

Seeing Like a Community: Education, Citizenship, and
Social Change in the Eastern Arctic

by

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Abstract

Relying heavily on the analyses of Inuit, this dissertation examines the implications of the historical and contemporary set of Inuit-state relations in one policy area – education – over a long period of time. It undertakes this examination by analyzing the local state and societal responses to the introduction of political, social and economic institutions that were imported from southern Canada and imposed on the Inuit societies of the Eastern Arctic.

It is well known that formal schooling was used as a key instrument of colonial intervention and oppression in the Eastern Arctic, and that the legacies of this intervention continue to effect communities today. At the same time, education is often identified as an essential component of Inuit self-determination. Despite 50 years of increased political control by Inuit over education, including the creation of a “made-in-Nunavut” education system, educational outcomes have not improved dramatically, Inuit continue to call for greater local control, and the school is still seen by many to be a foreign institution.

This dissertation argues that the persistent problems with the school system are symptoms of a deeper disconnect between citizens and the institutions that structure their daily lives. Building on Scott (1998) it argues that the enduring focus on the issue of local control over the education system in Nunavut is evidence of an implicit recognition by Inuit of the importance of intermediary social institutions for successful institution- and state-building.

This dissertation uses qualitative methods and a multi-scalar analysis that moves between federal and territorial politics and policy on education, and a detailed micro-level examination of Igloolik society in order to explore and understand the nuances and lived-experiences of the people – the citizens – who were (and remain) directly affected by political and policy decisions made elsewhere. These experiences and lessons from Igloolik then inform an analysis of contemporary attempts by the Government of Nunavut to institute a system of education to meet the aspirations for Nunavut.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Key Concepts

I'd very much love to get at that reason as to why we have not embraced education, and why, as locals, we are just laying back and letting others come in and run our affairs. Whereas in this day and age, we would have been highly educated, running whatever programs are in town but 50+ years after education was brought in we're pretty much at the doorstep like we were before.

...But it's foreign. My older generation [people in their late 50s and older], even though they went to school, it was negative. Education was not a good education...they're not pushing their children to school. It stopped somewhere and never progressed since.... We're still just sending our children to school. On any given day, we don't see very many parents at the school with their children basically pushing them or encouraging them. Mind you, we get a handful always but it's not as many as we'd like.

~ Francis Piugattuk

1.1 Introduction

Foreign, disconnected, an island. These are words that many residents of Igloolik use to describe the historic and ongoing relationship between Inuit and formal schooling – just one of a set of institutions imposed on Inuit society by outsiders. Igloolik is a predominantly Inuit community of nearly 2000 people located off the coast of Melville Peninsula in the North Qikiqtaaluk region of Nunavut. Every Inuk alive today whose family is from the Igloolik area, has come into contact with or been affected by the school(s) in some way. All – except for the eldest generation of Iglulingmiut who have only known the school as parents – experienced the school system as both students and parents or grandparents. Some have been educators, staff, or local education authority members. And yet, community members across all generations, socio-economic circumstances, and educational backgrounds still regularly describe the school as

“foreign” or unfamiliar, as disconnected from, or unwelcoming to, the broader community.

This dissertation examines the implications of the historical and contemporary set of relations in one policy area – education – for the realization of Inuit self-determination and the challenged beginnings of institutionalized education offered by the Government of Nunavut. It undertakes this examination by analyzing the local state and societal responses to the introduction of political, social and economic institutions that were imported from Southern Canada and imposed on the Inuit societies of the Eastern Arctic.

My work was motivated in large part by the insights and questions contained in Francis Piugattuk’s words quoted at the outset of this chapter about the enduring foreignness of the education system despite 50+ years of engagement with formal schooling, coupled with observations (my own and those of Iglulingmiut) about the apparent disjuncture between the people who live in Igloolik and the institutions that have shaped community life since the 1960s. The often traumatic (and very recent) imposition of formal schooling on Inuit society is undoubtedly a critical part of the explanation for the school’s enduring position as an island in the community, but my early discussions with Iglulingmiut and trusted advisors made it clear that there was something more to understand about the relationship between the community and the school.

