language is a reflection of the worldview and metaphorically expressed differently across different language systems (i.e. between English and Inuktitut). Inuktitut cannot be replaced in its usefulness to convey Inuit/Inuktitut worldviews. (McGrath, 2011: 216)

The language of the Elders and that of the youth brought about some challenges during the camps. Many of the Elders are unilingual Inuktitut speakers and some of the youth were stronger in English than they were with Inuktitut. This meant the need for translation at times (Figure 20) which can present a challenge in how the teachings are interpreted. It was a challenge even for me to translate the concepts that I have discussed thus far. I came to realize that our language is deeply intertwined with our culture. Our culture is expressed in many ways through our language and our language an expression of our culture.

There are some people who are out on the land following their traditional lives. They're out with their grandchildren, their children and they're teaching them the traditional skills that they have learned, which is a very good thing. I myself, if I was out on the land, I would have a lot more to say because everything would be visible to me. I would know what to say, what to teach. But living in the settlement like this, there's nothing visible that would give me an idea, or to talk about. But if I'm out on the land I would have a lot more to say. (Aqilriq, 2012)

The land is where our language and culture live, it is the source of knowledge, learning, and teaching. Trying share about the culture and language while sitting in a room, in a building, in the community often made it more difficult for some to know what to talk about. Being on the land can have a significant role when it comes to the continuation of our culture and our language.



**Figure 20: Simon translating**

Simon Okpakok provides much of the translations for the youth as they observe and participate in the skinning and butchering of caribou at *Tikiranajuq*. Simon was an important link between the Elders and Youth, ensuring the two generations understood each other. August, 2012.

Through camp planning, the interviews and follow up workshops there was a great deal of emphasis placed on being on the land to teach the youth cultural competency and the skills that had been passed on from generations before. This is where the importance of language and the land come together. Teaching skills such as hunting, butchering, preparing skins and sewing or preparing the *qulliq* - being done out at the camp allows the youth to partake in the activity, hands-on while learning the terminology

that goes along with it. This is what Mary Aqilriq emphasized above; while the youth and Elders are together at the camp there are teaching and learning opportunities that come up organically (Figure 21).



**Figure 21: Skinning Caribou**

Siksik took the opportunity to teach the youth about skinning caribou as he had harvested a caribou on our way to the camp site.

We tried to discuss Inuktitut terminology during the interviews with the Elders, but without anything there in front of them or being out on the land it was often difficult to completely recall important terms or to think of things to discuss. In some of the interviews we asked about the Inuktitut terms for each part of a caribou. However, it was stated time and again that it would be a far easier task to do with a caribou there in front of them. Once we were out at the camp and caribou were harvested the Elders naturally

incorporated the different terms as they skinned and butchered the caribou, explaining what they were doing. As parts were named they were also discussed in relation to their uses and importance (Figure 20 & 21).

Being on the land allowed the youth and Elders to work together and begin building relationships. In workshops following the land camp in 2012, the youth described how they now felt more comfortable speaking with the Elders and trying to speak Inuktitut. This is a process of healing and connecting; building relationships to reclaim language, culture and pass on worldviews. Because out on the land the young people are immersed in the experiences, they have the opportunity to work hands-on with the Elders.

(...) language skill and ability give access to Inuktitut ontology- methodology- epistemology-axiology. They give access to relationships and heal and connect people. (McGrath, 2011: 266)

Land camps can be one approach to revitalizing language and can serve as a foundation for Inuit youth to build an understanding of the world around them. As language skills improve so do the interpretations of the ontology, methodology, epistemology and axiology in Inuktitut. The Inuktitut language is complex, detailed, and is the voice of Inuit culture. The way of being, doing and knowing has been passed through generations living on the land. The language is now having to adapt to the changes that have taken place, to the different experiences and a changing way in seeing the world. Inuit culture like any other is changing and evolving and so does the language. Having a strong foundation in the language aids in the understanding of Inuit culture.

#### 6.2.4 *Iliqqusiq*: Culture

The continuity of Inuit culture is dependent upon the living histories being passed on to younger generations, for the knowledge and deep connection to the land to be passed on, and through the use of the language. The values held by the Elders can be shared through these venues. The land camps can then be one place where this all comes together. The youth are learning about being on the land, to become strong individuals to work together and learn from others, and how to be respectful of all.

Without the initiating fire the *qulliq* technology is a tool without utility. Similarly, without engagement with homeland, language, living histories and culture, knowledge in these areas is not reproduced to be carried forward. (McGrath, 2011: 246)

The land camp is an opportunity for all to engage in all these different areas. The young people at the camp were engaged in activities and thus in the living histories of their ancestors. These are experiences they will internalize and carry forward with them. Just as I have engaged in these stories and teachings, I have started to bring these teachings into my everyday life. At work and with family, I have come to have greater appreciation for the lessons that are embedded in the living histories. I see the value of being a good person and living a good life, being respectful, as being the foundation of our culture.

I know for a fact that our parents and our forefathers had laws, they lived by laws, but not having heard about it for quite a long time, it's hard to identify exactly what they are for me. Even before the White man came around they had laws. What I can remember is that at the time that I was growing up I was counselled by my grandparents and my parents, the reason for it is so that I can have a good life, and how to treat other people in [with] respect, so that in turn we would have the same treatment from the people around. Because living in harmony with others was the greatest thing that Inuit people taught from childhood to teenage years. And a lot of times I never believed what I had been told, that I will come to understand what they have said. But now I'm beginning to realize and

understand the reason for their counselling. (Kamookak, 2012b)

Mary Kamookak speaks of the values that were passed on to her from her parents and grandparents. Having respectful relationships is central to our culture being passed on through generations. Learning is relational and therefore these relationships must be in place to facilitate learning and the culture being passed on through generations.

Cultural longevity depends on the ability to sustain cultural knowledges. At the heart of a cultural renaissance, Indigenous or otherwise, is a restoration and respectful *use* of that culture's knowledge systems. (Kovach, 2009: 12)

The land camps provided this opportunity for relationship-building, and further understanding of how the land and the caribou (along with other animals) are such an important part of the culture and Inuit knowledge systems. The land and the caribou provided the context for the Elders and the youth to come together to teach and to learn.

While colonialism has interrupted the organic transmission, many Indigenous peoples recognize that for their cultural knowledges to thrive it must live in many sites, including Western education and research. (Kovach, 2009: 12)

The knowledge transmission that took place at these land camps is far different from the way that the Elders had been taught. This is a space that has been created, since it was recognized that much of the learning on the land is not happening as organically as it once did. Some of the youth have not had the access to the land that the Elders and the older generation have experienced. There is growing concern that youth are not experiencing the land, and the learning that can take place there. Tamalik describes, through the *Qaggiq* model, access and agency are required for Inuktitut knowledge renewal to take place. Having access to the land and the teachings of the older generations are imperative to knowledge renewal.

