

The Construction of Identity Among Inuit Men in Ottawa Through Foodways

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Abstract

This thesis uses ethnographic data provided by young Inuit men in Ottawa to understand how individuals mobilise their foodways in the process of self-fashioning. The role of food in constructing subjectivities is well known (eg Mead 1943, Julier & Linderfeld 2005). How those foodway generated subjective identities are used to negotiate and contend with objective structures of power is less well known. The thesis illustrates how Inuit individuals in urban areas of Canada mobilise food in the process of self-formation and how that impacts the way in which they navigate the objective power structures of Southern Canada, and will help to contextualize food issues among urban Inuit. It addresses how the participants confront structures of power and co-opt or resist those structures. The participants used their food to negotiate their identity and confront power in Ottawa in ways which were unexpected and not previously addressed by the literature.

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1 Chapter: Introduction

1.1 Statement of the Problem

A great deal of attention has been given to Inuit foodways as they existed pre-contact (eg. Mary-Rousseliere 1984) or as they exist currently in the North as they relate to food security (eg. Ford 2009). These approaches are informative, but do not adequately address how food and Inuit identity relate and how that impacts the ways in which those individuals confront structural power, and thus miss an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the lived experience of food among Inuit. This project will look at how Inuit men self-fashion using food and how that influences how they contend with objective power structures. Little is known about how the subjective aspects of identity intersect with food and how that might serve as an epistemological tool for examining those subjective aspects of self and how they are mobilised to address objective structures of power and discourse. While there is a general need for this type of research among all groups of people, indigenous and settler, given the historical context and present day focus on the role of food among Inuit men this research is critical for informing future approaches to urban Inuit foodways.

1.2 Background of the Problem

Identity is that “distinctive character belonging to any given individual” (Tastsoglou 2002: 1). The ethnographic data contained in this paper is about individuals, and how they think about themselves. To put identity in motion, I have made use of the concept of self-fashioning. The process of self-fashioning is the process of constructing one’s identity and public persona according to a set of socially acceptable standards (Greenblatt 1980: 1).

Since it is not possible to fully describe the ways in which individuals construct the self and constitute their identity and to do so would ultimately produce an incomplete picture of an individual, the concept of foodways will be used as a way to narrow the scope, and serve as a tool to examine particular aspects of their identity. Foodways are the entire cultural, social and economic practices that go into producing and consuming food. In particular, foodways serves as a way to look at how a set of practices and materials are used to construct a self to address particular objective power structures.

Foodways are a way in which individuals perform gender, which is an important aspect of self-formation. Butler's (1990) concept of a performative understanding of gender underpins how gender is presented in this project. Gender is something that is done repeatedly, not something fixed or rooted in biology. Since the project involves men in particular, it is concerned with the performance of masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity can be said to be a dominant norm of masculinity, to which men may attempt to conform (Courtenay 2000). There is not just one masculine 'script', and although hegemonic masculinity may be an imagined ideal towards which men strive, there are multiple masculine performances which men employ, dependant on a complex set of cultural and social norms (Roos and Wandel 2005). For example, many notions of masculinity involve meat, notably whether or not a man consumes it. Although many men may consider meat to be masculine, there are many ways in which it is mobilised (Sobal 2005). An understanding of masculinity centred on hegemonic masculine can be essentialising, and it is important to be critical of those understandings of masculinity. In addition, it is important to consider the role of patriarchy, which is power structures that maintain

masculinity through the policing of other men and exclusion of women, as well as the role of agency amidst those structures (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). This project will add to the literature on how masculinity and food intersect with other aspects of identity.

Although gender is a social construct, it is also important to consider the bodies upon which a masculine self is constructed. Individuals have bodies upon which they use to perform their gender, and upon which their gender is performed. Substances that are consumed have a socially constructed meaning as well as potentially having a physical effect on a body; the two are never really separate. Eating food is a part of the masculine performance of gender, and may or may not be a part of how the body conforms to (or rejects) a gendered representation of self (Measham 2002). For instance, seal is healthy, life sustaining food in a physical sense, but in a culturally meaningful way, seal is also life sustaining for Inuit individuals (Borré 1991). Just as gender is expressed through substances that have a physical and social significance, health is both socially constructed and physically constituted, and the practices associated with a masculine performance can have an impact on health outcomes for individuals (Courtenay 2000). When researchers abandon attempts at purity, that is, looking at substances as either entirely social or entirely physical, the ultimate conclusions are more interesting than either approach might be on its own (Measham 2002). Understanding how masculine bodies are acted on by substances, and how those masculine individuals understand themselves and their identity, as more than a public health issue is an area of research where there is a lack of information.

For all individuals, gender identity exists in relation to other aspects of their identity, and those intersections are brought together and mobilised to produce a self. For people who were

the original inhabitants of a place, indigeneity can be an important facet of identity, and mobilised in different individuals are part of their self-formation. There is a dearth of research with indigenous peoples which presents them as they actually are, not relics of a different time: often urban, living in and contending with multiple different ways of knowing and being, and navigating a position between settlers and their own culture (Starn 2011). The relation between indigenous people and the city has not always been a positive one, but there are models and ways of thinking about contemporary, urban indigenous individuals which do not 'other' those individuals (Rosenblatt 2011, Brody 1971). Although there is an absence of information on the lived experience of contemporary indigenous people, there has been an attempt to place them within a narrative of modernity, where the move from a 'traditional' lifestyle towards a more 'western' one constitutes a move towards modernity. This paper attempts to address issues surrounding indigenous modernity, and other metanarratives which attempt to frame indigenous experience in western concepts (Englund and Leech 2000).

In addition to indigeneity as a lens through which to understand the identity of participants in the research, it also serves as a point of inquiry and critique. How an individual understands the world around them is constituted by the way they have been encultured and learned about their surroundings. These differing ontologies and perception of the environment can provide additional insight into hegemonic western practices that may be taken for granted (Nuttall 2009, Ingold 2000, Nadasdy 2005).

An attempt to understand everything about what makes a contemporary indigenous person an individual would be necessarily incomplete, so foodways can serve as a point of

inquiry into how that individual relates to the world around them and how they constitute their some facets of their identity. For Inuit individuals, food can be a form of social distancing from Qallunaat (white people), a way to assert Inuit identity, and the incorporation of non-local food stuff in particular ways can also be a form of asserting Inuit identity in new ways (Searles 2002). The consumption of particular foods and their use for the maintenance of health is also a way in which food can constitute identity (Borre 1991). Practices around food, such as sharing, can also demonstrate how an individual's identity is expressed through foodways (Collings et al. 1998). There is an absence of literature on how these processes occur when individuals are removed from the area where they are derive their status as Indigenous.

As individuals constitute identity and choose to mobilise different aspects of their self in order to express their identity and, in some cases, engage with their identity as indigenous people in order to self-fashion they are always doing so amidst structures of power. Power manifests in many ways, such as the power a state and state mechanisms exert on individuals. There are also other structures of power which are equally significant, but are sometimes less apparent. There exists discursive power, which can manifest in the form of a metanarrative; a set of organising assumptions, which predicate how ideas are expressed or understood, and where some ideas are better enunciated than others (Englund and Leech 2000: 226). An example of one such metanarrative is that of food security, although there are other sets of organising beliefs which influence how individuals perceive food. There is the possibility that the use of metanarratives of food influences the identity of urban Inuit men. Little is known about how the identity of those whose food is discussed may be influenced by different labels surrounding food, and how

the subjective formation of self might be influenced by an objective discursive structure of power.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The primary questions which this research seeks to answer are “How do Inuit men in Ottawa use food as a part of their process of self fashioning?”, and “How does the subjective identity of individuals intersect with objective structures of power?”

The research is significant for several reasons. By inquiring into how identity is constituted by the intersection of food, indigeneity and gender, the project helps to build a more intersectional knowledge of the complex, subtle understanding of how people exist in the world, and helps to begin to address the gap in the literature as addressed above

Starn (2011) states:

“We also lack for research that grapples with the gray areas of native life, namely the prosaic, sometimes banal dimensions of everyday experience that neither horrify nor inspire and yet are very much another face of a continent where the majority of people indigenous and not are not especially involved in political organizing or social movements of any kind” (190).

This notion of exploring those “gray areas” has also driven this project, and I believe that it is significant in its insistence on exploring the everyday. Other anthropologists will be able to use this research as a jumping off point for future examinations of the everyday. The new data

uncovered reveals what may be interesting formations of urban indigenous life, and may serve to generate questions for future research.

The project was significant for me; it was a period of introspection, as I considered my position as an anthropologist, a student, and a young man. It was a time of tremendous growth, and leaves me wondering what the next step will be for the project, and if next steps are even appropriate. My hope for the new data generated by the research, and its presentation as it is found here, is that it can be of benefit to the Inuit community by complicating notions of food and identity, and expressing the different ways in which members of the community those communities can benefit by further engaging urban Inuit.

1.5 Methods

The methods involved consisted of ethnographic and auto-ethnographic methods in Ottawa, Ontario and Iqaluit, Nunavut. The population from which participants were drawn was individuals who identified as Inuit men. Prior to discussing methods further, I think it is worthwhile to position myself within the research, and interrogate how that affected my methodology and its success. Alcoff (1988) first developed the concept of positionality to develop a way of understanding what a woman was, and address the identity crisis in feminism (435). Just as Alcoff posited that women faced oppression due to various relations in society, I as a researcher, and because of various other relations, was in a position of privilege in the project. I am a white, male, Anglophone, graduate student. There were times when this excluded me from some settings and spaces, but I would say it more often carried with it access to spaces where someone with less privilege might be denied access. I believe that all data in the

thesis should be viewed through that lens, and how that intersects with the ideas of power and discourse in the paper. The following background to the project also serves to position the research, and myself therein.

This project was based in part on previous research conducted as part of my undergraduate thesis, “An Ethnography of the Foodways of Newcomers to the Halifax Regional Municipality.” That project was completed in the spring of 2011. In that project, five households completed food diaries as well as interviews about their foodways in order to gain greater insight into how their foodways had changed since their arrival in Nova Scotia. During the course of that project, the role of gender, and in particular masculinity, became evident as a central organising category for the participants’ thoughts on food. This previous research inspired me to look more at the role of masculinity and food, and also informed my thoughts on the topic.

In Iqaluit, my methods were ethnographic. I had conversations with individuals whose professional work related to the project, but also spoke with people casually, and made rigorous field notes. I had some contacts in Iqaluit already, as well as people in the South who knew people in Iqaluit and connected me. In the time I was there, I feel that I established some connections with individuals, and also uncovered some points of inquiry that may yield interesting research questions in the future, provided that the community will be interested in having me conduct research with them.

The Ottawa fieldwork was completed in the spring and summer of 2014. Participant recruitment began earlier in the year, but response was minimal. I tried working through Inuit organisations in Ottawa, and posting flyers in areas where Inuit might see them, such as

friendship centres, and campus aboriginal centres. My biggest success came after being referred by an acquaintance to an Inuit man in Ottawa. After conducting an interview with him, I asked if he might know of anyone else who would be interested in being interviewed. He then referred me to the individual who then became my second participant in the formal interview component of the research.

The formal interviews began with meeting the participants at a location of their choosing and with a review of the consent forms, and an explanation of their contents. Once it was clear, the individual consented to the interview, and in both cases agreed to be recorded for transcription purposes. The interviews were open ended, and non-structured. An interview guide can be found in Appendix B. The interviews began with general questions, about how they were doing, and where they were from, then moved into questions about food, usually beginning with “what is your favourite food?” My intention was to get in-depth responses and stories which would lead to further questions and generate many points of discussion into questions of around identity by using food as a jumping off point. In both cases, this methodology proved successful. Both interviews were over an hour long. After transcription, the interviews were reviewed for common themes. Given the small number of interviews, this was done manually.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical approaches for this paper are grounded in the fieldwork experience, rather than being driven by a need or desire to hang data from theoretical scaffolding borrowed from another discipline (DaCol and Graeber 2011). One of the major theoretical considerations, as

established by the data in Chapter 3, is that of power. The type of power which this thesis examines is what Wolf (1990) described as the power “that not only operates within settings or domains but that also organizes and orchestrates the settings themselves, and that specifies the distribution and direction of energy flows” (586). This is the same sort of power Marx considered the ability of capital to control labour, or Foucault’s notion of “the ability to structure the possible field of actions of others” and what he calls “structural power” (1990: 586). As anthropologists, we are interested in the flow of this power, and how it creates social and cultural arrangements in space and time, and how power is implicated in the workings of this process (Wolf 1990: 587).

Gender identity, as previously discussed, is constituted through performance and relationships (Butler 1990, Alcoff 1988). This performance is constrained by fields of power. In addition to the above notions of power, this research is also feminist in its theoretical approach. Although the research does not address a feminine subject, the research is concerned with examining and exploring notions of masculinity and how that relates to the dismantling of patriarchy in this fieldwork, as well as in previous experiences in the field, when discussing masculinity with men, the conversation almost always turns to how they do not fit the vision of hegemonic masculinity (MacNeil 2012). Men maintain their position as men through various performances, and by examining how individuals contend with the patriarchy in their fashioning of a male self, there is an opportunity to critique patriarchy.

One of the primary goals of this project is to understand how objective structures of power relate to the subjective entity of identity. I believe that Althusser (1970) provides a useful

starting point for addressing these concerns. Althusser posited that all subjects are ‘hailed’ or called into existence, by ideology. This act of being hailed is called interpellation. All ideology acts or functions to recruit subjects among individuals or transforms the individuals into subjects, by the operation of interpellation (Althusser 1970: 22-23).

Due to the fact that the participants in the research are Inuit, I believe that any theoretical framework must contend with the fact that the ontology of the individuals involved in the research may not conform to theoretical frameworks developed in a western epistemological tradition. As such, Ingold (2000) and other authors are concerned with challenging preconceived notions of the environment and reality to provide some diversity and richness to the analytic tools deployed in the discussion of the data. Insisting on the troubling of categories is an important aspect of decolonising how we categorise thoughts and objects and adds richness to the interpretation of the data.

1.7 Assumptions, Limitations, and Scope

I assumed that all participants answered honestly with no intention to mislead me, and I have no reason to suspect otherwise. I assumed that all participants were experts on themselves and knowledge of their worldview, and all their thoughts were taken as correct and accurate.

Some limitations of the research were my own biases about the current state of food issues in Nunavut, and biases about what the needs of that community might need with respect to research. Other limitations were related to the amount of fieldwork time I had available within

the scope of my program of study and relating to the high cost of research in the Arctic. The project was also limited by my lack of fluency in Inuktitut.

The scope of the project was two formal interviews with Inuit men in Ottawa, transcribed in entirety, participant observation in Ottawa in conjunction with interviews, and a 15 day fieldwork period in Iqaluit, Nunavut, consisting of approximately 10 conversations and participant observation throughout.