While discussion of the nature and purpose of education is necessary, my intent here is *not* to develop a theory of education or to make prescriptions about what an “appropriate” education system in Nunavut might look like. I believe that the design of such a system is the responsibility and the right of Nunavummit. Rather, I am focused on examining and trying to explain what happens when a set of fully formed institutions

(created elsewhere under a particular set of social relations and historical conditions) are imposed on a group of people who neither demanded nor approved them, and who may not be inclined to animate them. The focus of my analysis is the ways in which citizens relate to, and engage with, institutions that did not emerge organically in their society. Much of the contemporary discourse and literature on Inuit education, or education in Nunavut is focused on matters of pedagogy and curriculum, or on other aspects of the system such as teacher education, the role of principals, and bilingualism. Less focus has been placed on education governance, but governance¹ and governing institutions are fundamental because they affect how the education system relates to and interacts with citizens and other institutions at the territorial and local levels. Governance and structure limit and enable, and of course institutions tend to endure.

Sandra Inutiq, former Nunavut Languages Commissioner and founding member of the Qanak Collective in Iqaluit, points out that because of its origins as a “sharp instrument of colonialism” the education system is a useful barometer for assessing how the Nunavut project as a whole is doing. (Inutiq 2017a) Nearly two decades in, Nunavummiut are understandably still grappling with big institutional and governance questions – questions, I argue, that cannot and should not be answered by administrators alone. The education system affects everyone and is a useful avenue through which the state can (re)engage with citizens for the purposes of polity-building and community development. Education has played an important role in the expression of citizenship the

¹ Following the Institute on Governance (IOG), for the purposes of this dissertation, governance refers to how a particular society or group of people within a society organizes to make decisions: “Governance determines who has power, who makes decisions, how other players make their voice heard and how account is rendered.” (IOG 2018)

modern state. As such, formal schooling in Nunavut, and in Igloolik in particular, serves as a useful lens through which to document and understand the evolution of the relationship between Inuit, local societal institutions², and the state.

1.2 Schooling in the Eastern Arctic as an Aspect of High Modernism

High modernism is the term used by James C. Scott to describe a particular ideology, which arose in the Western world, that relies heavily on “scientific and technical progress, the expansion of production, the growing satisfaction of human needs, the mastery of nature (including human nature), and above all, the rational design of social order commensurate with the scientific understanding of natural laws.” (Scott 1998: 4) It was this high-modernist ideology that, according to Scott, led to the engineering of societies required for modern statehood and state-building. Scott’s work on high modernism is a useful analytical tool for understanding both the historic and ongoing relationship between Inuit and the state, as state institutions have developed rapidly over the last 50+ years. Of particular importance for this dissertation is Scott’s insight that one of the key features of high modernism is that seeks to minimize (and perhaps even erase) local and regional diversity and complexity. In doing so, it obstructs and undermines local control. In what follows, I briefly outline the history of formal schooling in the Eastern Arctic as an aspect of high modernist intervention in the North before drawing attention to a brief but significant historical moment in the 1970s and

² For the purposes of this dissertation, institutions are defined as formal and informal mechanisms that provide social order. I have chosen to take this expansive view of institutions to ensure ample space for the full spectrum of institutions that make up social life in Igloolik today; and, relatedly, to avoid rendering invisible Inuit institutions that do not fit neatly into the kind of categories of institutions (governing, social, economic, etc.) commonly accepted by Euro-Canadian societies and scholars.

1980s in Igloolik that illuminates the critical importance of diversity, complexity, and local control.