Land excursions are commonplace within schools in Nunavut, as well as inviting Elders into the school to teach the youth. During my informal discussions Bob Konana, he talked of the different land programs he has been part of with the schools, from days spent just outside the school, to day trips, to spring outings on the land for multiple days. In *Panniqtuuq*, over the school year they have invited Elders to teach during days dedicated to the seal and to fish. The school purchased seals and fish, and students spent the day learning all about these animals. They were taught, for instance, how to skin seals, to prepare the meat, and the different steps to cleaning and preparing the seal skin. Although teaching these skills in the school is an important part of continuity of knowledge transfer, there is no substitute for being on the land and being learning fully from that experience.

Going in the bush, participating in a sweat lodge, sewing moccasins, fishing and trapping, cooking geese, and many other cultural activities are all healing practices. Healing thus anchors and shapes identity in line with the local cultural ethos of what it means to live a good life. (Radu, House & Pashagumskum, 2014: 94)

Being on the land provides time away from the everyday stressors in the community. Time to focus on learning and an opportunity for healing. As stated earlier being on the land provided the feeling of lightness, a weight lifted (Konona, 2016). Each activity that the youth take part in supports their learning and building their identity. Each day was spent building the connections between the generations and allowing for healing to take place. Perhaps healing that is not explicitly realized at the time but is changing the way that everyone works together.

Because being a generous person has a purpose in life. If a person is generous, the person would be treated with generosity. A good person will be treated with kindness. A respectful person will be respected. Those are

the lessons that we had been taught by our parents: how to live in harmony, not just to other people but how to treat our husbands, how to treat our fellow people. (Kamookak, 2012b)

This all brings us back to the concepts of *pittiarniq* and *narjursiniq*. The continuity of culture, of building identity, of fostering respectful individuals and a strong collective are grounded in treating each other with care and being good to one another. Mutual respect allows for the relationships between the knowledge holder and the learner to share, teach, and learn. This of course goes beyond just the relationships we build with others; it extends to the land and the animals and how we treat everything around us during our learning experiences. The Elders spoke of the importance of treating even the smallest animal with respect because all are interconnected.

The youth are now working towards being the knowledge holders. They have entered into this relational learning experience because of a desire to understand more of their culture. The land camps that took place throughout this research project provided the opportunity for youth to begin engaging their culture through the connections with elders. This was just one instance where a short time was spent on the land. This was one of many steps, and for some their first, towards land-based learning. The young people, just like myself, are now tasked with going forward and continuing this learning journey.

If the knowledge is used, shared, applied, engaged, then it is more naturally integrated into new situations where it is useful again. Where it is useful, it will be used. Where it is used/experienced, it is a source of vitality and strength for peoplehood-personhood-livelihood. Where knowledge, or knower-ness continues, it transforms and adapts in order to address new realities. (Tamalik, 2011: 223)

My time in Gjoa Haven allowed me to learn so much, something that I will carry forward with me. It has made me more aware of the relationships and the opportunity for

learning. It has made me appreciate where I come from and the experiences that I now get to have living in the North. The stories and the knowledge that I have experienced through the land camps is something that I apply at home and at work. It is my hope that the youth that participated in the camps feel the same way. It may have seemed like a short time that we were out on the land but it has had an impact on my understanding of living histories, the land, the language and my culture.

### **6.3 Bringing it all Together**

As I worked through my analysis, I came to the realization that all is interconnected. The stories that I had heard, my experiences at the camp, the process of writing and reading all came together within the *Qaggiq* Model (Figure 4). For me, the land camp is the embodiment of the *Qaggiq* Model; a moment where Aupilaarjuk's triad and the four pillars of the model came together. The camp, by providing access to the land and the living histories, also engaged individuals in building and renewing relationships. It is a place where Inuit knowledge is passed between generations. A place where cultural practices and the language came alive for many of the youth.

Through my experiences at the land camp, camps become places that enable individuals to begin or continue strengthening their path towards building their understanding of themselves as Inuit. The land is a place to feel light, to be free of worries, away from the stressors that are present in the community (Siksik, 2012; Konona, 2016). People can be more at peace, and can then take the time to build relationships and focus on camp life, as they do community life.

For the youth, being at the camps allowed them to learn from their Elders; to listen to their stories, to learn to live on the land, and to know more about where they

came from. The importance of this is often reiterated; that we need to know where we came from in order to know where we are going. However, Aupilaarjuk links this as imperative to our physical and mental well-being.

I am not that old, but my life really started to change when the missionaries told us about Christianity. We were told that Inuit *piusiit* were really bad. That is what we were told. From that point on my life really changed. I felt that I went into a void. We were no longer to follow the *maligait* of the Inuit if we were to begin to follow that which was good. I think we are still in this stated today. I think we have to begin thinking about where Inuit have come from and where we are going to go in the future. I think we are in a three way situation. We have to really think about this carefully for we have to plan ahead. We have to look to the past and look at where we were, we have to look where we are today. We see that people's physical and mental well-being are deteriorating. We have to start reviving ourselves again. We can do this together, Inuit and *qallunaq*. Through working together we will get strength. If we work together there will not be divisions. Life would be a lot easier and more enjoyable. If we don't work together there will be more hardship. (Aupilaarjuk, 1999: 35)

Learning from the Elders at land camps such as those in Gjoa Haven, allow the youth to begin their journey of cultural understanding and revitalization. Land camps can be a place of healing and a place of reconciliation. Aupilaarjuk emphasizes the importance of working together, Inuit and *Qallunaat*, as we plan how to approach these differences in culture, language and experiences it should not be divisive. Rather, this is an opportunity for all to work together. Just as Tamalik describes through the *Qaggiq* Dialogue (McGrath, 2011), we should be working together in our approach to research. *Inuuqatigiingniq* then reaches beyond just our communities, beyond the camp, it can be understood in the broader sense. As Aupilaarjuk states above, life would be a lot easier and more enjoyable.

Land camps can be a place where learning takes place about many topics. Qaujigiaqtiit Health Research Centre, through their Makimautisat camps, has placed a focus on overall health and well-being. Their camps are part of a multiple module approach to teaching about health and wellness. Part of this learning takes place at a land camp with Elders. As it has been stated earlier it is important for the young people to understand where they have come from. Teaching on the land allows for this to take place, for the young people to learn about their ancestors, as well as to learn about how the land plays a role in their overall well-being.