1.8 Definition of Terms

In Inuktitut *Qallunaat* (*Qallunaak*, singular) means white person. This term is used throughout the paper, as the Inuit concept of *Qallunaat* is not totally analogous with settler notions of the category of 'white'. The term denotes a set of practices that are ascribed to settlers, which serve as a form of cultural differentiation, and the categories are mutable (Searles 2002). Country food means food that has been hunted or gathered on the land, where the land means the area outside of the communities of the Arctic. Country food is in opposition to foodstuff imported from the South, but country food is not necessarily Inuit food, and imported food is not necessarily *Qallunaat* food. The word *Inuk* is used in the writing; it is the singular of Inuit.

1.9 Summary

Chapter One has provided an overview of the research that is presented in the remainder of this thesis. Understanding how Inuit men contend with the hegemonic norms of Southern Canada, how they fashion themselves as individuals, and how this intersects with their gender

and position as Inuit was explored. Chapter Two will greatly expand on that topic, and provide more comprehensive coverage of the topic with regards to the existing literature. Using a mixed methodology, the data introduced in Chapter One will be expanded upon in Chapter 3, and will begin to answer the questions “How do Inuit men in Ottawa use food as a part of their process of self fashioning?”, and “How does the subjective identity of individuals intersect with objective structures of power?” Finally, the theoretical framework outlined at the end of this chapter will be used to frame the discussion found in Chapter Four.

2 Chapter: Literature Review

2.1 Identity

In this thesis, foodways are considered to mean the entire cultural, social, and economic practices that go into producing and consuming food. The ways in which what we eat, how we eat, and when we eat, “reflect the complexity of wide cultural arrangements around food and foodways, the unique organization of food systems, and existing social policies” (Koc et al. 2001: 1). Although this definition is broad, the intention of this is to allow for participants and their notions of food to be included in the analysis, and not ignored or excluded due to an insistence on a Euro-American understanding of foodways. The project is not an attempt to create an ethnography of the foodways of Inuit men in Ottawa, as any attempt at holism would be necessarily incomplete. The use of foodways is meant to be inclusive, not exhaustive.

To help frame the discussion of identity, I deploy the notion of self-fashioning, which describes the process of constructing one's identity and public persona according to a set of socially acceptable standards (Greenblatt 1980). Greenblatt (1980) employed the concept to understand new notions of self in the 16th century, but there have always been ‘selves’ (1). The concept is particularly important in this research as a framework for how we understand the individuals in research as it sets the concept of identity into motion. In my previous research (cf. MacNeil 2011) the use of the term self-fashioning also puts an emphasis on the role of agency; individuals are not passive participants, as an identity is thrust upon them; rather they are active participants in the project of self-formation. I used ‘identity’ as the primary object of study. Tastsoglou (2002) defines identity as “the distinctive character belonging to any given individual, or shared by all members of a particular social category or group” (1)”. Shifting the

research to being about self and identity in the sense of “the distinctive character belonging to any given individual” and not ‘identity’, as “shared by all members of a...social category or group”, changes the focus from an individual’s place within a particular collection of people or practices, to being about an individual’s place within society. This is important since the work involves Indigenous participants, who in Canada derive rights from membership from being part of group, not from their individual identity as an Indigenous individual (Sissons 2005: 118). There are very real implications to challenging individuals as part of groups or not. It is not the intent of this thesis to be construed as being part of a racist or colonial project of delegitimising the identity of any participants as being non-Indigenous because of their behaviours. Although this distinction is at the core of the research, this project is not about Indigenous identity in Canada, nor is it about creating frameworks for understanding self and identity as they relate to the group or the individual. To attempt to define a homogenous culture of Southern Canada to set in opposition to Inuit in Ottawa, and compare, would not only be inappropriate, but impossible.

Although this project is primarily about the self-formation of individuals and how food is mobilised as self fashioning, the social nature of self and identity is important. Identities are socially constructed, and there are ongoing renegotiations and reconstructions (Tastsoglou 2002: 1). These renegotiations and reconstructions are not atemporal, non-spatial or immaterial, but take place in a world of things, related to history and geography. In my analysis, an understanding of how individuals see themselves, and how they renegotiate their notions of self, are grounded in material and time. This is not just for novelty of approach; to use food as a device for understanding a process such as the formation of self, there is a necessary recognition

of the materiality of the food itself, in addition to the habits surrounding it. The project is not a structuralist approach to the subject, which I believe is hindered by a dialectical understanding of the subject. Understanding the complex nature of how identity and different forms of power intersect requires a non-binary understanding of forms of self.

2.2 Masculinity and Food

As part of self-formation, the renegotiation and reconstruction of identity plays a part, and for the purposes of this paper, gender is the aspect of identity. The framework I employ is Butler's (1990) performative understanding of gender. According to Butler "There is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results" (1990: 25.) Simply put, "we do gender". Understanding Inuit notions of gender at large is not the goal of this project, but by adopting a performative understanding of gender is liberating, as it allows for a full exploration of the socially constructed nature of self against societal standards. For the purposes of this research, part of the performance that is the expression of gender is the foodways of the participants, which can be considered a non-verbal form of communication, which is one of the ways in which Butler notes that performance can happen. Food is one of the ways in which gender is performed.

Sobal (2005) discusses the relationship of men, meat, and marriage from the perspective of singular masculinity and multiple masculinities (135.) Singular masculinity is a perspective that assumes the dominance of one set of male norms in a particular society and historical period that drive and structure men's actions (Sobal 2005: 136.) Multiple masculinities are perspectives

that assume plural conceptions of maleness and operate in a society and time period, with many ways of being gendered available which offers a diversity of cultural scripts for particular actions. (Sobal 2005: 136) Some examples of these 'scripts' could be a 'strong man' script, where physical might and virility are enhanced by eating meat to gain protein, a 'healthy man' script where warding off serious disease is enhanced by not eating excessive meat, a 'wealthy man' script where men have the ability to provide for themselves and family, and meat is a high status food, or a 'sensitive man' script where being supportive and considerate of others is linked to eating less meat and compromising with the dietary needs of a spouse. (Sobal 2005: 146-7) Hegemonic masculinity may serve as a prototype, but men can choose to follow or reject it in certain contexts, for example, a man eating a hamburger with his friends at lunch, but eating a salad with their spouse for supper. (Sobal 2005: 147, MacNeil 2011)

Courtenay (2000), Measham (2002) and Sobal (2005) rely on a notion of a hegemonic gender identity. Hegemonic masculinity, as a prototype of masculinity that may be followed or rejected in certain instances, can be a valuable epistemological tool for complicating understandings of gender. There is not a single masculine performance, but multiple ways in which males perform gender, based on their use of, or rejection of, certain aspects of hegemonic masculinity as a way to create an identity for themselves. (Sobal 2005: 136) As such, food can be used in multiple ways by men to perform gender in differing social contexts.

There are critiques of hegemonic masculinity, and while this paper is not an attempt to fully explore these criticisms, acknowledging them strengthens the analysis of the data. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) offer a synthesis of the concept of hegemonic masculinity and its critiques. One set of critiques is that hegemonic masculinity is essentialising or homogenising,

and that the concept of multiple masculinities which relate to a central hegemonic masculinity is inadequate for understanding the complex ways in which masculinity is expressed (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 836). By employing the concept of hegemonic masculinity, researchers have recorded an extensive ethnographic and historical corpus that demonstrates a multiplicity of social constructions of hegemonic masculinity; according to Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) “masculinities are configurations of practice that are accomplished in social action and therefore, can differ according to the gender relations in a particular social setting.” (836). A criticism of hegemonic masculinity is that there is a tendency for researchers to categorise and compartmentalise different forms of masculinity, without the blurred, individual experience of masculinity, where not all aspects of hegemonic masculinity might be followed (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005: 837). There is also ambiguity with the usage of the term, as well as what is actually considered hegemonic or not, and what it actually means, for instance when a man who holds power does not demonstrate what might be considered hegemonic masculinity in that time and place (Ibid.) Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) offer another critique, which is useful, in that hegemonic masculinity, as a masculinity that is premised on the continuation of the patriarchy, assumes a functionalist nature, where masculinity is a self-reproducing system (844). Rather, the ethnographic record shows that the maintenance of masculinity requires the policing of men, as well as excluding and discrediting women (Ibid.). To further complicate this, Demetriou (2001) suggests that there are two forms of hegemonic masculinity: internal and external (341). External hegemony is the institutionalised dominance of men over women, and internal hegemony is the social ascendancy of some forms of masculinity, and groups of men, over others (Ibid.). According to Demetriou, the differences between these two ways of

understanding hegemonic masculinity are not clearly articulated in earlier formulations of the concept (Ibid.). These critiques are important for several reasons, notably the insistence of specificity in determining what masculinity is for the participants and insuring that there is not a reliance on predetermined categories, which may not necessarily reflect those categorisations of the participants themselves. DaCol and Graeber (2011) argue that anthropology should return to its place as a discipline where fieldwork generates theory rather than one where theory is borrowed from elsewhere, and I believe that suspending essentialising categories is part of this project. The distinction between internal and external masculine hegemony is vital to an intersectional understanding of masculinity as well, where the study of masculinity can simultaneously be part of a project of dismantling patriarchy.

Julier & Linderfeld. (2005) discuss the absence of information on the relationship of men and food. The author demonstrates through a brief analysis of the show "*Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*" how men are often perceived in western culture as being inadequate in the kitchen. The straight men in the show are shown as being unable to cook, or lack the knowledge to prepare a meal in the 'proper' way. (Julier & Linderfeld 2005: 2) There have been consistent attempts to define the male cook as either a celebrity, a professional (e.g., a chef) or a hobbyist who cooks to show a particular style or talent, but the lack of research means that it is unclear "To what extent are these representations a reproduction of ideology, and to what extent are they a reflection of actual practices?" (Julier & Linderfeld 2005: 2) There are ample nutritional studies that document differences in men's and women's consumption patterns, but there is a lack of understanding of how gender and food operate together as fields of experience that shape contemporary lives. (Julier & Linderfeld 2005: 3) Although the analysis of the relationship of

gender and food has increased recently, most of the emphasis falls on women, as women are perceived to have a special relationship with food. (Julier & Linderfeld 2005: 3) Indeed, even the discursive analysis of men and food has not proceeded much past the framework that Thomas Adler laid out in 1983:

Dad's cooking exists in evident contradistinction to Mom's on every level: his is festal, hers ferial; his is socially and gastronomically experimental, hers mundane; his is dish-specific and temporally marked, hers diversified and quotidian; his is play, hers is work. Each of these ideal oppositions is reinforced by the real behaviours of male cooks" (Adler 1983: 51).

The research by Roos and Wandel (2005) is one of the few qualitative studies about the food of men. Whereas most previous studies have looked at the contributions of women, the research "explores how men of different occupational status talk about food and eating and how they explain, justify, and account for their eating." (Roos 2005: 170) The men in the study generally described their food choices as being mundane, routine, and ordinary, which supports the gender expectation that men do not care too much about food. (Roos 2005: 171). The men in the study viewed work as central to their identity and to their relationship with food, and as a reason for avoiding the ideal of a "healthy diet." (Roos 2005: 171-4) A recurring theme in the research was the idea of "coziness" and weekend food, as compared to weekday food, which was "fuel." (Roos 2005: 176).

Beyond the socially constructed meaning of substances or behaviours and how they might be mobilised to construct gender, there is also a value in understanding the physical impact of a substance on a body. Measham (2002) discusses the ways in which gender roles are enacted through the use of drugs (336). Rather than understanding drugs purely as a social construct, or

as purely a physical material which affects the body, Measham considers how drugs are done differently to create different socially constructed gendered meanings, and the physical effects of the drug allow individuals to conform to gender norms (2002: 355). For example, women with whom Measham conducted research chose stimulant drugs not only because they were the drug of choice in clubs (gendered spaces of drug consumption) but also because the physical effects of the drug, appetite suppression and the increased ability to be physically active, conform to gendered norms of the body (2002: 355-6). This work demonstrates the complex interplay between materiality and ideology which is important to recognize when analysing the participants' notions of the relation between food, identity and physicality. Demant (2009) offers some insight into how gender and substances come together around identity. Demant (2009) uses actor network theory to "enact" the teenagers who participated in the research, but also alcohol to look at how these actors connect in order to construct the selves of those teenagers. The concept of enacting substances is helpful for suspending the gap between objects and people.

There are several examples of literature on how material interactions with bodies are part of how we do gender. Courtenay (2000) discusses health behaviours, and the way in which gender is a larger determiner of health outcomes, even when ruling out social determinants of health, like poverty or ethnicity (1387). By making use of a performative understanding of gender, where gender is something that one does recurrently, the author undermines gender stereotypes of a hegemonic masculinity and femininity (Ibid.) Men and boys do commonly attempt to conform to and adopt dominant norms of masculinity, but they are not passive victims of these roles, they are active agents in constructing their masculinity (Courtenay 2000). The

author suggests that this agency is central in understanding the health outcomes of men, since health behaviours, as activities used as “a form of currency in transactions that are continually enacted in the demonstration of gender” (Courtenay 2000, 1388). There are many different things that are used as “currency” in these “transactions”, for example, wearing lipstick or a tie, but in the case of health behaviours, these activities can have an impact on health outcomes including well-being and longevity (Ibid.). This research is about how men’s health outcomes are based on behaviours that are related to hegemonic masculinity; if you substitute food behaviours for health behaviours, the research is quite similar to this project. The primary difference is that this project is not intended to measure health outcomes, or to assess wellbeing; studies of food and gender have typically been in the realm of public health research. This research will address health, but only insofar as participants self-identify the status of their wellbeing. What the participants think about their health is just as interesting, if not more interesting, than what a public health study might reveal.

2.3 Food and Inuit Culture

Indigenous peoples, and their foodways, have been an object of study within anthropology for much of the history of the discipline (Starn 2011). This has generally been done for the benefit of researchers, rather than the community under scrutiny. There have been few attempts to understand the many, often urban, faces of modern indigeneity (Ibid: 196). At a time when indigenous peoples are increasingly urban and living in ways not typically addressed by anthropology, this project, while not an attempt at creating a new approach to indigeneity, will attempt to add to the growing body of work that describes current complex configurations of indigenous identity. The literature on food has often suffered from a similar inability to address

indigenous peoples as modern people, unbounded from narratives of tradition. Given the sometimes traumatic ways in which aboriginal people in Canada have interacted with urban areas (cf. Brody 1971), this is also an attempt to gain insight in how urban indigenous people currently live. The literature demonstrates that the projects of better understanding the lived experiences of urban Indigenous people and challenging metanarratives of food are intertwined.