The rapid introduction of formal education to the Eastern Arctic in the post-war years brought massive changes to Inuit family relations and society. In less than 100 years, education in the Eastern Arctic has transitioned from an embedded system of knowledge and skills-sharing intimately tied to the environment and the family, to an externally imposed highly institutionalized system of formal classroom-based schooling designed and administered at first by the church and then by the state. Then, over fifty years in what is now Nunavut, formal schooling evolved from a federally run residential and day school system, to a decentralized territorial school system under the direction of the Government of the Northwest Territories, to a more centralized “new” one operated by the Government of Nunavut.

Formal education in the forms of residential schools, federal day schools, and adult education was part of a larger strategy of northern development rooted in high modernist policies intended to establish politically stable, and economically self-sufficient societies across the North to fit neatly into the broader vision of a democratic post-war Canada. The introduction of formal schooling served two complementary purposes with respect to post-war state-building in Northern Canada: first, by separating children from their parents, the state could teach young Indigenous people to be Canadian citizens without interference from their families; and second, formal schooling helped to facilitate the establishment of “semi-artificial” permanent settlements across the North, as

parents and families were drawn off the land to be closer to their children during the school year. (Arvaluk 2007)

In recognition of the assimilative effects of schooling on their children throughout the previous two decades, education was among the first areas over which Inuit sought to regain control in the 1970s. (Amagoalik 2007; McGregor 2010) Over the next two decades - into the 1990s in the field of education and elsewhere - Inuit were engaged in the critically important process of working out which of the imposed institutions they could work with and through, and which ones they wanted to change or reject. It was during these years that organic, grass-roots institutional and social change began to gain momentum. Important democratic development and participation in public and civic life took place. And, although it was likely far from what would have emerged had Inuit been involved in decision-making from the start, the school system gradually began to reflect the people it was serving. (McGregor 2010) The activism of the 1970s and 1980s culminated in big political victories in the 1990s, including the historic negotiation of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and creation of a new territory and government. Nunavut's very existence held great promise for the (re)development of institutions that made sense to Nunavummiut – ones that reflected the people who call Nunavut home. After a rocky start, in 2008 Nunavut's first "made-in-Nunavut" Education Act was passed with ground-breaking clauses related to Inuit language and culture.

Despite these high-level political and legislative changes, educational outcomes in Nunavut remain disappointing. Territorial graduation and attendances rates are low, Inuit students have limited access to early childhood and post-secondary education; staff and administrator turnover rates are high, and the proportion of Inuit teachers and

administrators has remained stagnant since 2001.^{3 4} These figures reflect a complex web of interrelated institutional and societal challenges, both historical and contemporary, with no clear or easy solutions.

It is clear that Nunavummiut have significant concerns about governance and institutional development in their territory, particularly with respect to the education system. The concerns raised in recent years about Nunavut's education system are reminiscent of those that Inuit identified in the 1970s, namely that the system does not incorporate or reflect Inuit language, culture, and knowledge in any meaningful way, that the system does not engage parents, and that most of the decisions about what happens in the system are dictated from above, with little consideration for the people it is meant to serve.

1.3 Contemporary Community-School Relations in Igloolik

When I spoke with parents and educators in Igloolik, it became clear that questions around what is taught and who is teaching, while clearly important, were

³ For example, less than one third of Inuit students graduate from high school. Moreover, attendance rates hover around 71% on average, with some schools reporting much lower rates (Nunavut Bureau of Statistics 2014). Nunavut students, especially Inuit students, have limited access to early childhood as well as post-secondary education close to home; while participation in post-secondary education among Inuit is on the rise, still only 3% of Inuit report having a university degree. (Statistics Canada 2016) Staff and administrative turnover rates across Nunavut are high, and the proportion of Inuit teachers and administrators in the system has remained stagnant since 2001, hovering around 27% for “professionals” (i.e. teachers and specialists), and 18% for “middle management” (i.e. school administrators). It is important to mention that the available data, whether from the Census or the Government of Nunavut must be approached with caution. Because of the small population numbers in Nunavut communities, Statistics Canada data are often suppressed, making it difficult to understand the complete picture, or to make comparisons across time or space. Nonetheless, it is possible to see what the challenges are. (See Appendix A for more education-related data.)