So many of the stories shared through the interviews came back to teachings of *inuusiqattiarniq* (living a good life) and *inuuqatigiittiarniq* (living together and supporting the collective). At the foundation of *inuusiqattiarniq* and *inuuqatigiittiarniq* are the guiding principles of *najursiniq* and *pittiarniq*. To live a good life you must be a good person and care for those around you. Many of the stories related living a good life to treating others well, especially in relation to sharing food. This links to the third part of Aupilaarjuk's triad, *niiqainnarniq* (to always have meat). This triad, as Tamalik explains, can be discussed individually; however, the three concepts are very much interconnected and support the well-being of all (McGrath, 2011). In order to have a strong collective you need healthy individuals, and in order to be so one needs a source of livelihood. These three concepts tie closely together and ran throughout the interviews of both the Elders and the youth.

Mary Aqilriq spoke about the importance of people gathering, sharing food, telling stories and even playing games, and that these gatherings were what brought harmony and a healthy lifestyle.

During the time that I was growing up, there were not many people in one area; but there was usually a small group of people together. Because of a lack of food sometimes, at times, everybody would gather into one area and share food. And after the meal they would tell stories as well as play any games available like *ajaraq*, one of our Inuit games ... which is called *ajaraq*. Those type of things that they usually do when they're gathered in one area, because healthy lifestyle has always been very important to Inuit. The reason why I mentioned that is because having a gathering of that type creates a harmony between people to live a good life, as well as a happy life, and to be one with each other. When people gather in small groups, there are some Inuit games – activities – that they usually play, whatever it may be that creates a healthy lifestyle, an undisturbed livelihood in everyone. (Aqilriq, 2012)

Working together and sharing food was an integral part of leading a good life; aiding in the survival of the small groups that lived close to one another. This brings together the three parts of Aupilarjuk's triad. Supporting the importance of *inusiqaqtiarniq*, *inuuqatigiittiarniq* and *niquainnarniq*, these triad concepts were discussed by many. Leading a good life was often tied to respecting others and treating them well, to sharing food, and respecting the animals that you hunted that were the source of sustenance. *Najursiniq* and *pittiarniq* are the values that guide a person in their relationships to others, with animals, and with the land (Anavilok, 2012; Akitchok, 2012; Aqilriq, 2012; Sallerina, 2012; Bennett and Rowley, 2004).

The importance of sharing the catch of those at the camps was emphasized by the Elders. As the caribou were harvested, butchered and meat was dried the Elders would reiterate that this meat would be brought back to share with others in the community. A feast was planned upon our return to Gjoa Haven in 2012. This was a way for us to share the meat with the community, and to celebrate the success of some of the new hunters. While we were at the camp we would eat together (Figure 22). Camp cooks would prepare food to be shared by all. The meals were often made from the animals that had been harvested at the camp.



**Figure 22: Sharing a meal**

At camp we often ate together daily, this was a beautiful day at *Tikiranajuq*. August, 2012.

Sharing food and eating together has been something that I have been raised to hold important. My family is a very large one, however, whenever one is given country food or has harvested food themselves it is shared with as many people as possible. Eating together has always been very important. When I was growing up we would often go to my *Anaanakuluk's* house for lunch. She would prepare food for many of us on a daily basis. She would make sure that everyone that came for lunch ate some food.

The same level of respect is to be shown to other people as it is to animals and to the land. Your own well-being and living a good life is contingent on your treatment of those around you and your treatment of the environment in which you live. Being a healthy individual - *inuusiqattiarniq* means living in a way that supports the collective while giving regard to everything around you.

Respect other people. They say treat everybody the same whether it's your best friend or an orphan. They says, "it'll help you in the future to become a better person, or to have a better life". So I believe in what the Elders say. I don't have to worry about something coming back to haunt me, type of thing, or any regrets. Just respect life and respect the animals around you, and the land. Respect the weather, and you'll be okay. (Sallerina, 2012)

In failing to show respect to others, the land, and the animals, the consequences were often that it would shorten your own time here on this earth. By failing to treat others well you would be shortening your own life. These stories were told the Elders by their parents, and were more so lessons on how to lead a good life – how to exemplify *pittiarniq*. Growing up on the land meant there was a greater connection to the environment and all the animals that shared the land with you. This respect was of the utmost importance. Failing to follow these teachings and values could have great consequences in life. These are values that continue to be passed on to the youth. In our

interview with Abby Anavilok she also discussed how her father had taught her that even the slightest gesture could show respect and express your care for others.

Even just a smile or a laugh could brighten up somebody's day. Those were the words I carry most from my dad: Treat others the way you want to be treated. I try my best to respect others so I can be respected in the same way. (Anavilok, 2012)

To lead a good life *najursittiarlugit* (we must care for) and *pittiarlugit* (respect) all that are around us; to treat people as we wish to be treated, thus allowing us to live in harmony with others and with the land.

These values were also taught through the telling of legends or *unikkaattuaq*. One such story that came to mind as I listened to the interviews was that of *Kaugjagjuk*. This is a story that I had heard of when I was younger and is recounted in a song by Etulu and Susan Aningmiuq from my home town of *Panniqtuuq*. I was listening to their album one day as I was trying to get some work done on this thesis. The song *Kaojajuk* came on and I was reminded of this subject that had come up through the interviews. *Kaugjagjuk* was a young boy who was orphaned and not taken care of by others in his camp. He was forced to sleep in the porch like the puppies without a bed or source of heat. He was teased constantly for being small and for being orphaned. He was visited by a shaman who offered to help him with this situation. With the help of the shaman's powers he grew to be very large and took his revenge on those that had teased him constantly. Now, as I have been taught you are not to seek revenge on those that have done you wrong. However, in the story of *Kaugjagjuk*, it is implied that you should not mistreat an orphan as it could end badly for you. These values were constantly reinforced through both explicit and implicit teachings. The story often has an underlying lesson to tell the children that were listening carefully to what is being told. As you grow and you hear

stories multiple times, you begin to draw more and more from it. This is why it is important to be listening carefully. To be able to understand what it is that is being discussed in the story. To tease a person for their misfortune or to mistreat them can have ramifications. If you treat others well then you too will be treated well in return and you will then live a good life.

And also my uncle, my biological father's brother, had taught me to be kind to other people; even if they are mistreated by someone else, never to take part in mistreating people who are being mistreated. Show kindness to people who are mistreated. (Akitchok, 2012)

Even if this is something others are doing, you do not take part in mistreating others, this too was linked to health and a having good life (*inuusiqattiarniq*). If you see someone else doing something wrong it does not make it alright for you to partake. If you are to be well and live well then there is a requirement to treat others well. Being a good person (*pittiarniq*) was also discussed in the actions of helping others that were in need. This was highlighted earlier through the importance of sharing food. Not matter how little you have it is best to share with others. To help others in need, especially those who are older than you, is revered in Inuit culture.