Although this thesis does set out to address the indigeneity of the participants involved, beyond their own conceptualizations of that aspect of their identity, as it relates to their food or otherwise, or their food as being distinctly Indigenous, Inuit people are very often studied because of their high level of food insecurity (e.g., Ford and Beaumier 2010, 2011, Ford and Berrang 2009, Kuhnlein 1995, Wein 1995, Beaumier 2010, Boulton 2004, Pakseresht and Sharma 2010, Searles 2002). A recent report shows that Nunavut has by far the highest rate of food insecurity in the entire country (Council of Canadian Academies 2014: 39). Many research projects attempt to improve the food security of the communities in which the work is being done.

Searles (2002) conducted research in Iqaluit, Nunavut, and serves as a good example of the intersection between Inuit culture, food and addressing current ways of indigenous self-formation. Searles traces how food and food activities become meaningful for Inuit individuals, and how these people make use of food not only to articulate cultural difference and cultural distinctiveness, but also to establish the discursive power and importance of Inuit food (Searles 2002: 55). Previous studies of food, according to the Searles, insist on interpreting from an economic or an evolutionary perspective, in that food is understood as being part of a subsistence based mode of production that is particularly suited for the Arctic (2002: 56). As a result of an

increasingly globalised Arctic, where non-local foodstuffs are more prevalent, Searles believes that a specific inquiry into how food is used by the Inuit to shape a modern identity is required (Ibid.). He describes an increasingly complex set of relations which serve to distinguish Inuit from Qallunaat (Ibid: 56). Changes in the social, economic and political sphere in Nunavut, including the creation of the territory as an Indigenous region, are constantly troubling the boundaries between what is Inuit and what is Qallunaat. For example, the capital of the territory, Iqaluit, has a population of roughly 4500, making it the largest centre of population in the territory, as well as the hub of economic and political life (Searles 2002: 59). Due to the differences in the community of Iqaluit and the rest of the territory, some Inuit consider Inuit who live there to be more Qallunaat than not (Ibid.). Searles' fieldwork revealed that the division between Qallunaat and Inuit is constantly in flux, and that Inuit objectify and understand the world in a particular way, and food is exemplary of these phenomena (Searles 2002: 57). He contends that food serves as a way of distancing Inuit from Qallunaat, as well as offering critique of Qallunaat society (Ibid.).

Searles offers an example of an interaction with an Inuit family in their home. Upon arriving in the home, Searles proceeded to the kitchen to help himself to tea, a practice that is customary in the region. Upon seeing orange juice in the kitchen, he changed his mind and asked politely if he could have a glass of that instead, being well aware of the high cost of the beverage. His host was somewhat annoyed with the request, and told him "Don't you ever learn? You don't have to ask." (2002: 61). It was not until later that Searles was made aware that by asking for food he was redefining the household as a non-Inuit one; asking for food, and the related implication of individual ownership, is a Qallunaat trait. For the Inuit involved in the

above example, food functioned as a critique of stinginess, a trait that is considered negative among the Inuit, but common among Qallunaat (Searles 2002: 61-2). Qallunaat food is not necessarily a reflection of Qallunaat-ness, and these foods can be mobilised so as to express Inuit-ness, and develop new forms of prestige and power.

Inuit notions of food, such as local ideas about the properties of Inuit food and their effects on the body, are an important part of defining the importance of Inuit food as well as individual identity. Alongside this is a process of revalorizing Inuit foods and questioning the social and nutritional value of Qallunaat food, as full time hunters see themselves as being increasingly marginalized (Searles 2002: 69). Searles considers that food serves as a symbolic, generative aspect of a modern Inuit identity, where folk categories of food into Inuit and Qallunaat allows Inuit individuals to distance themselves from Qallunaat and negotiate group identity. Rather than understanding Inuit foodways as functionalist and related to the environment, or evolutionary, and instead focusing on the way the individual constitutes their identity has important consequences for future analytical frameworks for research. Additionally, although the Inuit are understood to have a different cultural ethic of sharing and communality, this does mean that they do not constitute identities as individuals any less so than anyone else. A failure to recognize Inuit, despite their geographic isolation, as 'modern' individuals who constitute their identities through various processes, and also experience the impact of bio-power as exerted by states and institutions, is both parochialising and primitivising. The fact that Indigenous peoples use their foodways as a tool for creating 'self' is illustrated elsewhere (Hensel 1996: 104) as among the Inuit (see Searles (2002), which leads me to believe that it is an important analytical path to pursue.

Collings, Wenzel and Condon (1998) discuss the role of sharing in Inuit food systems; in particular, they seek to address the specific absence of sharing from the ethnographic literature in recent years (Collings et al. 1998: 302). The authors argue that the deficit in ethnographic information about sharing has been unproblematically accepted as proof that traditional forms of exchange are being eroded by the process of modernization, which is often taken as proof that Inuit culture is in disarray, or at the very least represents a major shift in the cooperative nature of Inuit culture (Ibid.). After outlining the ethnographic literature on historic food sharing patterns, the authors explore contemporary sharing forms. The authors concede that sharing patterns have changed, noting in particular, an increased importance put on individual's close consanguineal relations, especially in younger families (Collings et al. 1998: 311).

There is a large corpus of data dedicated to understanding food security in Nunavut. Ford and Beaumier (2011) specifically address the experience and determinants of food insecurity in their article. In their analysis, they make use of food security as a frame of reference for gauging the food situation in Igloolik, Nunavut. By conducting interviews, focus groups, and participatory mapping, the authors gained qualitative information on the daily experience of hunger. (Ford and Beaumier 2011: 47). Using qualitative data analysis, the researchers note several factors as determinants of food insecurity: affordability, harvesting cost, availability and quality, environmental stress and change, knowledge and education, poverty, addiction, fewer full time hunters, reduced sharing networks and climate change (Ford and Beaumier 2011: 50). According to the authors, these factors express the complicated set of processes and conditions, which exist in multiple spatial and temporal scales (Ford and Beaumier

2011: 58). Research on food in the south focuses on food as a cultural signifier, but in the north food is researched as something of which there is an inadequate supply.

Englund and Leech (2000) suggest that the topic of “modernity”, since becoming a popular way of framing cultural changes, has become a metanarrative. A metanarrative is considered by the authors to mean “a set of organizing assumptions of which only some may be enunciated in a given anthropological narrative” (Englund and Leach 2000: 226). They argue that this metanarrative of modernity performs the analytical function in ethnographies, rather than insisting on field driven theorizing (Ibid.). A similar condition has arrived in the study of food broadly, and specifically in the study of Inuit food, challenging the way we write about food for a group of people who are regularly addressed through a lens of food insecurity, should provide new insights.

Challenging metanarratives around food and food security and how this influences the conceptualization of Inuit lifestyles is an important part of this project. A related critique of food security is related to the problematic notion of the “Ecological Indian”. Krech’s core question in “The Ecological Indian” is about the difference between the image of the noble American Indian, and the de facto Indian behavior. There has been a tendency to view Indigenous peoples as the original conservationists, and combined with the concept of the “Noble Indian”, creates an imagined “Ecological Indian”, an indigenous person that personifies the western notion of environmentalism in their behavior and in their culture (Krech 2005: 78). Krech argues that while Indigenous peoples possessed a very detailed environmental knowledge and lived sustainably prior to contact with Europeans, that this does not imply that they were not necessarily conservationists, or intentionally trying to preserve their environments (Krech 2005:

79-80). This results in a situation where contemporary environmentalists assume (as is sometimes the case) that Indigenous peoples will be allies on environmental issues; in reality, Indigenous peoples do not necessarily see themselves as conservationist, which creates tension with western environmentalists (Krech 2005: 82). I believe that Krech's analysis is somewhat problematic, if only because of its tone, or the fact that it is written as if it were in a political vacuum, free from the possibility of its application to undermine Indigenous discourses on the environment. Despite this, the concept is valuable for understanding how we construct an exotic other, one that is different from us since it is closer to the environment, and somehow less cultural. Nadasdy (2005) adds a further critique to the notion of the "Ecological Indian", since trying to put Indigenous knowledge of the environment or ecologically into the terms of 'environmentalism' frames indigenous peoples beliefs and values in a fundamentally Euro-American way, which further marginalizes Indigenous peoples (Nadasdy 2005: 292). This insistence on Indigenous peoples as "Ecological Indians" has an impact on how Indigenous foodways are understood, and it is expressed in the literature. Building on Nadasdy's (2005) work, we can say that by insisting on leaving western notions of Indigenousness unchallenged, there is little attention given to complicated concepts such as of nutrition, health, and hunger for Indigenous people. An uncritical use of these terms in discourse frames Indigenous people's beliefs and values surrounding food in Euro-American terms (Nadasdy 2005: 291). Like Nuttall argues, by ignoring Indigenous ways of understanding the environment, and by extension, food, we are complicit in portraying individuals as passive victim, rather than agents in understanding and enacting their own environment. Just as alliances between Indigenous peoples and environmentalists are "ambivalent" (Nadasdy 2005: 291), perhaps these alliances between

Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous food activists will become increasingly tense as food becomes a more mainstream political issue.

The literature on foodways is expansive and forms the base for interrogating foodways as a part of an intersectional understanding of identity, and how discourse influences how we understand the foodways on individuals. In the following sections, Chapter 3 will introduce and describe the data collected during the fieldwork portion of the research, in the way described in the methodology section of Chapter 1. Chapter Four will use the literature as reviewed in this chapter and look at how it articulates with the data in Chapter 3.

3 Chapter: Findings and Analysis

This research consists of ethnographic data collection in Ottawa, Ontario and Iqaluit, Nunavut, and formal interviews with participants involved in the Ottawa portion of the research. The participants were those individuals in the population who identified as Inuit men, who were then solicited to participate in the research. Thus, the data is in the form of field notes and interview transcripts. The assumptions underlying the research were that I assumed that all participants answered honestly with no intention to mislead me. I assumed that all participants were experts on themselves and knowledge of their worldview, and all their thoughts were taken as correct and accurate. The following chapter is structured as follows: an introduction and thematic analysis of the interviews and participant observation from the Ottawa portion of the fieldwork, an overview of the exploratory work from Iqaluit, an overview of the literature on food security. Chapter Four will discuss the data, and how the data might articulate with the existing literature.

3.1 Fieldwork in Iqaluit

The research in Iqaluit was exploratory, in that it was meant to contextualise my work in Ottawa and prepared me for future research. I think in those senses, the fieldwork in Iqaluit was a success and yielded good insights, which aided the rest of the project.

I would classify my time in Iqaluit as a ‘classical’ anthropological field experience. I arrived in a place I had never been, began taking many notes and tried to gather as much information as I could to try and answer the questions that I had thought I needed to answer. The main thing different between my time in Iqaluit and a more classical fieldwork experience was

the timeframe. My partner was back in Ottawa and we were expecting our first child, so if my time had been longer than the two weeks I allotted for my fieldwork in Nunavut, I would have been too close to potentially missing the arrival of our child, and leaving my partner alone. It is also worth mentioning this because my field notes at that time reflect some of that urgency; an urgency to get as much out of my time in Iqaluit, urgency to figure out what it meant for me to become a parent, and urgency to get back to Ottawa to prepare for the arrival of our child.

The separation between Qallunaat and Inuit was pronounced. In the city, there were spaces that were definitely Inuit and spaces that were Qallunaat, and how each group interacted in each space was very interesting. I volunteered at the soup kitchen in the city, and spoke with some of the people involved. I couch-surfed to save money, and stayed with many southerners living in Iqaluit for work. The Inuit in Iqaluit seem to have research fatigue, but a group that is very interesting and understudied are all the Qallunaat living in Iqaluit, and in particular, the class of educated southerners working the lucrative government jobs.

I spoke with Inuit and the information gained from those conversations helped to contextualise my future interviews in Ottawa. One major feature of that was the connection was between food and masculinity, and hunting and masculinity. Whenever I spoke with anyone about my research project, they regularly assumed it was about hunting. I was told to, and did, speak with people from the Iqaluit Hunter and Trapper organisation because of the relationship between food and hunting for men. Another thing that I frequently heard was that men were “not all right”; that there were issues affecting men profoundly, and it was an underlying issue in the territory.

I had several of experiences of an individual not meeting me at the predetermined time. If I had stayed in Iqaluit longer I may have had the conversations but I think part of it came from the fact those being suggested to me to speak with were people who were already very busy, and often with good reason. There was one name in particular that kept coming up, and I was trying to have a chance to speak with him. I tried twice to arrange meetings; we met once, and he asked me to come by again at a particular time. When I arrived at the location, someone said he was at the correctional facility speaking with people there. Although I was sad to have missed an opportunity to speak with him, I could not help but feel that, of course, his work was more important, and I was just an interloper.

People in Iqaluit were interested in the fact that I was studying men, as there was a perception that young men were deeply troubled. I called up an organisation that worked on issues of violence against women, on the recommendation of someone I had met. When I told them I wanted to conduct research with men, they were very excited. They related issues of violence against women by men to systemic issues affecting men. Where my research failed to connect with their concerns was that it was about food. I encountered several people who were interested that I wanted to work with men, but a bit perplexed that I wanted to learn about their food. After some time in Iqaluit, I think I realised that this bewilderment might be related in some way to a sense of urgency regarding men. Issues impacting men in the territory, for many of the people I spoke with, were a matter of life and death, and wanting to research them was valuable. But by choosing to focus on their food, and not say, violence among men, or high suicide rates (both things that were mentioned to me as issues among men) I feel that I was

trivialising these serious issues. In retrospect, I believe that there is a connection between the foodways of Inuit men and violence. There is a close connection between Inuit notions of masculinity and hunting, with country food being predominately hunted (sc. Searles 2002). Many of the individuals with whom I spoke felt that the inability for men to hunt and provide country food was closely related to the issues that they had identified with Inuit men.

An important reason for the inclusion of the exploratory research from Iqaluit, may be beyond its position as a source of data but rather as a tool for future research. My time in Iqaluit served as a way to hone research questions, and think through issues, all the subsequent data collection and analysis was filtered through that experience. I believe that it is valuable to address that ethnographic fieldwork experience that help give direction to the project, in addition to the data gathered in what I would consider the auto-ethnographic value of the fieldwork.

3.2 Interviews

In the summer of 2014 I conducted interviews with two Inuit men living in Ottawa, Vernon and Jared. Both men completed written consent forms which were approved by the Carleton Research Ethics Board, and can be found in Appendix 1. As per the forms, a pseudonym has been used for both of the participants. Both participants agreed to be recorded, and that recording was then transcribed and used for the analysis. Having already completed interviews in Iqaluit, I had some experience in the field and was prepared for the actual process of conducting interviews, but had reservations about the project, its benefit to the community, and what participants might think of the topic.

My first interview was with Vernon. Vernon was referred to me by another researcher. I contacted him by phone and he readily agreed to participate. We agreed to meet at a coffee shop in Ottawa on an afternoon after he finished up work for the day. It was my first interview in Ottawa, so I was apprehensive. The interview was very straightforward; I asked questions, and they were answered with very short answers. I was worried that I was not getting information that was adequately in depth, or rich enough to be valuable. When I came to the end of my questions, it seemed that the interview might end at that point. Rather, Vernon began to speak more freely and, after being unbounded by the open ended questions, at more length about some of the topics covered in the interview. Most of the useable information from the interview came from that portion of our conversation. The interview would have probably lasted longer, but he was meeting a woman nearby for a date. The interview ended well, with Vernon offering the name of someone else who would be a potential participant, and leaving in what seemed to be a good mood, although how much of that can be attributed to the success of the interview or to his anticipation of his plans is a subject of speculation.