One thing that I can say is that in order to live a healthy life, a good life, we have been told by our parents that we must help our elders. When I was a child I have been told to help them, to help elderly people. One is by fetching water for them. It's not all the time that we have elderly with us, but once in a while when we are in the same place with elders, that's what we've been taught. (Kamookak, 2012a)

Caring for others (*najursiniq*), respecting others (*pittiarniq*) and treating people well (*inuuqatigiittiarniq*) - being helpful were greatly emphasized. These are teachings that many of us have grown up with. This kindness and respect, as I understood it from their stories, reached beyond just the treatment of other people but also to the animals and

the land. Inuit, as well as many other Indigenous Peoples, believe that everything has a spirit; people; animals; and the land (Absolon, 2011; Bennett and Rowley, 2004; Oosten, et al, 1999).

Also in respect to the animals, to any type of animal, or to their young, never to mistreat any type of animal, which goes from bigger game to the smaller animal. (Kamookak, 2012a)

The importance of not mistreating (*pittiarniq*) any animal or person was instilled within the teachings that all the Elders had grown up with. The treatment of animals can be linked to the importance of game for sustenance. Inuit beliefs are such that all living beings have spirit that lives on after death. Treating animals well was thus part of this belief system (Bennett and Rowley, 2004). The spirit of the animal could seek revenge on the person that had mistreated them; bringing misfortune in hunting and making it difficult to provide for their families.

One thing I have heard of is that any type of living animal regardless of size, as long as it's a living animal, they are not to be made to suffer if they're wounded, kill it right away. (Nimiqtatuq, 2012)

Respect was to be shown to all animals, as some of the Elders discussed this could be related to hunting large game or even to the smallest bird and lemming. Living on the land meant living in an environment that was shared with all these animals. Inuit were reliant on the animals to provide food, clothing, tools, and shelter (Bennett and Rowley, 2004). It is then understandable that such respect would be shown to the spirits of the animals that provide all of this for them.

Respect for wildlife is a marked feature of Inuit culture, in the past as well as in the present. In many respects, it is at the core of the *tirigususiit*, *maligait*, and *piqujait*. Although it is no longer assumed that game has an *inua*, or spirit, animals are thought to be aware of what is done to them. If game is not respected it will retaliate against the hunter or even the whole

community. In the past, that could mean starvation. (Oosten, et al., 1999: 33)

This is common theme throughout the stories shared by the Elders in their interview, the stories shared at camps (*unipkaat*), and the literature on teaching from Elders from across the North. A culture that has such close ties with the land and with the animals are going to have deeply entrenched beliefs of the spiritual links to all things in the environment.

As a person who [had] grown up with my parents eating country food, I have been told by my parents that any type of animal cannot be made to suffer. Regardless if it's a sparrow, even, a person is not to make any type of animal suffer. If they're going to suffer, the animal have to be killed right away. Because any living animal that we hunt is meant for consumption. (Kamookak, 2012b)

The land was the source of life for many of these Elders, it is where they grew up and it provided for them. It was of the utmost importance show respect (*pittiarniq*) to the land and the animals just as it was to show respect to other people. The animals were the main food source, this meant showing them respect so there would be abundance of food. Causing harm or not following these rules of respect could mean dire consequences.

People are told to be good to others, anyone or anything. Whether an animal that is hunted for food or even the smallest creatures. We are told not to cause harm to them. (Tavalok, 2012)

If you were to mistreat or cause harm to another there could be terrible consequences. Some were told that the harm that they caused could happen to them, if they were to make an animal suffer they too could be faced with suffering.

If you wanted the land to continue providing for you then you needed to treat it well. Today, that is a different story - we rely very much on store bought meat and other foods. The land is no longer the sole source of survival. Living in the communities is very

different from the way these Elders grew up. How do we maintain these values when such change has taken place? How does this work when there is no longer the same level of connection to the land that many of these Elders had? Their stories tell of times that were often challenging and they had to work hard for what they needed.

We've always been told by our parents to have respect, respect others, as well as if they don't have any food, give them the food that they need, as well as...although if they do anything wrong to us, never pay back what they have done to us. So we have been told a lot of other things regarding how we should live. For those of us who are older people, we keep these stories and sayings within our own self. Nowadays young people, life have changed. They're living in a nice big warm house nowadays. So although we try to teach the value of our, the value that we have been taught by our parents, they don't respect that anymore, because their life is not the way that we had lived, because they are now living in a warm house. (Aqilriaq, 2012)

The Inuit way of life has changed drastically over the span of a generation. Living in the wage economy, in larger communities, and western educational institutions have shifted how we learn and how we live (ICI, 1979; Matthiasson, 1992; Marcus, 1995; Wachowich, 1999). Priorities have changed and I cannot begin to imagine what all of this is like for the Elders. Inuit youth are taught the Inuit values and are told the stories but we have not, and never will, experience this land in the way of our Elders. The stories that we pass on will differ vastly from those that have been shared by our Elders. The way they have experienced the land and the way they talk about it will not be the same for future generations.

Referring back to the “NS Curve” (Figure 1), it has only been a few generations between the timeframe of pre-contact with non-Inuit and the current day. It was my mother’s generation that first completed schooling in the western educational system and my grandparent’s generation that moved into communities for the first time, after

growing up on the land. Although many Inuit have held onto the values and continue to pass on hunting skills and cultural practices, they are still caught between two very different worldviews: two ways of understanding the world, two conflicting ways of living and being (Matthiasson, 1992; Fossett, 2001; Wachowich, 1999; McGrath, 2003; Watt-Cloutier, 2015).

Indigenous worldviews teach people to see themselves humbly within a larger web or circle of life. This web contains our relationships to one another and to all of Creation. Indigenous knowledge lives in the animals, birds, land, plants, trees and Creation. Relationships among family and kinship systems exist within human, spiritual, plant and animal realms. (Absolon, 2011: 31)

Inuit, the youth especially, are caught in the middle of two cultures vying for their attention and participation. The land, language, culture and histories that they are taught are from two different sources. The connections and relationships that they have with older generations are often the source of Inuit cultural teachings. The land camps are a place for these connections to be made. In order to understand the importance of the land and the animals in the continuity of Inuit culture, the land needs to be experienced. The youth are not only building relationships with others at the camps; they are connecting to the land, the plants and the animals. They can begin to understand how this was all important for the Elders that grew up on the land. It can build a new level of understanding and respect. Therefore, to live a good life or *inuusiqaqttiarniq* the respectful relationships with everything around us is vital. As Inuit and other Indigenous worldviews show us, everything is connected and living a good life is linked to everything around us (McGrath, 2003; Absolon, 2011; McGrath, 2011; Simpson, 2014).

This brings me back to thinking about the approach to Inuktitut knowledge renewal as discussed by Tamalik in her dissertation. In order for knowledge renewal to

take place there is the need for the connections between healthy individuals at the community level and to have a source of livelihood. People then need access and agency in respect to the land, living histories, language and culture (McGrath, 2011). Through access and agency there is a source of vitality to the individuals and the community. For the youth, and for myself, the land camp provides a connection to the teachings of the Elders, to hear their *unikkaat*, the stories that teach the culture and language. They share the stories of the *nuna*, the land that has been home to the Elders. Watching the youth engage in living on the land, and seeing them experience hunting and providing for the camp and the community, instilled pride in all.

## 7 Chapter: *Nuqqavissara*: Conclusion

This is where my story comes to an end, for now. The thoughts and analyses have rolled through my head for many years now and I have learned so much from all that I have worked with. I refer to the questions that I set out in the beginning:

- 1) How can the *Qaggiq model* be put in to practice through land-based, Elder-youth camps to promote Inuktitut knowledge renewal?
- 2) How do land camps, based within the *Qaggiq model*, support the well-being of individuals and communities?

The *Qaggiq model*, as I have stated earlier, is embodied through the land camps. The land camps that we undertook in Gjoa Haven provided a space where the youth and Elders had access to, and agency with, the *nuna* (land), *uqauasiq* (language), *iliqqusiit* (culture) and *unipkkaat* (living histories). The youth heard Inuktitut every day they were at camp. They were provided the challenge of using the language to communicate with the Elders. The camps bring people together as a collective that needs to work together. The youth are taught to help the Elders and to take on tasks to help provide food or heat, such as hunting or picking heather for the fire.

The land camps, in this case, were described as the context in which learning took place. On the land the youth were more exposed to the Inuktitut language, they heard stories of their ancestors and the surrounding area of Gjoa Haven. Some youth experienced successfully hunting their first caribou, bringing a great sense of pride to themselves, their family and the community as they shared their catch upon their return. The youth also had the opportunity to skin, butcher and prepare caribou meat for drying.

With every interview that I listened to, and the more I read, the stronger I felt that land camps are an excellent place for Inuktitut knowledge renewal to take place. A place

to foster *inuusiqaqttiarniq*, to bring people together or *inuuqatigiittiarniq*, and for Inuit youth to gain understanding of the importance of *niqiqainnarniq*, the source of livelihood. By bringing people together we are reinforcing the importance of the respectful relationships that will lead to living a good and healthy life. The *nuna*, *uqauasiq*, *iliqqusiit* and *unipkkaat* are at the centre of the teaching that takes place at the camps. The *Qaggiq Model* is thus put into practice, starting the process of knowledge revitalization.

While I was teaching at Nunavut Sivuniksavut I had two students from Gjoa Haven who had attended the land camp while in high school. It had been about a year since we had been at the camps and they still recounted stories of being at the land camps and spoke of their experiences with endearment. They had attended the camps while they were in high school. This project was based on funding received from SSHRC and therefore the camps were run for three years. Although there were three very great years of teaching and learning it is just a beginning. The youth that took part in these camps are now becoming young adults, and even though it was a short time spent on the land, it is my hope that they carry this experience with them.

As I have discussed throughout this thesis, the land camps are a source of cultural vitality. The camps have taught me to appreciate the time that I now get to spend on the land with family. Moving back to Nunavut I have found a new appreciation for being out hunting, boating, fishing, or berry picking. I think of the stories that we are creating, being on the land. Making connections to new places. We are carrying on the connection to the land as those before us.

There is so much that can be gained by youth and by communities through access to land camps. Not only are the young people building respectful relationships, through *pittiarniq*, with the Elders, they are learning to work together or *inuuqatigiittiarniq*. They are learning Inuktitut and they are learning about their history. With more time spent at the camp or with more follow up time when back in town there is potential for further cultural and language learning. The youth are becoming the knowledge holders and they will be the next generation to care for these stories and to teach the skills that they have learned through learning from the land.

## **7.1 Challenges**

Finding funding to continue camps, just as with the camps in Gjoa Haven, can be a barrier to the continuity of the project. Taking into considerations the preparation and the team of people required it could be costly. Many communities and organizations across Nunavut have encountered the issue of funding require for camps. The funding for the Gjoa Haven camps came from working with a university in order to access the funds needed, but this is not a sustainable or desirable model. Local schools face similar challenges of obtaining funding for their land programs. Some schools undertake a great deal of effort in fund raising to ensure that these trips can go ahead.

Community groups, such as the Elders and others in Gjoa Haven had trouble obtaining funding. Without the local capacity to complete funding proposals and the reporting that is required when funding is received can impose barriers. The department of Culture and Heritage and the Government of Nunavut has grant options for Elder and Youth programs. Many of the grants have a maximum amount and are often just one time

only. This type of funding would not support something that is more long term (GN, 2015).

Engaging with diverse groups in the community, although challenging, is needed to pull of a large camp such as the camps in Gjoa Haven. This includes working with community groups through all stages of a project. Building these relationships can provide an understanding of the needs and vision of the community in a research project. Communities can also provide a great deal of support in planning and executing the land camps. Supplies and larger items such as tents and stoves can be borrowed or rented from different groups in the community, schools, or even the hunters and trappers organizations.

## **7.2 Moving Forward**

To continue building relationships and to support Inuktitut knowledge renewal, as discussed by Tamalik there is a need for access to the land, language, culture and living histories (McGrath, 2011). Through the land camps this access is central to camp life. Being on the land, using the language to teach, to tell stories, and to share understanding of the land strengthens the collective. There is still work to be done to understand how these experiences at the camp are continued upon the return to the community. How do we continue to foster the relationships that have been developed at the camp? Also, how do the youth continue to learn about their culture and language? In order for the youth to become the knowledge holders they need to be continuously engaged in learning opportunities.

As I look back on my experience, I have considered some things that I would have liked to have done differently. The first would be the focus on culture and language

and how this was documented and experienced through the camp. Because I was in the community for a short time I was not as engaged in this as I could have been. The Elders had talked about documenting the terminology and skills. This is something that future camps may place a greater focus on planning how this is done. Identifying upfront, who will be documenting the processes and how they will be delivered and shared would be key. This could also be a way for the youth to continue to engage in the language and to work with the Elders upon their return to the community.