Vernon was a 33 year old man, originally from Rankin Inlet, Nunavut. He worked in Ottawa as a supply control specialist for a corporation that did contract work for governments and militaries. He had originally come to Ottawa looking for work. His current position was one that he “ended up falling into after [he] came.” Vernon had a variety of educational training, including a business management diploma he had completed prior to arriving in Ottawa, a supply management certificate that he completed on a part-time basis in Ottawa, and he was working on a project management certificate at the time of our conversation. Vernon had just learned that he

would be laid off at the end of July, as a major contract that his company had was coming to an end, but he did not seem concerned about his upcoming unemployment. He considered himself to be healthy and happy, and had expressed no major complaints about his current situation during our interview. He was single, recently getting out of a long term relationship. Vernon was also involved in the Ottawa Inuit community, had served as a board member for an organisation that supported Inuit in Ottawa, and had also participated in youth mentoring for Inuit men in the city.

At the conclusion of my interview with Vernon, he mentioned that he knew an Inuk man who would be a good source for my research. Vernon also mentioned that this man, Jared, was a vegetarian Inuk; he told me “Well he himself is almost the exact same age as me and is Inuk as well. He’s a vegetarian. Vegetarian Inuk. I remember the first time he told me that when I met him four or five years ago I just laughed in his face. Are you serious? It’s like an oxymoron.” He provided me with contact information for Jared.

Jared was also interested in being interviewed, but he had a fairly restrictive timeline, as he was very busy with work. We agreed to meet at his place of work, which was an Inuit organisation in Ottawa. I was really looking forward to this interview, I felt that I was warmed up, and that my questions and approach were better after having already spoken to someone. When I arrived for the interview, he was in the process of getting the organisation’s food bank ready to open. When someone came to relieve him we went to an office upstairs to do the interview. When I first arrived, we sat for about half an hour in the food bank, as clients came in, one at a time, to collect the food they needed, then left. I spoke with some of the clients, who

were wondering who I was, and I why I was sitting in the food bank. It was useful to spend time in the food bank as it informed some of our interview discussion, but it was also interesting to note the products that were available in the food bank, and the choices that the clients were making, such as the preference for convenience foods rather than ingredients. Jared had a good rapport with all of the clients that came in to the food bank, and it seemed to me that he had a good relationship with the community. The interview lasted more than an hour, with Jared answering the open ended questions, and at the end of the interview having a bit more of an open discussion. At the end of the interview, Jared offered to pass along information about the research to try and help find more participants. I left feeling that the interview had gone very well.

Jared was from Igloolik, Nunavut, and had been living in Ottawa for about four and a half years at the time of our conversation. He had originally come to Ottawa on a temporary basis, moving back and forth between Ottawa and Igloolik. He worked for an organisation in Ottawa working to support Inuit people living in the city. His position was a housing support worker, which involved helping Inuit in the city with housing issues, but also tasks such as running the organisation's food bank. Jared was living with his girlfriend, a quallunaak Ph.D. candidate at one of the universities in Ottawa.

3.3 Themes from Interviews

In both of the interviews, there were topics that were similar, as a result of the interview questions, such as explicit questions on a certain topic (for example, what do you think about food security?), but also thematic similarities. The analysis of the interviews involves breaking

the interviews into these thematic categories. The categories that emerged were food and identity, food and masculinity, and food and Inuit culture.

3.3.1 Food and Identity

Many of the questions related to food, and in particular changes in food. In general, both of the men experienced changes in their food after arriving in Ottawa, and both of them considered the changes to be positive. Despite this, they both experienced some nostalgia for some aspects of their former diets. They generally considered their health to be better since arriving in Ottawa, and their arrival signalled a major lifestyle shift.

Vernon experienced a major lifestyle shift since coming to Ottawa. When he first arrived in Ottawa he considered himself to be very unhealthy; “When I first came I was in the cheapest bachelor unit I could find in the market it was 600 dollars a month. I might have had Domino’s [pizza] every second day for the first month.” Additionally, he used his weight, and the subsequent change, to be a measure of his improvement in health since arriving in Ottawa: “When I initially came down, I was a heavy smoker and drinker and I weighed 240 pounds. I’m 160 pounds now, obviously I can make dietary changes, and for one I stopped drinking.” When asked how his food had changed, he discussed eating less country food because of lack of access, but he said the “Western” food he ate was generally the same. He mentioned in particular Kraft Dinner as being something he ate in both the north and in Ottawa, but that “[he hasn’t] had Kraft Dinner for 2 or 3 years now.” He stated that he now eats a lot less processed foods, and more fruits and vegetables. He cited price as a part of the reason for the shift in his diet, and the increased affordability of fruits and vegetables. His meal patterns also changed when he arrived

in Ottawa, and he stopped eating a large lunch, and instead small meals throughout the day.

Although he said that he had always cooked, he had not enjoyed it. He indicated that the move to Ottawa had shifted his perception of some food practices and cooking:

I am not a big fan of cooking for myself and back then I was not as health conscious. I would scoff at the thought of organic and things like that but – you can't get away from it so I guess you end up being assimilated to things that I would roll my eyes at –[which] I find myself very immersed in now.

The most obvious change in the foodways of Jared was his shift to vegetarianism. Without much prompting he spoke about his change to a vegetarian diet; I believe he has probably become accustomed to explaining his identity as an Inuk vegetarian. He described his shift from consuming meat to becoming a vegetarian:

I was living here about a year or so before that happened. What had happened was I found out about... some friends told me or I was just surfing on the internet... I found out about factory farming y'know or maybe it was one of those food documentaries I forget what it was called but yeah I found out about factory farming and as soon as I found out I boycotted all store bought meat. Unless y'know my dad and my sister they'll go to a farm ...to get meat. It's all y'know it's local and organic it's been harvested humanely. I would eat local food. I would eat wild game. Like traditional foods from back home especially working at the centre we have access to caribou and fish and beluga and seal. So I would eat that kind of meat but it is also much more expensive than store bought meat so it just became more and more spaced out. I was depending more and more on vegetarian food and I think I was eating like this for a year and a half – just kind of slowly weaned myself off of meat and the longer I went without it my desire for it became less and less. Y'know it's kind of weird if there's like pastries and stuff that has eggs like cake or whatever. I'll eat that I have no problems but I remember sitting in a restaurant one day and agonizing over whether or not I should order poached eggs or pancakes. It even extended that far until eventually I didn't want to eat eggs anymore. I didn't want to eat meat. Yuh. It was a slow process.

Jared seemed happy with his dietary changes since arriving in Ottawa, but he had encountered resistance to his choices. He said the resistance mainly came from Inuit, who were not used to

hearing about a vegetarian Inuk, while Southerners were more used to it. According to Jared “vegetarianism is so common lately like vegan, gluten free, dairy free...it’s just exploding like crazy.”

He also said that his diet had changed due to his girlfriend and her dietary restrictions. According to Jared, her health issues meant that she ate mostly organic food, and most of the food he ate was organic as a result. He felt that many of the changes in his diet were more a response to his girlfriend than actually living in the South. His girlfriend had also influenced his thoughts on food:

Living here must have a lot to do with it because you don’t really have those options up North. So there’s that. More organic foods. Also my knowledge of nutrition has changed as well but I think that has more to do with my girlfriend than in living here because she knows a lot of Indian cooking and she knows a lot about Eastern philosophies about health and diet. Mainly from her I guess.

Vernon’s perception of the changes in his diet were very positive. When asked if he thought the changes in his diet were positive, he said they were, but the question was related to a much larger change in his life:

...when I came here I wasn’t happy...My father just passed away with cancer and I hadn’t been in a good place for a long time for that. I was sick and tired of being sick and tired, feeling sorry for myself, making excuses for everything. Some bad things happen in your life, you can’t change that but if you just sit there feeling sorry for yourself and dwelling on them... using them as excuses and just stay stagnant then you deserve to be in that situation. I accepted everything that happened and I tried, right? I came here not knowing anyone for a fresh start and like I said just broadening my horizons just trying to make things -everything great. I love to say this is one of my favourite quotes “Every great accomplishment and achievement I’ve experienced in my life I’ve put myself out of my comfort zone” and I continue to do that now so coming here was for a change and I really didn’t have an option I would hate to think what other option vs coming here looking for change, positive change.

Jared was also very positive about the changes he had made to his diet, and the resistance he encountered. He considered it to be part of an ongoing shift, where greater learning about

food made him surer of his choices, and related it to his perception of health issues in the Inuit community. He said about the change in his diet

...the more I learn about food the happier I am I made these changes. And y'know some things like the meat have taken a long time are worth the effort. Yeah. Especially since in the unique Inuit community there's type 2 diabetes rising, incidents of stomach cancer, y'know colon cancer, colon and rectal cancer it's going up like crazy – yeah. The more I learn I am happy I made these changes.

Vernon expressed some nostalgia for the food he ate in Rankin Inlet. Country food had been a part of his diet in Nunavut and the move to Ottawa had changed his patterns of consumption of those foods. When I asked about his dietary changes, he spoke mostly about the change in country food:

No major changes initially except for no more traditional foods. I mean when my mom would come to visit or I would have a friend come or I would go to a friend's then I could have it but it is not as simple as going out on the snow machine after work, shooting a couple of caribou, harvesting them, taking them back and have that for the next month or two, now I actually have to wait for someone to bring that. I miss that obviously because I grew up eating something that's a delicacy to me and suddenly it's not there. Not in the quantities you're accustomed to"

Jared also expressed nostalgia for country foods, but also meat in general, and in particular, bacon. His cravings for country food, and Inuit practices around food would sometimes in the past cause him to forget his vegetarianism when he first made the shift:

I'd be helping to prepare caribou or something y'know cutting the meat from the bone and cutting it into cubes to make stews or whatever and just out of habit and accepted culture you'd just pop bits in your mouth here and there. I'd just catch myself going oh wait a minute. So there was a time there when I was missing caribou. And of course bacon. The smell of bacon...Sometimes bacon. Used to be caribou. I think it's more – It used to be the satisfaction of something and yeah once you cut meat out you might miss that satisfaction to some extent. There's something. I don't really know how to explain it. It might be part of that Inuit identity thing. Yuh.

His nostalgia and cravings for meat were related to his vegetarianism and his decision to not eat meat, but he also related it to Inuit identity.

Vernon had found that his move to Ottawa was positive for his health. He used his weight loss as an indicator of that, but also that he no longer felt “sick and tired.” His decision to stop consuming alcohol was also included in his assessment of how his health had changed. He felt that in his diet there was “room for improvement” and he was “guilty of going out and getting something quick and easy with my friends while we were watching the hockey or something or just picking up something at the local diner.” Throughout our conversation, it seemed that he perceived food that was processed was bad, in opposition to fresh fruit and vegetables. He said he did not buy meat at the store, but if he was offered it, he would eat it, and he said that he had taken vegetarian cooking classes in Ottawa. When we discussed food and identity, he said that he met a lot of people who were either “vegan or only organic” but when I asked if he was, he said he was not, and related it to experiences of his grandmother, and her upbringing. He said that Ottawa is great for learning about food, but he said there is a “learning curve” since “[he] is only two generations from living off the land.” He had heard that food banks in the city for Inuit people often give out more “junk type food”, and he attributed that change to the transition from living off the land, and the lack of educational opportunities that existed in Ottawa around food.

Jared discussed how food related to his health throughout his interview. His choice to not eat meat was linked to moral and ethical consideration about the condition of factory farming, but also to his perception of a healthy diet. I asked Jared what he thought made a healthy diet:

Food that is fresh. Preferably local. Food that you prepare yourself or someone else has prepared for you. The way the food is prepared is really important. But basically the fresher it is the health[ier] it is. If it hasn't been stored a long time. I don't consider food

that's been packaged for months and years healthy. It's probably tasty but I wouldn't consider it healthy.

The value that Jared placed on the freshness of food and the way it was prepared made me think of much of the literature about country food, and the Inuit tradition of eating food shortly after it had been hunted. I asked him if his notions of healthy food were related to his ideas about the Inuit diet. He felt that aboriginal people everywhere were experiencing a major shift in their diets. He believed that "...aboriginal people around the world, including First Nations and ...some East Indian people" shared the idea that if your body is craving something you should eat it. He suggested that many health issues emerge from the fact that food high in sugar, fat, and salt are causing a distortion of that idea, for example "you have a chocolate bar, and later on you're craving it; I don't know, your blood sugar spikes or something, you crash and you crave, to get your blood sugar up again." Jared said that some of these indigenous ideas surrounding food caused problems for the health of individuals, and he explained the food science mechanism behind them. His own food choices seemed to reflect a rejection to some extent of those ideas of food, as he mentioned his decision to not eat particular foods, including those that he craved. He had also used his experience with the Inuit community, and running the food bank, to illustrate some of his points about health. That is not to say that he was judgemental, but rather attributed issues surrounding food with a lack of education and Inuit notions of food, as well as lack of access in the North, issues which often followed people when they moved to Ottawa.

Both of the men involved in the research also discussed alcohol and its relationship to their health. Jared said he originally was travelling between Ottawa and Igloolik to work and he had "a lot of money and [he] just wanted to party." Vernon identified himself as a heavy drinker

in the past. I asked him how he viewed the relationship between food and alcohol, he identified the two as separate, but he did relate his consumption of alcohol to its high caloric content and the impact it had on his health:

I wasn't a casual drinker. I could but I didn't. If I was going out for beers afterwards it wasn't to have a couple. My mind was made up We were going out to have a good time right. It might end at 10 [PM] or it might at 2 [AM]. More likely 2 [AM]. It wasn't ___ y'know. Majority of my friends still drink and I hang out with them it doesn't bother me at all but I wanted change but it reminds it doesn't interest me in the slightest it because it's part of my old life. I've distanced myself from it, it just doesn't appeal to me anymore. Continuous improvement right? If I felt like having a drink I would have a drink. ___ Like I said I was 60 pounds heavier so you can imagine how much my ___ eating habits have [changed].

3.3.2 Food and Masculinity

We discussed masculinity and how that related to food. I asked Vernon what he thought about masculine food:

I might have before but you look at some of the UFC fighters who are completely vegan but the small part of me thinks, Y'know meat. Especially an animal you've hunted and caught yourself. How can you get more masculine than that? I'm just trying to think of the exact opposite of that. What would be a feminine food? Thimble cakes? Vegan thimble cakes? I don't really think of food in those terms right now.

Jared did not say very much about his particular notions of gendered food. He did indicate that meat was masculine, and that hunting was linked to that as well. For Jared, it seemed like his identity as a man, and his choice to not eat meat, was closely related to his identity as an Inuk man, and when asked about his thoughts on gendered food, spent quite a bit of time discussing Inuit identity, and how that related to hunting. He also provided some insight into the intersection between his identity as a man, and his identity as an Inuk:

“My identity as an Inuk I was pretty insecure [about] for a while. I stopped speaking my language and actually I was always a bit insecure about my Inuit identity because y'know

back home you kind of, it has become more unofficial, but your initiation into manhood was catching your first caribou or catching your first polar bear. I've never had that experience. My dad is from New Brunswick and has never let me fire a gun. My cousins and all my friends were bagging their first caribous and I was still begging to be allowed to shoot. So there was a time but I don't think it's been as big of an issue lately. I've been speaking more Inuktitut. I've been reading more. I've been kind of coming more to terms to be Inuk or to even be a man it's not – sure country food and hunting is an aspect of it but it's not the whole thing.

I asked what he thought it meant that people were using the term food security, rather than a related term, like hunger. He said that he felt that hunger had a different feel to it, and food security did not have the same effect. He said that when his clients lack food, they say they are hungry. He said he would be surprised if any of his clients would actually use the term food security. He also estimated that about 90% of his clients were food insecure, so although they do not use the term, hunger is a significant part of their experience.

3.3.3 Food and Inuit Culture

Both Vernon and Jared had various thoughts about how their food choices relate to their Inuit identity and culture as Inuit men. By culture, I am not referencing a monolithic entity of “Inuit Culture”, rather I mean what the participants were discussing what they considered to be part of a shared Inuit identity and what they considered to be part of Inuitness. Jared spoke about Inuit food and identity more generally given his job, as well as what that meant for him personally. His choice to not eat meat and the resulting challenges he had faced seemed to have provided some interesting insights into that relationship. He said that most Inuit are fine with it, but that he is still “a bit of an oddity” and faced resistance. According to Jared, there are Inuit who do not eat Southern meat, but eat country foods, and call themselves vegetarians. As such, there is some exposure to the concept, but his decision to “cut off meat entirely” is a rarity.

When asked if he knew of any other Inuit vegetarians, he said he knew 2 or 3 who ate only country food and used the term, but he was the only Inuk he knew for sure who had totally stopped eating meat. As a result of his food choices, Jared had faced criticisms, he had been called “a waste of an Inuk” and not a “pure Inuk.” He was very understanding of those critiques and said “you just have to understand where that’s coming from, y’know? I didn’t take it personally; I can see where they are coming from.”

Jared had embraced some of the elements of Inuit culture, which he had identified as resilience and ability to adapt, and applied that to the way in which he saw himself living in Ottawa currently:

I mean Inuit people are kind of known for surviving in super harsh conditions and being able to adapt. Personally I think this is just an extension of that this is adapting. I am living in a Southern environment I am eating southern foods I am eating healthy foods and y’know I don’t think of that as a rationalization. There is something really meaningful about it and so I get this joke all the time “What do you call an Inuk vegetarian?” “A bad hunter”. I get that constantly. But y’know it’s fine I just laugh with it.

Vernon discussed some of the changes to his foodways and how that related to his perceptions of his identity as an Inuk. He said a lot of people he knew were vegan and organic, and that he had taken vegetarian cooking classes, so I asked if he was vegan himself. He was not, and the reason was related to his family history:

No, I don’t know if I ever could be [vegan] for the sole reason that my grandmother has survived starvations. She was left behind with her mother when she was 13 by the rest of the camp because they didn’t have food they just left – y’know - they couldn’t fend for themselves – they were just dead weight --so they walked 250 miles to the next, nearest community – they ended up surviving -- it took them 2 weeks or something – and I mean it was winter too – to know and understand that my grandmother whose 74 years old now – still alive and still hunts caribou – what she would think and feel if she found out I was a vegetarian. She would have done anything for a good meal. Just ethically, to me, I don’t go out of my way to buy red meat at the store but I will never ever turn it down if I am at

someone's place. If someone has prepared something for me I will never say no I don't eat meat.

Jared also discussed how food and culture were related for the Inuit community in Ottawa as a whole. According to him, at pretty much all of the programs offered by the Inuit organisation for which he worked, they served some sort of country food. He said that many of the Inuit who come are low income, staying in shelters, and eating a lot of food which was canned or dried, so for many clients they would come to programs at the centre and find say that the food was healing. Jared felt that "they get a sense of their identity back from eating country food." He said that the practices around country food are "deeply ingrained" and that often during a program when people are eating country food they will begin to tell hunting and camping stories. Jared summed up his thoughts on Inuit identity: "If you want to be considered Inuk you have to speak Inuktitut and part of the Inuk community and you have to eat country food."

Jared related some of the issues he saw with Inuit health, and the way food has changed with Inuit notions of health. One example that he discussed was the idea that being overweight was healthy. He said "I've had elderly women, middle aged women tell me they are suffering from diabetes or some form of cancer and they tell me their doctors are telling them to cut out pop and you have to start eating healthy and the doctors say you have to lose weight and they'll just say, no I don't, I'm big, I'm healthy."

As I had envisioned and hoped for the interview portion of the research, food had served as an interesting entry point into conversations relating to broader topics about identity, masculinity, and indigeneity. The data presented in this chapter was collected as part of a multi-

sited, mixed methodological approach. The interviews with participants in Ottawa revealed insights into topics of gender and masculinity, identity, indigeneity, and food security. The fieldwork in Iqaluit provided a lens through which my other analysis is filtered, and opened up new avenues of inquiry and previously unnoticed relationships. Finally, the food security literature provides a way of looking how food issues in the North are perceived, and provides another way to analysis how discourse can impact how individuals self-fashion. The following chapter will discuss the data as it relates to the literature and how the questions initially posed might be answered.

4 Chapter: Discussion

Chapter Three detailed the data collected portion of the research project, and this chapter will examine how that data relates to the existing literature, and how to frame this issue theoretically. To this end, I will address each of the research questions as they relate to the literature in Chapter Two and how the ethnographic data in Chapter Three relates to that literature. I will also insert critical views on the discussion where necessary, and use the final portion of the chapter to elaborate on the limitations of the research and a critique of the project.

The major research question that the project set out to address was “How does the subjective identity of individuals intersect with objective structures of power?” Little is known about the specific process where urban Inuit men fashion self, but little is also known about how this happens generally as well. Using the interviews with participants, we can comment on how these individuals address structural power and how that is part of how they negotiate their identity.

Additionally, the thesis addresses the question “How do Inuit men in Ottawa use food as a part of their process of self-fashioning?” This question was raised mainly as a result of an absence in the literature: men are often left out of the literature on food, and particularly men, but when men are represented in qualitative research on food, it is often non-Indigenous men (sc. Julier & Linderfeld 2005, Sobal 2005). Those studies that do look at urban indigenous foodways sometimes lack an intersectional lens, or focus solely on the impact of colonialism as a way of understanding foodways (Foley 2005). The fieldwork in Iqaluit revealed that the issues faced by men was related to their ability to get out on the land, and by extension, their food. Understanding how urban Inuit men conceptualize their issues in the South provides a valuable

comparison to what was uncovered by fieldwork in Nunavut. It is also important to address this question as it helps to illustrate the messy, intersectional nature of everyday life, where it is difficult to compartmentalize and separate bits of identity from one another. As Starn (2011) discusses, there is little known about the mundane and banal aspects of aboriginal experience, and this question is meant to address that gap in the literature by expanding our knowledge of the everyday by centring a discussion of identity on foodways.

As I address the questions in the following section, the responses generally follow the thematic categories addressed by the research: food and identity, food and masculinity, and food and Inuit culture. As was revealed in Chapter Three, the interviews exposed the complex ways in which foodways were mobilised by men in Ottawa. This chapter will seek to further contextualize those narratives and demonstrate how they correspond with the existing literature.

4.1 Question #1 “How do Inuit men in Ottawa use food as a part of their process of self fashioning?”

4.1.1 Food and Identity

As seen in Chapter Three, both individuals used their foodways as a means of constructing their identity in a way that corresponded to “socially acceptable standards.” When asked about their thoughts on how their food had changed since arriving in Ottawa, the responses were overwhelmingly positive. For both men, the move to Ottawa coincided with the construction of an identity that distanced themselves from past habits, in particular, the consumption of alcohol and what was perceived as “unhealthy” foods. Vernon explained his reason for changing his foodways in Ottawa after being asked why his diet had changed:

“...when I came here I wasn’t happy...My father just passed away with cancer and I hadn’t been in a good place for a long time for that. I was sick and tired of being sick and tired, feeling sorry for myself, making excuses for everything. Some bad things happen in your life, you can’t change that but if you just sit there feeling sorry for yourself and dwelling

on them... using them as excuses and just stay stagnant then you deserve to be in that situation. I accepted everything that happened and I tried _____ ,right? I came here not knowing anyone for a fresh start and like I said just broadening my horizons just trying to make things -everything great.”

Vernon chose to discuss issues relating to the nature of happiness and personal events when asked about whether he thought the change in his diet was good. Like Jared, Vernon also experienced a major lifestyle shift after arriving in Ottawa, which he considered positive. He drank and considered his weight to be an issue. Food was an important part of his identity, and he ate a diet that he considered to be healthy, including small meals throughout the day, and a limited amount of red meat. Jared’s switch to vegetarianism seems to have been largely mediated by an ethical concern and the socially constructed meaning of the food, although health was an issue. Food is related to our identity and how we see ourselves in the world. When both men wanted to change their lives and present a different public persona, a change in food was part of that.

The interviews revealed that what was socially acceptable varied according to a diverse set of conditions and the individuals who were observing the participants. When describing his vegetarianism, Jared said: “I found out about factory farming y’know or maybe it was one of those food documentaries I forget what it was called but yeah I found out about factory farming and as soon as I found out I boycotted all store bought meat.” To abstain from meat was to eat as a way that was more ethical. By self-fashioning in this way, he was adhering to a set of standards that his girlfriend would find acceptable, but were unacceptable to some Inuit, as evidenced by derisive comments he received (eg, “waste of an Inuk.”) His decision to not eat

meat constitutes a challenge to the structures of power that is capitalism, in the form of factory farms and the way in which those facilities treat animals. His resistance to that system, in the form of not eating meat, does not preclude his ability to self-fashion in a way that prevents him from participating in the Inuit community in Ottawa. Jared was also closely tied to that community in Ottawa, working with an Inuit organization that helped in the transition to life in Ottawa, and the organisation's food bank. Jared enacted his resistance to structural power as a reaffirmation of Inuit identity: "Personally I think [my change in diet] is just an extension of that this is adapting. I am living in a Southern environment I am eating southern foods I am eating healthy foods and y'know, I don't think of that as a rationalization." His choice to follow up with "I don't think of that as a rationalization" demonstrates that he is aware that he an active agent in determining how his identity is constituted.

While Jared's desire to oppose factory farming through his dietary practices constitutes a resistance to particular forms of capitalism, his knowledge of vegetarian food constituted a piece of middle class culture, and carries with it particular status, as well as due to his choice to live in the South (Higgins 2008: 146). Jared's position can be understood as an attempt to pass in some ways as a Southerner, and to participate an aspect that of Qallunaat life that were permitted because of the status associated with his advanced knowledge of a particular foodways. The image of the vegetarian Inuk, giving out food to, presumably, omnivorous Inuit, is symbolically loaded. Jared said:

"We have a lot of Inuit people who are low income that are staying in shelters they get their food from food banks and y'know the food banks they offer a lot of canned food a lot of dried food that kind of thing and so whenever we have clients come and have country food they say it's so healing - they get a sense of their identity back from eating country food."

Jared was a gatekeeper for the community, over a store of what was largely Quallunaat food, and he himself chose to not eat country food, the food that those who actually ate from the food bank craved the most. Although I do not wish to try and fit Jared into, or between, a binary of Inuit and Qallunaat he was something of a liminal figure (Turner 1967). By deciding to not consume meat, he had status and identified with the foodways of Qallunaat, but his work meant he was directly implicated in the foodways of many Inuit in Ottawa. He was able to walk the line between Inuit and Qallunaat and be powerful because of it. As our interview began, he opened the door to the food bank to allow the Inuit assembled to enter to get food, and he controlled how many people entered the food bank at a time; his power is not just symbolic, but also structural. His choices surrounding his foodways were part of a process of self formation that allowed him to conform to Quallunaat norms, while still being Inuit in Ottawa.

Vernon discussed how his food changed based on his friends in Ottawa. He related his decisions about which food he consumed with the people who were around him at particular times. When asked about his favourite food, he said:

I am very partial to pho. I like Asian food. Since I am single now I don't go through the process of making a big meal... it's a lot of lately.... just y'know - mixed vegetable stir fry or frozen pizza. I am not going much further than that or even if I've been on the run it's going to be like a bowl of cereal or something. I've been eating out a lot which y'know – It's a good thing I jog but as any young man would be I suppose not only a teenager I just mean-- someone on the run – that's a meal.

When asked whether his preference was a choice, he said:

Circumstantial. I'm not going to spend 45 minutes cooking a meal for myself. If I am having company sure I'll cook a nice big meal. I mean just two months ago is when I separated from my girlfriend – 2 boys. Every meal was a thorough, healthy meal.

His decisions around food were based on his relationships with others, and how he constituted his identity as a single man, was based in part on his choice to eat quick, easy meals. Much like the previous work by Roos and Wandel (2005) was the dichotomy of quick easy food and more elaborate meals with partners. Unlike the participants in the research by Roos and Wandel, where participants linked their decision to eat an unhealthy diet their identity, Jared and Vernon both pursued a “healthy” diet and considered that to be a central part of their identity. Despite the similarities in the research a major difference which account for difference would be the position of Vernon and Jared as middle class, whereas participants in the earlier research were working class individuals.

The work of Courtenay (2000) is useful for understanding how individuals perceived their health, its relation to food choices, and their masculinity. The participants in the research are not passive victims of hegemonic masculinity, but exert agency to enact practices which enact a masculine self, but also impact how they perceive their health outcomes. Vernon said he would go out with his friends and eat food which was not healthy and watch a hockey game, which conforms to masculine notions of food, but that act also influenced the determinants of his health.