A multi-year camp which involves multi-faceted learning opportunities is needed to provide continuous learning, as was reflected in initial community priorities of having a spring and fall camp held annually in Gjoa Haven (Laidler and Grimwood, 2010). The Elders grew up on the land and were immersed in the pillars of the *Qaggiq* model throughout their lives. A young person participating once in a land camp is simply introduced to what is learned over a lifetime on the land.

In addition to ongoing land camps different options for youth to engage in being on the land and learning from others are also needed. We need to explore different options to building relationships with others and the land. This could be supporting families that are spending time on the land. Looking at options to connect active hunters with youth to learn one-on-one. Whatever the approach may be, the objective is to engage youth in learning on the land with others. This helps to strengthen the connections in the community, and provides opportunities to improve overall well-being.

The land camp, for me, allowed me to connect with Elders and youth in the community of Gjoa Haven. I continue to spend time on the land with family and friends. Each time I am out I am reminded of times at the land camps in Gjoa Haven and I share

my experiences with others. My time spent working on this project has taught me to appreciate the time that I do get to spend on the land. It has affirmed my appreciation and love of my language and the knowledge that has been passed on to me by others.

Being immersed in the land camps and the *Qaggiq* model have got me thinking about how I approach my work relationships as well. I think about the lessons of respecting everyone and the importance of working well with others as I consider my approach to supervising colleagues. Everyone is an important part of a strong collective and being a good individual and supporting others in the collective is paramount to the success of all.

I will carry the memories of the camps with me for the rest of my life. This has become another piece of forming who I am as an individual. The stories of the Elders and the youth, the experience of the land camps, and the experience of working within another dialect while learning about our cultural connections across Nunavut are now part of who I am. It has been over six years since I first entered the Master of Arts program and attended my first land camp. I think back to these experiences often. From the classes that I took at the University to the time spent in Gjoa Haven, two very different experiences. Both that have challenged me and taught me so much, and are intertwined in the research and stories I have shared in this thesis.

Now that I have come to the end of this part of my learning journey, I will continue on a new journey. Now that this thesis is complete, I can take this time to focus on learning more about my culture, language, the land, and our living histories through my work as well as time spent with family on the land. This involves passing on stories to my nieces and nephews and learning from others here in my new home of Iqaluit. I will

continue learning through *sanarniq*, through the *Qaggiq* model, focusing on Inuktitut knowledge renewal. I will continue spending time on the land, fishing, hunting, camping and berry picking, and I encourage others to also seek out opportunities to learn from the land whether in short or long durations. It is in this context that renewal is fostered, for the self and the collective, and supports us in living with respect for everyone and everything around us – living a good life.

*Taima*

## Appendices

### Appendix A - List of Camp Participants

#### Land Camp Instructors

Bob Konana (Leader 2011, 2012)	Martha Kogvik (2011, 2012, 2013)
David Siksik (2011, 2012, and Leader 2013)	Susie Konana (2012, 2013)
Geroge Kamookak (2011, 2013)	Miriam Aglukkaq (2013)
Donald Kogvik (2011, 2012, 2013)	Joseph Akoak (2012, 2013)

#### LAND CAMP SUPPORT STAFF (16)

Jasper Kameemalik (2011)	Rebecca Mearns (Researcher, 2011, 2012)
Eva Qirniq (2011)	Sean Robertson (Researcher, 2012, 2013)
Jerry Arqviq (2011)	Stephanie Pyne (2013)
Luke Takkiruaq (2011)	Kyle Aglukkaq (2012)
Philip Kamigpakittuq (2011)	Martha Pooyatak (2012, 2013)
Adam Malcolm (School Teacher, 2011, 2012)	Terry Eleehetook (2013)
Lorraine Pukiqnak (School Teacher/Instructor, 2011, 2012)	Gerald Kogvik (2013)
	Martha Kununak (2013)
	Salomie Qitsualik (2013)

#### LAND CAMP PARTICIPANTS (31)

Martha Porter (2011, 2012)	Gerald Kogvik (2012)
Julie Mariq (2011, 2013)	Dawn Konana (2012)
Adam Palongayak (2011)	Barbara Okpik (2012)
Huma Aglukkaq (2011)	Shannon Okpik (2012)
Andrew Oogak (2011)	Devon Pauloosie (2012)
Robert Hunter (2011, 2012)	David Porter (Junior) (2012)
Louie Uttaq (2011)	Tommy Porter (Junior) (2012)
Esther Ann Magaknak (2011)	Jacob Uyarrai (2012)
Amanda Pauloosie (2011, 2012)	David Anaija (Junior) (2013)
Vanessa Aglukkaq (2012)	Chelsea Anaittuq (2013)
Paul Aaluk (Junior) (2012)	Christopher Carlson (2013)
Amy Aglukkaq (2012)	Neil Kununak (2013)
Abby (Anavilok) Pukiqnak (2012)	Joseph Okpakok (2013)
Armand Apiana (2012)	George Sallerina (2013)
Lonna Ikkutisluk (2012)	Jenna Sikkuark (2013)
	Kyle Tootiak (2013)

One youth who wished to remain anonymous, and a number of other family members also joined the camps at different times.

## Appendix B Interview List

Name	Code	Date	Interviewer/Facilitator	Interpreter
<b>Simon Okpakok</b>	SO	2012-07-23	Rebecca Mearns & Sean Robertson	
<b>Mary Aqilriaq</b>	MA1	2012-07-24	Rebecca Mearns & Sean Robertson	Simon Okpakok
<b>Donald Kogvik</b>	DK	2012-07-24	Rebecca Mearns & Sean Robertson	Simon Okpakok
<b>George Kamookak</b>	GK	2012(a)-07-25	Rebecca Mearns & Sean Robertson	Simon Okpakok
<b>Rosie Kigeak</b>	RK	2012-07-25	Rebecca Mearns & Sean Robertson	Simon Okpakok
<b>Jacob Atkichok</b>	JA1	2012-07-26	Rebecca Mearns & Sean Robertson	Simon Okpakok
<b>Mary Kamookak</b>	MK1	2012(b)-07-26	Rebecca Mearns & Sean Robertson	Simon Okpakok
<b>Jonathan Hiqiniq</b>	JH	2012-07-27	Rebecca Mearns & Sean Robertson	Simon Okpakok
<b>Lucy Nimiqtaqtuq</b>	LN	2012-07-27	Rebecca Mearns & Sean Robertson	Simon Okpakok
<b>Bob Konana</b>	BK	2012(a)-08-14	Rebecca Mearns & Sean Robertson	Leonie Aaluk
<b>Tommy Tavalok</b>	TT	2012-08-14	Rebecca Mearns & Sean Robertson	Leonie Aaluk
<b>Kyle Aglukkaq</b>	KA	2012-08-15	Rebecca Mearns & Sean Robertson	