A major concern of the literature on food of Inuit, and of Inuit living in Iqaluit was food security. The literature on food security had little to say about the experience of Inuit men in the city, despite the participants both having identified hunger as an issue for Inuit in Ottawa. Inuit in Ottawa sometimes did not have enough to eat, and there was a need for a food bank for Inuit living in the city, but literature that examines the issue of food security among Inuit is focused largely on the North, but not people from the North once they leave. For the Inuit men in Ottawa

who were interviewed, they did not see themselves as food insecure, or that food security was part of the way in which they self-fashioned. In the interviews, I had anticipated that a discussion of food would turn to food security, or either a lack of calories or a discussion of food that was appropriate. In both cases, the participants were very happy about their food, and any deficiencies were related to health rather than food security. When I asked them “are you food secure?” they both said yes, and upon further querying that food security could mean even food that was considered culturally appropriate or comfortable with, they still insisted they were food secure. Literature on food security sometimes problematizes notions of “what is enough?” for the participants in the research they maintained that they were food secure, whether it was insecurity due to a lack of calories, or a lack food of a specific nature, leading to a proliferation of definitions (cf. Maxwell 1996). This caused me to wonder to what extent attempts at expanding the category of food security is the work of academics and policy makers striving for holism in the category, and how much is driven by the lived experiences of those who experience hunger.

Due to Jared’s career, he had firsthand experience working with those in Ottawa who experienced hunger. He told anecdotes about people in Ottawa actually experiencing hunger, to the point of fainting in one case he described. I asked him about food security in Ottawa, and he said that there were people in Ottawa who were food insecure. When I asked if those individuals saw their situation as food security, he said, “when I heard anyone refer to [lack of food] they just say I’m going hungry, my family is going hungry. I would be surprised if any of my clients use the term food insecurity.” I asked about what he thought the impact of referring to food security as hunger might be, and he said, it had a different feeling if it was referred to as

“hunger.” This could be seen as discursive power erasing lived experience of hunger. Jared suggests that people actually experiencing hunger do not call it food insecurity is also significant. The fact that hunger is still the predominant way of referring to hunger, and that the language of food security has not entered the vocabulary of those to whom it is applied, is evidence that the discourse, if not influencing the self-fashioning of individuals, may at least be a demonstration of power, as language may be a factor in limiting who can enter certain arenas and discuss ‘food security’ rather than hunger. There may be a link to the rise of social media campaigns to address the issue, such as the *Feeding my Family* campaign, which relies on photos, non-academic language, and popular web platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to demonstrate the structural issues creating food insecurity (Feeding My Family 2014). It is also interesting to note that the title of a popular grassroots campaign to address hunger, *Feeding my Family*, uses language very similar to what Jared said he hears from clients: “my family is going hungry”

Both of the men felt that their responses to the interview were unhelpful, and both apologised at the end of their interview. I found that very interesting, because I had been struggling to get an interview for so long at that point, that I was happy to actually be speaking with anyone, but in retrospect upon review of the literature, this behaviour seems to be part of a pattern of men thinking their food choices were inadequate. A similar phenomenon was noted in my previous research, where young men felt their responses were inadequate because they were not “real immigrants” (MacNeil 2011). Similarly, Roos and Wandel (2005) note that participants considered their food choices to be banal, mundane, and straightforward, compared to others, or the work of Julier and Linderfeld (2005) where heterosexual men are frequently cast

as being unable to cook and being inadequate in their dealings with food. I think that the disparaging comments relate to their position as men, in particular, to their position as urban Indigenous men. Jared said that someone had said he was not a “pure Inuk”, and that he had not gone through “rites of passage” like hunting a caribou when he was younger because his father had not taught him. Vernon was worried that he was too “against the grain” for his interview to be of value. Both of the men identified as Inuit and discussed how their culture was important to them, and related to their identity, but neither of them felt like they were a representative Inuk. I think there is no representative Inuk, just as there is no representative Qallunaak, but both men seemed to view their identity through a lens of authenticity, where there was an authentic Inuit ideal. Jared suggested that to be Inuk you needed to speak Inuktitut, be part of the Inuk community and eat country food. His inclusion of “eating country food” as a prerequisite to be part of the category of “Inuk” is interesting as it necessarily precludes him from being a member. Vernon said his decision to eat meat was part of what made him Inuk, but he was not sure what exactly it was that made someone Inuk. He had mentored young Inuit men in Ottawa, and he had had a chance to discuss these topics with them, and look at what made them Inuk, and food had always emerged as one of those categories that established identity.

In addition to the agentic capacity of Vernon and Jared to construct their identities, an examination of power is an interesting epistemological lens. The type of power that is interesting to me is what Wolf (1990) describes as “structural power”, that is the power that operates in settings but also creates the settings. It is impossible to separate the individuals in the

research from fields of power. Foodways serve as a point of inquiry into the identity of the individuals, but how they are mobilised to constitute identity is complex.

4.1.2 Food and Masculinity

Masculinity is a useful analytical tool for understanding how participants self fashioned using foodways. Despite participants not referring to food in a gendered way, there were still aspects of their identity that were influenced by masculine understandings of food, or by rejections of those masculine norms surrounding food. While their identity as Inuit was rooted, in that not behaving like an Inuit did not revoke group membership (Jared was still Inuit even though he did not eat meat), masculinity served as a more fluid category, where they could enact different masculine scripts at different times more readily. If we use Alcoff's (1988) notion of positionality, then identity is derived from a series of relationships. Those relationships are fluid and changing, and individuals mobilise their agency in order to enact them differently at varying times depending on social and cultural arrangements. For example, Jared attributed his dietary awareness to his girlfriend, a Quallunaak woman:

Yeah I would say so. I've been – especially with my girlfriend. She suffers a lot of health issues her immune system is not very strong so it's really important for her to eat mostly organic food so that's one of the changes that has happened. Most of our groceries are – most of the food we eat is organic. We go for local as much as possible but I am not sure – yeah. Living here must have a lot to do with it because you don't really have those options up North. So there's that. More organic foods. Also my knowledge of nutrition has changed as well but I think that has more to do with my girlfriend than in living here because she knows a lot of Indian cooking and she knows a lot about Eastern philosophies about health and diet. Mainly from her I guess.

Contrary to Jared, Vernon had a preference for quick, easy food, which he attributed to having his previous long term relationship end.

Since I am single now I don't go through the process of making a big meal... it's a lot of lately.... just y'know - mixed vegetable stir fry or frozen pizza. I am not going much further than that or even if I've been on the run it's going to be like a bowl of cereal or something. I've been eating out a lot...

Men frequently alter their food choices to correspond to those of their partners, and men who show strong preference for meat may opt for the food preferred by a partner when eating with them (Roos & Wandel 2005). Men in relationships frequently demonstrated that they would not eat their preferred foods in order to conform more to the food of their partner (MacNeil 2011: 25). Both Jared and Vernon conformed to this demonstrated relationship between the food and how the men constructed their identity in relation to their heterosexual partners. Both of the participants conformed to southern expectations about the relationship between food, men and their partners.

Vernon discussed how his mother had to buy country food from people because she did not have a "man to hunt for her." He also based his decision to continue eating meat on a story about his grandmother and great-grandmother facing starvation. While Vernon did not face food insecurity, narratives of food security were a part of his identity, and in particular narratives of women dealing with a lack of food. He also said that he got to eat country food when a friend, or his mother, sent some south to Ottawa.

An understanding of masculinity centred on the hegemonic masculine can be essentialising, and it is important to be critical of those understandings of masculinity. Vernon seemed to think about food in a way which we would call multiple masculinities, where a very masculine individual can eat any food. When asked about masculine food he said,

I might have [thought there was masculine food] before but you look at some of the UFC fighters who are completely vegan but the small part of me _____ y'know meat. Especially an animal you've hunt and caught yourself. How can you get more masculine than that? Im just trying to think of the exact opposite of that. What would be a feminine food? Thimble cakes? Vegan thimble cakes? I don't really think of food in those terms right now.

Vernon still believes that meat is masculine, but he troubles the food and gender binary by wondering if the opposite of meat is cupcakes, and has trouble with that idea. He attributed food preferences more to individual choices, and related an anecdote about a female friend who would not eat food without meat and felt it was not as good or “distasteful”. Despite this, he expressed that there may be some relation between gender and food. He also said in the interview that his mother did not hunt, or did not have good access to country food, because she did not have “a man around.” He also related his preference for quick and easy meals to being single and no longer living with a woman. Vernon's discussion of masculinity indicates that he believes that there is a hegemonic masculinity based on the idea of hunting and strength, but this can be achieved with or without the consumption of meat.

Understanding how masculine bodies are acted on by substances, and how those masculine individuals understand themselves and their identity, Vernon's food choices and how they relate to his identity could perhaps be best understood by examining the food as a social object and also as a material one with effects on his body (Measham 2002: 355-6). Although he always considered himself masculine, by eating food he considered unhealthy, Vernon was fashioning a masculine self, but in his current food choice, he was eating food that was fulfilling a “healthy man” script (Sobal 2005: 146-7). In his previous relationship, he ate meals which were healthy as well, but were prepared and eaten by the family, and he was fulfilling a “caring

man” script. Although these scripts deviate from hegemonic masculinity, Vernon was still enacting a masculine performance. By eating foods that he thought were healthy and in a way that was healthy, they also allowed him to enact that gendered norm of the body, which he perceived to be of strength and fitness (Measham 2002: 355-6). His decision to eat small meals throughout the day was a reflection of that:

“A lot more fruits and vegetables throughout the week. It’s just more cost effective and easier because I don’t like eating a big lunch that makes me groggy after work for the afternoon. I’ll eat two bananas, two oranges, two apples throughout the day with two bran muffins. I am constantly not hungry but I mean I might not eat all that in one day I might just have half of that”

His choice to consume food throughout the day had a physical impact on his body (lack of grogginess, “constantly not hungry”) but also had a socially constructed significance, as Vernon related the consumption of small meals throughout the day as a part of a health regime. The choice to eat small meals is also reflected in the literature on Inuit foodways, but he never explained if his decision to eat in that way was related to his Inuit identity (Searles 2002: 71). Jared also related a change in his health to his change in foodways, he felt that he was healthier, although it is less clear how the food specifically worked on his body to produce the gendered norm he sought to create, but his decision to be vegetarian, as well as reaction to injustices in the practice of factory farming, was also related to a desire to be healthy.

Good health was an important part of Jared’s identity, and he spoke about how he perceived his health to be better as a result of his food changes, and a part of an ongoing process of education where his diet was always improving.

“Actually, the more I learn about food the happier I am I made these changes. And y’know some things like the meat have taken a long time are worth the effort. Yeah. Especially since in the unique Inuit community there’s type 2 diabetes rising, incidents of stomach cancer, y’know colon cancer, colon and rectal cancer it’s going up like crazy _____ yeah. The more I learn I am happy I made these changes.”

Jared spoke about the health of the Inuit community in relation to his own health. That is not to say that he condemned them for making poor choices; he attributed health issues to a lack of knowledge, Inuit notions of health, or poverty. Part of his identity was based on his food choices and his authority to speak about food.

4.1.3 Inuit Culture and Food

Despite how present discussions of food security are in the literature surrounding contemporary Inuit foodways, the topic was not central in my discussions with participants. The small number of participants and the nature of the research meant that the ethnographic data collected did not have many references to current food security issues, except when explicitly asked or it was discussed in relation to others, such as Jared discussing his client. In the case of the participants, it seems that the men do not engage with contemporary notions of food security to self-fashion. This is not surprising since the literature on food security and identity are distinct, but what is interesting about this is how the literature on food security presents Inuit culture and identity. The literature on food security is expansive (eg, Catherine & Carrington 2011) and the topic is ubiquitous when discussing Inuit food. In the literature, this ubiquitousness translates into a monolithic presentation of the issue, and that individuals are impacted by it uniformly. The interviews with Vernon and Jared demonstrate that food insecurity is not a universal experience among Inuit. Those who are not impacted by food

security issues may be left out discussions on food, or their voices may be considered less valuable. Both Vernon and Jared, despite considering themselves food secure, had important insights on the topic. Additionally, by presenting food security as the foremost issue of Inuit food, there might be missed opportunities for addressing issues that are more pressing for individuals with respect to foodways, such as further addressing issues of foodways and violence, as was uncovered in fieldwork in Iqaluit.

The interviews conducted do indicate that hunger and stories of hardship surrounding food may sometimes be related with identity. Vernon said that his decision to eat meat was based on a story of his grandmother's survival, and the importance of meat to Inuit: "If Inuit didn't eat meat – We wouldn't exist." Jared saw his decisions to be vegetarian as an expression of the Inuit trait of survival being reworked for a life in Southern Canada. Narratives of hunger and survival were an important part of self-fashioning for the individuals involved in the fieldwork.

Something that emerged in the literature on contemporary and historical Inuit food, in my fieldwork in Iqaluit, and in my interviews with the participants was the connection of masculinity, food and hunting (sc. Searles 2002, Beaumier, M., Ford, J. D. 2010). Speaking with the men in Ottawa, the relationship between hunting and foodways was still important. For Jared, who did not eat meat, hunting was not part of his life, but he still thought about hunting and its relation to his identity. He said that he frequently hears the joke "What do you call an Inuk vegetarian?" "A bad hunter". Additionally, he said he felt insecure about his Inuit identity:

"Actually I was always a bit insecure about my Inuit identity because y'know back home you kind of it has become more unofficial but your initiation into manhood was catching

your first caribou or catching your first polar bear. I've never had that experience. My dad is from New Brunswick and has never let me fire a gun. My cousins and all my friends were bagging their first caribous and I was still begging to be allowed to shoot. So there was a time but I don't think it's been as big of an issue lately"

Even for a man who did not eat meat, hunted or otherwise, there was insecurity about how his identity and masculinity related to his ability to hunt. When Vernon was asked about hunting and identity he said:

With the story I just told you [about my grandmother surviving], yea, meat - -- If Inuit didn't eat meat – We wouldn't exist. I wouldn't exist. Seal, y'know. Caribou. I mean A lot of the people – I respect all their decisions and life choices they make but the story I am telling you here I am hesitant to share that with them because Ill end up getting in an ethical debate about – they all say the same thing “well that's different because you used it for survival vs people here who can go out of their way to eat soy whereas out north it is not economically viable” but I don't eat meat here like I said but I don t go out of my way to eliminate it from my diet and I have gone lengths of where I havent eaten meat. The only significance it really really has like I said is where I come from, who I am as an Inuk you probably had to try and figure out what makes an Inuk an Inuk too. Is it their hunting? Can they speak the language? Is it their percentage they are Inuk? Is it how long they have lived up North? If at all? In my mentorship program I had to ask these people the same thing and they all had very different answers. It obviously helps me because I would identify with one of them One of the identifications I have as an Inuk is what you eat? A whole slew of things and that's one of them.

For Vernon, who did eat meat, hunting was still an option; he discussed how he used to be able to go out and harvest caribous after work when he lived in Rankin Inlet. He said he could go hunt deer around Ottawa, but he did not have much interest in it. This caused me to think about a particular issue surrounding Inuit masculinity in Ottawa. Inuit men are indigenous, and keep that label when they move throughout Canada. That indigeneity is tied to the land in a particular place, with a fair measure of sovereignty and independence, which is Nunavut. In the city, they are dislocated from that place where their indigeneity is rooted. Urban Inuit men trouble the boundary between Qallunaat and Inuit by identifying as Inuit, while not participating

in an activity that some would deem an essential part of that identity. It seemed that despite his belief that he might not be a representative Inuk, he was a role model in the community, having been a board member for an Inuit organisation in Ottawa, and having mentored young Inuit men.

The way in which the men determined identity as it related to food also related to whether the food was Quallunaak or Inuit. There have been attempts to trouble the boundaries of Inuit food further, but I have not been able to find contemporary research done to better understand urban Inuit categories of food (Borré 1991, Searles 2002). If categories do exist which reflect an Western, tradition, for example country food—store food, male—female, nature—culture, there is still the question of whether or not Inuit peoples attribute the same symbolic importance to the categories as others might (Strathern 1980: 174).

Jared expressed the idea that that food was not just divided into categories of Quallunaat and Inuit, but also categories of food within the category of Quallunaat food, which related to how he perceived its healthiness. When I asked Jared what foods he thought were healthy, he said:

“Food that is fresh. Preferably local. Food that you prepare yourself or someone else has prepared for you. The way the food is prepared is really important. But basically the fresher it is the healthier it is. If it hasn’t been stored a long time. I don’t consider food that’s been packaged for months and years healthy. It’s probably tasty but I wouldn’t consider it healthy.”

This stands in opposition to the idea that the Country food—Southern food binary might be the most useful way of understanding Inuit food choices. Searles (2002) indicated foods which reassert Inuitness are not necessarily “Country” foods, and those

which assert Quallunaat aren't necessarily Southern. By avoiding processed and canned food, he was distancing himself from some aspect of Inuit life in Ottawa.

“...there are Inuit people that wont eat Southern meats but they consider themselves vegetarian but they still eat traditional foods - country foods but they still call themselves vegetarian

This further complicates how we understand Inuit food. There has been work done to complicate categories of Inuit food previously, but the interviews make it clear that these categories are different from the categories which I encountered in Iqaluit as part of discussion there, or that are presented in the literature (Searles 2010).

Another similarity between the two participants in how they constructed their self, was one of inadequateness, in that both felt that they were not good candidates for interviews, and that their inclusion in the research would not be useful. Vernon stated that he felt it was important to talk to people about issues around Inuit experiences, but he was worried that his interview would not be helpful. Jared expressed concern that his interview would not be valuable both because he was a vegetarian, and was unsure that a project on Inuit food could make use of an interview with a vegetarian. While it is true that both of the participants would probably be considered middle class, and may not fit with previous ethnographic research with urban aboriginals in Canada (cf. Brody 1971) their words were interesting, important and illustrated a facet of urban aboriginal life in Canada that may be less researched, or presented, both in academic and popular sources. It seemed like there was a sense among the participants that I should be studying the “rest” of the Inuit community, with the implication being that that was the part of the community that suffered food insecurity and poverty. The participants

seemed to be making an assumption that as a researcher, my interest would necessarily be in ‘studying down’, rather than ‘studying up or across’ at those individuals who provide services or are leaders in the urban Inuit community, rather than those who fit the stereotypical perception of urban Indigenous individuals. Their positionality was perceived as creating a distinction that I would find unhelpful.

The men involved in the research self-fashioned with their foodways, and their thoughts on food were an important tool in constituting their identities as urban Indigenous men. Both men made major lifestyle changes after arriving in Ottawa, and both placed decisions about food centrally in that shift. To complicate Greenblatt (1980) and the notion of self fashioning, it is clear that the individuals challenged what was a “socially acceptable norm” and negotiated how differing aspects of identity would be perceived in different circumstances. Relationships were an important factor in how the individuals chose to mobilise food to present a particular identity. The discourse of food security is present in the literature, but largely absent in the thoughts on their own thoughts on their foodways, only in opposition to them. They both used food in multiple non-binary ways to construct a masculine self, although in some cases rejecting hegemonic masculinity or typically masculine foods to establish a particular masculine script. The men mobilised food both through the socially constructed meaning of those foods, but also the physical properties of food allowed for an enactment of gendered norms onto the body. Both men related their food choices to what they considered to be an Inuit trait of ‘survival.’ They both enacted that value in differing ways; Jared did not eat meat, and his decision to be a vegetarian reflected his understanding of the Inuit trait of survival, while Vernon said he would

never reject meat for a similar reason. Both men also had complex categories of food, beyond the binary of Quallunaat—Inuit food, where canned and processed food was an Inuit food, and vegetables and fresh food represented Quallunaak foodways. Finally, both men felt that their contributions to the research were not valuable because of their positionality. The ways in which the men use food as part of their self-fashion is more complex and intersectional, and demonstrated many novel ways in which foodways were mobilised to create a urban Inuit self.

4.2 Question #2: How does the subjective identity of individuals intersect with objective structures of power?”

In order to address how the men in the research contend with objective structures of power and how this relates to their identity, there must be a way to cross the subject/object divide. One valuable way to address this gap is by applying the notion of interpellation. Althusser (1970) posited that all subjects are ‘hailed’ or called into existence by ideology. This act of being hailed is called interpellation. All ideology acts or functions to recruit subjects among individuals or transforms the individuals into subjects, by the operation of interpellation (Althusser 1970: 22-23). To what extent do the ideologies surrounding foodways interpellate particular types of subjects, or how does it transform subjects? The interviews with participants provide insight into how these individuals negotiate structures of power and ideology to fashion a self.

4.2.1 Food and Identity

One example of an ideology often applied to Inuit food is that of food security. It has appeared frequently in the literature and has become an important topic of study (cf. Canadian

Council of Academics 2014). In order to see in what ways this ideology was interpellating a particular subject, I asked both participants about their thoughts on food security; if they thought they themselves were food secure and also about the label itself. When I asked Vernon if he was food secure, he asked in what way I meant. I asked either in a calorific way, or in eating food that he was comfortable with. He said that he was happy with his diet, although there was “always room for improvement.” I asked specifically about his access to country food and if he felt his diet was lacking because of his lack of access to which he replied, “No, no. I love to eat more of it but I am not lacking in any kind of way. I get all the nutrients I need.” He did not seem to feel that food security described his diet, in either a calorific sense, or in the access to food way.

When I asked Jared about it, he was very certain that he was food secure in both a calorie, and food preference sense of the term. Since Jared worked to support the Inuit community’s food bank, I also asked him what he thought about it as someone who dealt with people who might be food insecure. He said that about 90% of the clients he dealt with as a housing support worker were food insecure. He related food security to finances, but also to knowledge. He said many of his clients receive government benefits, which he recognised was not much, but if they could not afford meat, they would often go without rather than substituting what he considered a healthy alternative. Beans typified this idea, he said “people don’t collect beans here [the food bank]. They just hate beans. We just have boxes and boxes of beans, but people won’t eat them because they would rather have meat and because there’s not meat, they won’t bother having it at all.” I asked what he thought about people who consider food security to be not just a lack of

calories but rather a lack appropriate food. He did not mention food that's appropriate culturally, but he did mention a case of a woman who called in reporting dizziness and fainting, after having eaten only crackers and water for some time. He considered that to be a lack of appropriate food. He also mentioned a case the previous week of someone moving into a transition home, and having no food for several days. He said "a lot of people are just used to feeling hungry, it's common." The ideologies of food security, and the structures of capitalism and colonialism which create hunger, hail a subject which is by the food security literature understood as being in need. As Jared explains, these individuals still exert agency to make decisions about their food to express their Inuit identity, as demonstrated by their choice to "go without" at the food bank if there is no meat.

Both Jared and Vernon were in the South because of work; the power of the capitalist economy and economic motivation is part of the reason why they moved to Ottawa. In that way, power, in the form of capitalism, influenced their subjective notions of identity, in that it helped establish urban Inuit subjects. Both Vernon and Jared said that they were partiers and drinkers prior to settling in Ottawa. In moving to Ottawa and accepting full time employment as professionals, the institution of work hails a particular subject. In both cases, the subject that was interpellated had a set of middle class practices, of which their foodways formed an important part, notably around the value of 'healthy' foods and education about correct consumption habits.

4.2.2 Food and Masculinity

Patriarchy, the power structure which maintains masculinity through policing of other men and the exclusion women, also relates to the notion of multiple masculinity and hegemonic masculinity, concepts which expressed, rejected or mobilised in the words of participants. When asked about the relation of food and gendered norms, both participants had what I would consider a feminist view of the subject, although neither used that term. As the interviews were about masculinity, in neither did feminism emerge as a topic of discussion. Both men had a non-binary gendered understanding of food, where there was a belief that some people held the notion that foods existed in categories of men's food and women's food, but that understanding food beyond those categories was valuable. They attributed differences in foodways to historical, contextual and individual differences. Vernon had trouble with the idea of men's food versus women's food, and he used the example of a vegan mixed martial arts fighter to express his belief that you can be masculine and defer from food which is considered masculine. The contrary example he provided was of a woman he knew who would balk at eating food that did not have meat on it. Jared said that his grandmother, who had survived starvation still hunted Caribou. He then later said "my mom is a very capable woman, she is a director of a human resources department of an organization but she's in a community where she doesn't have a man to hunt for her so now she'll buy caribou or fish from the meat plant there. And that's kind of sad because just a stone throw away there are animals being harvested."

Jared did not have much to say about gendered foodways. In my previous research, the men had a uniform preference for meat and felt it was masculine food, in contrast to women involved in the research (MacNeil 2011). Several other scholars have also noted this preference

for meat (Sobal 2005, Roos & Wandel 2005). In my previous research, preference for meat was also a patriarchal tool for policing other men and excluding women. Although Jared said he faced resistance from the Inuit community for his decision to not eat meat, and he mentioned some of the derisive comments he had received, none of those comments were directed at his masculinity, but rather at his status as an Inuk. For example, he said he was called “a waste of an Inuk” but not “a waste of a man”, someone said he was not “pure Inuk” but he did not mention having been called not “pure man.” For the Inuit who were attempting to police his food choice, it seems like the primary signifier of meat is not gender, but rather Inuit identity. For Inuit, it is possible that there is a different aspect of foodways outside of meat, which serves to police masculinity which was not addressed in the research or that the underlying logic of how food is mobilised by the patriarchy to create particular subjects operates differently amount Inuit. For the participants in the research, the power of patriarchy had a less important role on how they establish their identities than I expected given that Inuit society is typified as patriarchal (Rousseliere 1984). It is possible that both men had a well-developed understanding of the harms of the patriarchy, and actively resisted it. Alternately, it could be indicative of a differing Inuit understanding of gender and differing expressions of gender difference. Someone who I spoke with in Iqaluit believed that women had dealt better with the change to living in the communities and urban spaces, and that men had not transitioned well from their role as hunters. This individual had attributed the issues faced by Inuit men as being related to their diminished role in food procurement. An Althusserian perspective would suggest that the demands of sedentary life and a capitalist mode of production hailed a subject which was closer to that of the “traditional” roles of Inuit women, and Inuit women were better able to adapt. There may be a

relationship between settlement in communities and altered gender roles and expectations among Inuit.

4.2.3 Inuit Culture and Identity

Marx argued that the “the bourgeoisie draws all nations ...into civilization [sic]”, and a Marxist reading of Jared’s arrival in Ottawa might suggest that Jared was becoming more drawn into the culture of Southern Canada and the entrenchment of capitalist ideals, as expressed by his choice to eat a diet that was organic and vegetarian, which had the symbolic markers of middle classness in Southern Canada, but also a cost which would make his diet inaccessible to some. Rather than Marx’s view, Jared’s explanation of the relationship between his Inuit identity and his vegetarianism better illustrates Sahlins (1993) understanding of cultural contact. According to Sahlins (1993) by encountering others, there is not a sudden shift to a way of life that did not exist before with the integration of new practices and things. In contact with other cultures, we can in fact become more like ourselves, rather than lose our identities to the influx of different cultures (Sahlins 1993: 2). In addition to indigeneity as a lens through which to understand the identity of participants in the research, it also serves as a point of inquiry and critique. How an individual understands the world around them is constituted by the way they have been encultured and learned about their surroundings. These differing ontologies and perception of the environment can provide additional insight into hegemonic western practices that may be taken for granted (Nuttall 2009, Ingold 2000, Nadasdy 2005). In the research, the way differing ontologies presented themselves was not necessarily between Inuit and Quallunaat.

The literature on Indigenous foodways sometimes frames food issues around traditional versus modern and Indigenous versus settlers. Although the importance of incorporating traditional practices into contemporary policy cannot be understated, how that approach interpellates a particular subject is an interesting avenue of inquiry. Kuhlein (1995) attempts to describe Indigenous food in Canada and in the process create an “Ecological Indian” as well. Kuhlein states that there is a ‘risk’ and a ‘benefit’ to traditional food, since traditional food “[provides] excellent nutrition and opportunities for physical exercise.” (Kuhlein 1995: 766). By implying exercise for Indigenous peoples requires it to be part of their search for food fits with the notion of the “Ecological Indian”. In addition to this, it is also patronizing; I do not believe that in a study of non-Indigenous food you would suggest that the quality of a food would be linked to the effort required to obtain it. It is hard to imagine a researcher suggesting to Euro-Americans that they should go to a grocery store farther away from their homes to create an opportunity for physical exercise. Kuhlein’s statements create an image of Indigenous people moving through the environment to hunt, fish and gather, and their needs for exercise being fulfilled as part of the food quest, in opposition to non-Indigenous people who eat ‘non-traditional’ foods and are able to separate their need for exercise from other aspects of their life. Ingold (2000) suggests that Indigenous peoples are burdened by the notion that they are unable to separate themselves from their ‘culture.’ Although Kuhlein states that the traditional food is more nutrient dense, she also adds that the traditional diet is high in fat, and insufficient in calcium and Vitamin A, as defined by Health and Welfare Canada (Kuhlein 1995: 768). Unfortunately for participants whose diets were based on seafood, as they are at risk for high rates of contaminants (DDT, PCB, Chlordane, etc.) (Kuhlein 1995: 769). As with the article by

Wein (1995) Indigenous people are described as being inherently better suited for a traditional diet, but then subsequently reminded that there is risk associated with that diet (as defined by the government of Canada.) Both of the articles portray Indigenous peoples as an object of study, whose food choices are able to speak without actually listening to participants themselves. In both case, although attempts are made to insure that the studies are done in a way which is culturally appropriate, the metric for determine the quality of the diet is determined by the Canadian government reflecting a biomedical understanding of food, and does not give particular attention to Indigenous ways of eating, notions of risk, or experiences of hunger. This also relates to the aforementioned notions of inadequacy of participants, who felt that their answers were not helpful. I believe that there was a feeling among participants that they did not fit the perception of the “Ecological Indian” and that I would be better served by speaking with someone whose foodways resembled something more like those participants in Kuhlien (1995) research.