<b>Abby Anavilok</b>	AA1	2012-08-15	Rebecca Mearns Sean Robertson	
<b>Jerry Arqviq</b>	JA2	2012-08-15	Rebecca Mearns & Sean Robertson	
<b>Joseph Akoak</b>	JA3	2012-08-16	Rebecca Mearns & Sean Robertson	Rebecca Mearns
<b>Susie Konana</b>	SK	2012(b)-08- 16	Rebecca Mearns & Sean Robertson	Leonie Aaluk
<b>Joanni Sallerina</b>	JS	2012-08-16	Rebecca Mearns & Sean Robertson	
<b>Miriam Nilaulaq Aglukkaq</b>	MA2	2012-08-17	Rebecca Mearns & Sean Robertson	Leonie Aaluk
<b>David Siksik</b>	DS	2012-08-17	Rebecca Mearns & Sean Robertson	Leonie Aaluk
<b>Leonie Aaluk</b>	LA	2012-08-19	Rebecca Mearns Sean Robertson	
<b>Robert Hunter</b>	RH	2012-08-19	Rebecca Mearns Sean Robertson	
<b>Verification Workshop</b>	Workshop	2016-02-9 to 11	Mary Aqilriaq David Siksik Salomie Qitsualik Donald Kogvik Susie Konona Facilitators: Rebecca Mearns Gita Ljubicic Sean Robertson	Simon Okpakok Lorraine Pukiqnak

## Appendix C Interview Guide

Interview Themes - Gjoa Haven Caribou Project (SSHRC & KIA)

June 9, 2012

We will be using the Qaggiq Model to guide our interactions with elders and youth, to learn about the connections between caribou, community, and well-being in Gjoa Haven. As such, it is not appropriate to have set questions or formal interview sequences. We aim to facilitate learning in context in the elder/youth camp, as well as engage in discussions around key community research priorities during interviews and workshops. Therefore, the themes that we aim to discuss are organized according to key components of the Qaggiq Model, as related to caribou-community relations.

Although these themes are described individually for the purposes of identifying key aspects of the Qaggiq Model, as suggested by McGrath (2011), an important emphasis will also be placed on understanding and respecting the interconnections between each since they are all intertwined. Furthermore, we will work with participants to understand how these themes also tie into the individual, collective, and livelihood components of Aupilaarjuk's triad (McGrath, 2011).

Potential topics that we aim to discuss include:

### ***Living histories:***

#### **- personal history**

- can you tell me a little about yourself? your family?
- where are you from?
- where did you grow up?
- where have you travelled when you were a child? as a young adult? as you became older?

#### **- connections to collective history**

- important family or community events you experienced?
- living in Gjoa Haven, other places in Nunavut, elsewhere?
- work you've done? involvement in projects? committees?
- experience on the land? with caribou? changes over time?

#### **- oral history**

- personal stories you'd like to share? Inuit legends/lessons?
- stories of caribou - history, health, movements, relationships with people/other animals, etc.

### ***Land:***

#### **- land use (by people)**

- how would you describe your relationship with the land? its importance to you?
- what are the different kinds of hunting/harvesting you do?
- what do you consider to be sustainable hunting/harvesting?

- what things do you do while hunting or travelling to make sure that you are safe and successful (e.g. navigational skills, weather reading, safety precautions, etc.)?
- **land use (by caribou)**
  - how would you describe your relationship with caribou? their importance to you?
  - how do caribou, people, and other animals interact? affect each other?
  - what would describe as important habitat for caribou? terrain? kinds of plants? food? shelter? weather? snow or ice conditions?
- **caribou herds, health, behaviour, migrations**
  - how many different kinds of caribou would you say live around the Gjoa Haven area (either on the island, on the mainland, or further north)? names? how can you tell the difference? are these different herds or different species?
  - where do you travel to hunt caribou? which kinds? what times of year?
  - how can you tell if a caribou is healthy or sick? what do you look for? what diseases affect whether or not you will eat the caribou?
  - what are the main predators of caribou? where/when are they most influential?
  - what kinds of things tend to disturb caribou? (e.g. noise, bugs, mine sites, roads...) why? how are they affected?
  - can you describe the seasonal cycle of caribou movements? when and where do they travel at different times of year? for what reasons? how does this differ for different herds?
  - can you describe the longer term cycles of caribou movements? when/why do they shift their migration routes?
- **changes over time** (*"affected" could mean health, locations of calving/rutting, migration routes, response to humans, etc.*)
  - are there changes in weather or the environment over time that have affected caribou? please explain
  - are there changes in hunting over time that have affected caribou? please explain
  - are there changes in predation over time that have affected caribou? please explain
  - are there changes in industrial development over time that have affected caribou? please explain
  - how do caribou adapt to such changes? are you concerned about these changes (for people, or for caribou)?
  - in trying to monitor changes in caribou health, behaviour, or movements over time, what do you think would be the most important indicators to look for/record on each hunt, or each season/year?

**Language:**

- Inuktitut will be used as the working language in elder-youth camps, and in any interviews/workshops where participants are most comfortable in Inuktitut
- this provides an immersion opportunity for youth and researchers in Inuktitut (but translation will also be available to help youth or researchers who don't understand Inuktitut)

- ask into **traditional Inuktitut terminology** for any related topics, attempting to understand holistic aspects of relationships with the land, caribou, government, research, and between generations

**Culture:**

**- caribou and Inuit culture**

- how would you describe the place of caribou in Inuit culture? its importance for individual, family, or community well-being?
- what are some of the cultural practices related to the caribou hunt, including preparation of meat and skins, and various uses for different parts of the animal (e.g. for making tools, clothing, other instruments)?
- are there specific rituals performed when hunting caribou? does this vary by family, community, caribou herd, time of year, etc.?
- are there different roles and skills of men and women in relation to caribou? please explain

**- cultural learning**

- how were you taught about the land, culture, caribou?
- who were the main people sharing their knowledge with you (parents, grandparents, family members, friends)?
- what are the different ways in which knowledge transfer takes place in traditional teaching and learning (hands-on, watching, experiencing, story-telling, singing...)? do you see ways these could be better incorporated into learning in schools?
- how important is it to you that Inuit cultural knowledge is passed on to Inuit youth?
- are there rules about how Inuit knowledge is passed on, and to who (variations by age, gender, ability, interest, cultural background)?
- do you have any concerns about outsiders (researchers, governments, tourists, journalists, developers, etc.) exploiting Inuit knowledge? are there rules about how Inuit knowledge is shared with outsiders, or how it should be protected?