Jared related current public health among Inuit population to a somewhat similar logic, where traditional practices posed risk, but so did non-traditional practices, as identified by a biomedical understanding of the subject. Jared spoke about his beliefs about the difficulties facing Indigenous peoples as they transitioned to urban life:

It is a really interesting study because it is such a drastic change not just Inuit people but I know like aboriginal people around the world including first nations and I know even some East Indian people they have this philosophy that if your body is craving something you should satisfy it because there is this belief for example if you're thirsty you drink water that is a very obvious signal your body is sending you but people used to believe that if your craving something that is just a signal from your body and so our elders used to say and still do if your body is craving something you should just eat it your body is telling you that you need something but that's just been so heavily distorted now because of all the sugar, fat and salts in the food down here and you have a chocolate bar and later on your

craving it I don't know your blood sugar spikes or something you crash and you crave to get your blood sugar up again. And so that kind of notion of listening to your body doesn't really apply so much to people that I don't know aren't really aware of the effects of these really bad foods.

Like Kuhlein (1995), Jared states that the traditional practice of eating, of eating what you crave, is good, but only with proper education, as modern ingredients "distort" how our bodies crave things. He relies on a biomedical understanding of health to justify his understanding of the subject. He makes similar argument about perception of body fat in the Inuit community:

There's also the issue of Inuit people are raised to believe that being overweight is healthy and it used to be the case a long time ago before colonization happened __ Somebody who had some fat like a nice layer of fat all over their body was considered attractive and so it's still today. I've had elderly women, middle aged women tell me they are suffering from diabetes or some form of cancer and they tell me their doctors are telling them to cut out pop and you have to start eating healthy and exercise and the doctors say you have to lose weight and they'll just say ...No I don't. I'm big. I'm healthy. I think it's just it's kind of a messy kind of meshing of cultures that a lot of Inuit people still haven't kind of gotten up to date how southern food works.

It is interesting to note that Vernon and Jared both state that they have learned a lot about food since arriving in Ottawa. Vernon had taken vegetarian cooking classes. Despite this, Jared felt that issues with Inuit food in the city were largely related to what he perceived as gap in knowledge among his clients. I had originally thought that Jared's thoughts on food would differ ontologically from western notions of foodways. In reality, Jared has used his understanding of Inuit beliefs (about body fat and cravings) and combined them with the current hegemonic, biomedical model of nutrition to develop a way of framing his thoughts on health issues in the Inuit community in Ottawa. The ideology of the state public health

programs which seek improve health by avoiding certain foods and addressing obesity, call forth a subject which views health in those terms.

As is demonstrated in the above section, the interviews with participants highlight several ways in which the subjective identity of participants intersects with objective structures of power. The ways in which they interact was not always expected. The power of a capitalist means of production called forth middle class subject whose selves were shaped by notions of health as presented by the hegemonic Western discourse. The participants also demonstrated that their understanding of gender, as expressed in their foodways, was not necessarily a reflection of dominant patriarchal norm. Finally, dominant structures of power, which influence how we see Indigenous health had shaped Jared's ideas about how Inuit health issues in Ottawa were problematic, but he had mobilised them in such a way that reflected his knowledge of Inuit beliefs on health and food. It also it seems that the relation of narratives of food hardship are a part of identity, but food security is not frequently applied by the people who are labelled as "food insecure" by others.

4.3 Limitation and Self Critique

There were some limitations to the project that were outside of my control or beyond my capacity to accomplish given the delimitations of the project. I entered the project with preconceived notions about the state of food security in Nunavut and among Inuit, which influenced the early formulation of the project, and biases about what the Inuit community might want from the research. Another limitation was the length of time available for fieldwork, related to the high cost of research in the Arctic and to my program of study. I also lacked a

fluency in Inuktitut, which limited me in some of my interactions in Iqaluit, as it marked me as an outsider and limited my access to some spaces.

This project was for me a time of great reflection on my actions and methods as a researcher. This project lacked a collaborative approach, and a real attempt to design the research to benefit those involved. While I was learning about the value of a collaborative approach in class, writing about it in papers, and hearing about it in practice, I do not think I grasped what a collaborative approach actually encompassed. The task of actually working with people to build a research project that benefits those involved is a process that involves painstaking work that is often slow and difficult, but in the end results in a project which is genuinely beneficial for those involved, and not just the person writing and defending the thesis. This lack of a collaborative approach was highlighted by a few encounters with participants or organisations that were really embarrassing for me, but helpful as a research. At the end of our interview, Jared was asking what the research was about, and said “A lot of our work is project based any statistics would be incredibly useful.” I had to say that the project was entirely qualitative and I had no statistics to provide him. I am not a quantitative researcher, but if I had actually known about their need for research and worked collectively with Jared’s organisation to build a collaborative project, I could have developed a methodology that could have procured useful statistics. In Iqaluit I called an organisation working to end violence against women. When I said I was working with men, they were very interested in that and felt that not enough had been done. When I said I was working on food, they were perplexed, wondering why I would do that. If I had attempted a collaborative approach, I would probably be doing a different project, and likely could have

worked on a topic that benefitted an organisation such as that. A recent report developing background for an Inuit child and youth strategy in Ontario identified 17 “promising practices” from a literature review, all of which were approved by the Ottawa Inuit community who were consulted as part of the report (Catalyst Research and Communication 2015). Of the 17 practices, several deal with the need for collaborative, Inuit-driven research program (Ibid: 61-2).

My research design did not adequately problematize my exoticisation of the participants in my research. My research proposal basically came from a place of personal interest, and desire to travel to do research; a feeling that that made fieldwork “real.” In the end, my field site became the place where I lived as well, Ottawa, but I still do not feel like the project adequately addressed why I was working with Inuit men. My travel to Iqaluit demonstrated that the Qallunaat there were very interesting, and I had to confront the fact that my desire to work with Inuit was at least partially due to a desire to learn about the “other.”

Another issue was the size of the pool of participants. The interviews with Jared and Vernon ultimately proved to be the most fruitful and rewarding parts of my research, but by the time my proposal was finalised, after having changed my project, my time for fieldwork was nearly complete. This left me with very little time to pursue other interviews and expand that selection of data. While the interviews were very interesting, having more would have added to the richness of the data and increased the information gained exponentially.

4.4 Chapter Conclusion

Brillat-Savarin said in the 19th century “tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are” and at least since that time, it is known that food plays an important role in how individuals constitute their identity; therefore it is perhaps unsurprising, Inuit men in Ottawa use food as part of their self-fashioning. What this research addresses is the myriad of complex ways in which the identities of Inuit men intersect with foodways. Food provides a window into issues of identity, indigeneity, gender. Additionally, the responses of participants provide insight into some of the actions of structures on the identity of individuals, and food is a powerful tool for addressing these issues. As the interview portion of the project confirmed, as well as a whole genre of post-colonial scholarship, Indigenous people are neither stationary nor historical objects, but engaged in all the same messy, intersecting, complex relationships as others. This project also had some issues in its design and implementation, which limited its ability to engage the Inuit community, and produce scholarship which was useful for them. Despite this, within the chapter, there were new insights and many avenues for future inquiry for project which are engaging urban Indigenous populations.

5 Chapter: Conclusion

This thesis was an examination of how urban Inuit men use foodways to self-fashion in Ottawa, and how the discourse of food security can influence how they construct their identity. There is a lack of knowledge about how subjective aspects of identity, such as masculinity and indigeneity intersect with each other, and with the substance of food and related food practices. Additionally, the research sought to understand how discursive devices, such as food security, influence the way in which individuals self-fashion. Relatively little is known about the day to day of Indigenous peoples, and this project sought to examine the mundane and add to our knowledge of the everyday; additionally the project uses ethnographic evidence to support and construct a more robust critique of the discourse of food security, and provide benefit for the urban Inuit community. The research sought to answer several questions:

1. How do Inuit men in Ottawa use food as a part of their process of self-fashioning?
2. In what ways do the subjective understandings of self interact with objective structures of power?

I believe that despite a great deal of attention has been given to Inuit foodways, it is often done without understanding the impact on those who are researched, and what that means for their notions of identity.

In order to address the questions presented by the gaps in the literature this project employed the ethnographic method. The first portion of the research was an exploratory trip to Iqaluit, Nunavut, which helped contextualize my results, and inform my other methodologies. Next, interviews with Inuit men living in Ottawa about their foodways.

The primary limitations of the research were time and biases about Inuit food. There were flaws with the research as a result of my own errors. Most noticeable was the lack of a collaborative research design, or consultation throughout the process. An inadequate critique of otherness when choosing the topic, and a limited pool of participants.

The main findings were in the form of an attempt to address the primary questions that identified by the gap in the literature established in Chapter Two. The first was “how do Inuit men in Ottawa use food as part of the process of self-fashioning?” The men involved in the research self-fashioned with their foodways, and their thoughts on food were an important tool in constituting their identities as urban Indigenous men. Both men made major lifestyle changes after arriving in Ottawa, and both placed decisions about food centrally in that shift. To complicate Greenblatt (1980) and the notion of self fashioning, it is clear that the individuals challenged what was a “socially acceptable norm” and negotiated how differing aspects of identity would be perceived in different circumstances. Relationships were an important factor in how the individuals chose to mobilise food to present a particular identity. A discourse frequently applied to Inuit food of food security, and identified in the Ottawa Inuit community was issues of food security, but largely absent in the thoughts on their own thoughts on their foodways, only in opposition to them. They both used food in multiple non-binary ways to construct their gender identity, both through the socially constructed meaning of foods, but also in some cases the physical properties of food allowed for enactment of gendered norms onto the body. Both men related their food choices to part of what they considered to be Inuit: the talent for survival. They both enacted that value in differing ways; Jared did not eat meat, and his

decision to be a vegetarian reflected his understanding of the Inuit trait of survival, while Vernon said he would never reject meat for a similar reason. In this way, their foodways were used for reasserting their identity as Inuit. Both men also had complex categories of food, beyond the binary of Quallunaat—Inuit food, where canned and processed food was an Inuit food, and vegetables and fresh food represented Quallunaak foodways. Both Jared and Vernon used these foods (or not) to present a particular self publicly in Ottawa. Finally, both men felt that their contributions to the research were not valuable because of their current positions in the community. The research demonstrated that these men use food to form their identities, but in a way more complex than anticipated. Foodways are a way in which these navigate various identities. This link has been previously documented and this information adds to our knowledge of how men use foodways as part of their foodways, and the complex meanings of food.

The most intriguing questions addressed by the thesis was “How do subjective understandings of self intersect with objective structures of power?” The ways in which the subjective and objective interact is not always expected. The power of a capitalist means of production called forth middle class subjects whose selves were shaped by notions of health as presented by a hegemonic biomedical discourse. The participants also demonstrated that their understanding of gender, as expressed in their foodways, was not necessarily a reflection of dominant patriarchal norm in Southern Canada. Finally, that dominant structures of power which influence how we see Indigenous health had shaped Jared’s ideas about how Inuit health issues in Ottawa were problematic, but he had mobilised them in such a way that reflected his

knowledge of Inuit beliefs on health and food. It also it seems that the relation of narratives of food hardship are a part of identity, but food security is not frequently applied by the people who are labelled as “food insecure” by others. The men had used the changes in moving from the Arctic, and the changes in their foodways to reconstruct their identities in a way which was valuable for navigating situations in Southern Canada and improving their lives.

The significance of this research is that it may be beneficial to Inuit communities and help them to consider critical understanding of the foodways of their constituents, and how that may cause them to construct identities in different depending on changing relationships to foodways. For the Inuit community in Ottawa, the research may help organisations to engage men, by gaining a better understanding into the processes that may influence their self-fashioning upon arrival in a new city. The project also helps to illuminate the “gray areas of native life” which constitutes the majority life in North America, but is a topic we do not often grapple with as researchers (Starn 2011). The project also presents interesting avenues for inquiry for learning more about how individuals address power structures and how to better address them. Finally, for researchers, this project should illuminate new avenues of inquiry and novel theoretical approaches for addressing how individuals constitute identity with their foodways.

This thesis presents many avenues for future study, but based on responses from participants and the public, there are a few that would be particularly valuable. In collaboration with the Inuit community in Ottawa, discussions with men about their experiences coming to Southern Canada, in a way that generates statistics for organisations that would benefit from a better understanding of the Inuit population in Ottawa. Another avenue would be a further

examination of the experiences of Inuit men in Iqaluit, in collaboration with organisations who are addressing either gendered violence or contemporary Inuit masculinity to develop a research project to gain a better understanding of the systemic issues affecting Inuit men.

I have not been considering the whole of Inuit foodways, but rather just the way in which foodways make up a small part the complex, intersectional identities which Inuit men fashion as live in an urban environment. The messy relationship of gender, indigeneity and identity is found when foodways are used as tool for discussing identity. These men are also confronting structures of power related foodways and those relations are changing how they constitute their identity as well. The often banal aspect of life, of consuming food to live, in fact yields vast insight into how we navigate complex structures, relationships and webs of power to fashion a self which we find to be an acceptable visage to present to the world.

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Appendix A Consent Form



Canada's Capital University

I am aware of what this project; “An Ethnography of the Foodways of Young **Inuit** Men in **Ottawa, Ontario**” is about. I have been informed of what it means to be involved in an interview, participant observation, or the creation of a food diary, and I am willing to participate under the following conditions.

Project Description

This research project will explore how young Inuit men define their identities through food choices. In particular, the study will investigate to what extent store bought food is integrated into the lives of young Inuit men and how these foods are used by individuals to negotiate and construct their identities against a backdrop of traditional food and cultural practices.

Involvement (check all that apply)

I agree to take part in:

- Interviews
- Food Diaries
- Participant Observation (shopping trips, food preparation, etc.)

Recording (Check all that apply)

I agree to have my contributions to the project recorded using:

- Audio recording
- Photographs
- Video
- Transcripts

Identification

I remain the owner of the information I have contributed, but for the publication of project results and sharing this information with others I wish to be identified in the following way:

- I DO NOT want my name to be attributed to all of the information I provide, and I will discuss what information will be attributed to me with the researcher, if I wish to have information connected with my name.

Sharing of information

I understand that information I share will be used to compile and communicate the results of this project in reports, publications, dissemination in the community, or related project outputs (check all that apply):

- for unrestricted public, non-commercial use (covers all of the above)
- for unrestricted use (covers all possible uses)

Print name: _____

Verbal consent, check here:

Sign name: _____

Witness: _____

Date(s): _____

To be printed on reverse side of the first page.

If I have any questions or concerns about this project, or the consent that I have provided, I will contact the researcher involved, the Nunavut Research Institute, or the Carleton Ethics committee using the following information:

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Appendix B

Interview Guide

- What is your preferred name?
- How old are you?
- What do you do?
- What brought you to Ottawa?
- How long have you been in Ottawa?
- Where are you from originally?
- What is your favourite food?
- How has your food changed since arriving in Ottawa?
- What is the connection between your food and your identity?
- Does meat have any significance to you?
- What do you think about the term food security?
- What are your thoughts about food in Ottawa?

Note: Interviews were open ended and semi-structured, so the guide was typically only a starting point for the conversations.