**- land-based learning**

- how would you describe the importance of land-based learning in sharing Inuit knowledge?
- why are land camps often used for this kind of learning to take place? what do you see as the value of the land camp and/or ways in which it is not useful?
- what kinds of knowledge do you feel are most important to share with Inuit youth, and why?
- how do you think youth can take what they learn on the land and bring it back into community life in a helpful way? how can land-based learning and school-based learning be used together? are there Inuit cultural values and principals that could be better translated into community life?

**- Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and maligait**

- what does the term *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* (IQ) mean to you? had you heard it or used it before the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (1993)? is there other terminology you prefer to use? please explain

- in the Nunavut Government, IQ is defined as: Inuit societal values and beliefs guided by the principals of *Inuuqatigiitsiarniq* (respecting others, relationships and caring for people), *Tunnganarniq* (fostering good spirit by being open, welcoming and inclusive), *Pijitsirniq* (serving and providing for family and/or community), *Ajiiqatigiinni* (decision making through discussion and consensus), *Pilimmaksarniq* (development of skills through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort), *Ikajuqtiigiinni* (working together for a common cause), *Qanuqtuurniq* (being innovative and resourceful), *Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq* (respect and care for the land, animals, and the environment) - is this meaning appropriate to you, or does it seem constraining?
- what does the term *maligait* (Inuit law) mean to you? is there other terminology you prefer to use? please explain
- what is the relationship between *maligait* and IQ (or the other terms preferred)?
- are there certain *maligait* that determine cultural practices or relationships with the land, animals (especially caribou), and waters? can you describe some of these?
- do certain families have responsibilities for certain areas or resources?
- **caribou co-management**
- what were some traditional ways that hunters would help ensure healthy caribou populations (i.e. before government regulations)?
- the Nunavut Wildlife Management Act (2005) makes it a priority for various levels of government to work together on wildlife management issues, including the use of and respect for IQ in making decisions related to animals (for our purposes, we're focusing on caribou)
  - what do you think about the government trying to use Inuit knowledge and science together to help maintain healthy caribou populations?
  - do you feel these two types of knowledge are similar or different? please describe
  - do you feel that both are given equal respect and are used equally? why or why not?
  - how have Inuit and IQ been incorporated in caribou monitoring, research, or management decisions before the land claim? and after the land claim?
  - have you ever been a part of any committees that deal with wildlife management? what was your role? what influence do you feel you had?
  - how do you feel that wildlife regulations affect your hunting or harvesting practices, or your professional life?
  - how closely do you think community members follow government regulations about caribou (or other animal) harvesting?
- if IQ is better incorporated through co-management, and used equally alongside science (biology), do you think it will help with making better decisions about caribou management? will it be more encouraging for Inuit to closely follow regulations (depending on reply above)? is it more empowering to Inuit, or government? do you think it would have bigger implications (e.g. for more political autonomy, improved well-being...)?

- do *maligait* and associated values described earlier conflict with, or complement, government wildlife (caribou) management policies or regulations?
- what do you think are the best ways to hunt/research/manage caribou to have health populations over the long term?
- **changes over time**
  - are there changes in the importance of caribou in Inuit culture over time? please explain
  - have there been changes in how cultural learning takes place? please explain
  - are there changes in the importance of land-based learning with changes in community life? please explain
  - have there been changes over time in how IQ or *maligait* are referred to, or used? please explain
  - have there been changes over time in how co-management takes place in Nunavut? do you see this as including IQ more or less? what kinds of implications has this had on caribou and hunters? what do you suggest for improvements?

## MAPPING

### ***important features to map***

- important places/water bodies (with Inuktitut place names, descriptions, meanings) - points
- camps (past or current) - points
- travel routes (distinguish type of travel, e.g. boat, snowmachine, ATV, foot...) - lines
- dangerous areas (with description) - points or polygons
- caribou calving grounds (distinguish which herds if multiple) - polygons
- caribou migration routes (distinguish which herds if multiple) - lines or polygons
- caribou hunting areas (distinguish which herds if multiple) - polygons
- important caribou habitat (by vegetation type, terrain, snow patches, etc.) - polygons
- differences for all: by time frame, by season

### ***additional features to map***

- inuksuit
- caches
- cabins
- disturbances to caribou (e.g. mine sites or exploration, roads, etc.)
- other landmarks/features

## Appendix D - Ethics Clearance Form



**Carleton University Research Office**  
Research Ethics Board  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor Tory Building  
1125 Colonel By Drive  
Ottawa, ON K1S 5B6 Canada  
Tel: 613-520-2517  
Fax: 613-520-2521  
[ethics@carleton.ca](mailto:ethics@carleton.ca)

### Ethics Clearance Form

This is to certify that the Carleton University Research Ethics Board has examined the application for ethical clearance. The REB found the research project to meet appropriate ethical standards as outlined in the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* and, the *Carleton University Policies and Procedures for the Ethical Conduct of Research*.

#### New clearance

Renewal of original clearance

**Original date of clearance:**

Date of clearance	<b>1 May 2012</b>
Researcher	<b>Gita Ljubicic, Ph.D.</b>
Status	<b>Faculty, Department of Geography and Environmental Studies</b>
Funding status	<b>Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Grant</b>
Project number	<b>12-1439</b>
Title of project	<b>Connecting Inuit elders and youth: Learning about caribou, community, and well-being</b>

Co-investigators: **Julia Ogina, Kititmeot Inuit Association**  
**Simon Okpskok, Gjoa Haven Community**

Clearance expires: **31 August 2012**

#### All researchers are governed by the following conditions:

**Annual Status Report:** You are required to submit an Annual Status Report to either renew clearance or close the file. Failure to submit the Annual Status Report will result in the immediate suspension of the project. Funded projects will have accounts suspended until the report is submitted and approved.

**Changes to the project:** Any changes to the project must be submitted to the Carleton University Research Ethics Board for approval. All changes must be approved prior to the continuance of the research.

**Adverse events:** Should any participant suffer adversely from their participation in the project you are required to report the matter to the Carleton University Research Ethics Board. You must submit a written record of the event and indicate what steps you have taken to resolve the situation.

**Suspension or termination of clearance:** Failure to conduct the research in accordance with the principles of the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* and the *Carleton University Policies and Procedures for the Ethical Conduct of Research* may result in the suspension or termination of the research project.

  
Antonio R. Gualtieri, Chair  
Carleton University Research Ethics Board

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