⁴ It is important to note that Inuit teacher training has been available since the late 1960s and programme participation and completion rates historically have been relatively high. One of the contributing factors to the lack of growth in the proportion of Inuit teaching staff is that many qualified Inuit educators move into positions in the territorial bureaucracy rather than remaining in classrooms. To learn more about teacher education in Nunavut see: McGregor and McGregor 2017, Berger et al 2017; Arnaquq 2008.

largely secondary to the pressing daily matters of low attendance, matters of trust resulting from teacher and administrator transience, family and community social dynamics, and the challenges of operating within increasing institutional constraints imposed by the Government of Nunavut. Teachers and parents are meant to be a team. Many aspects of the dilemma that parents and teachers are facing was captured by one long-time educator I spoke with in Igloolik:

... I refer to [the children who do not attend school] as little angels. Like, you know, we know their names are on a list, but we never see them for the entire year. At school, at the elementary level, we just don't have the capacity in the building to follow up on that. We are dealing with the students in the school with many needs. So many of our kids, the kids that come, who, you know, have learning difficulties, who may have Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, who may have sustained traumatic incidents at their house, who are sleep deprived, malnourished—all sorts of things. So, we're dealing with those students and nobody is able to follow up with these kids who aren't there, and it just perpetuates the problem. So, let's say your older brother doesn't go to school, then probably the younger sister is not going to school. I see many families like that and as much as I can—now that I've been in the community for 10 years, I feel comfortable approaching a parent and saying, you know, why isn't your son or daughter in school? And [I am] able to have a conversation about it...but there's no pressure to send your son or daughter. I don't think that's going to change for a while. (M. Vsetula, personal interview, May 29, 2014)

In nearly every interview I conducted in Igloolik with parents and grandparents of current students, I asked them to reflect on their experiences with the school as parents, and on their role in their children's education. Some people told me that while they understood the value of their children receiving an education, they did not feel their children were learning much at the school and that the quality of education had deteriorated since they were in school; others acknowledged that they were responsible for ensuring their children attended school but that they had a very difficult time making that happen. Almost no one explained why they found it difficult beyond, "I don't know",

or “I know I should try harder but...”. These responses reflect, I believe, a genuine feeling by many parents that the situation they and their children are in is largely out of their control; that they lack the power to change well-established patterns in their families and in the community, or that their participation is futile. On several occasions I heard variations of, “we’re just locals, what can we do?”.

1.4 The Ebb and Flow of Local Control and Parental Engagement in Education

In the 1970s, on the heels of residential schools, and the creation of permanent settlements across the Arctic, leaders in education understood that adults needed opportunities to engage in community life in meaningful ways, and, importantly, that they needed opportunities to participate in decision making about their children’s education after a decade or more of state-sanctioned exclusion. Local control over education has been an enduring feature of education governance in the Eastern Arctic since that period and became more firmly entrenched in the education system through the development of local education authorities and then the regional boards of education under the GNWT. But, as I will explain more throughout this dissertation, the relative power of communities – and parents as citizens - has waned since the early 1980s. Parental engagement or parental mobilization has been identified as an important component of improving educational outcomes in Nunavut; however, as I will show in Chapter 6, the Government of Nunavut seems less interested in supporting local control than was its predecessor, with harmful effects for communities.

Now called District Education Authorities (DEAs), these local education institutions are meant to serve as the “voice of the parents” – deemed key partners in the education system. However, as I will explain, the real power of DEAs has ebbed and

flowed considerably over the last four decades as higher-level state-building processes took shape. In Nunavut today, the role and power of the DEAs has diminished as power has become increasingly centralized within the Department of Education. When I asked former Igloolik DEA chair, Francis Piugattuk to describe the purpose of the DEA, he explained:

It is also a way for the school to have at least some protection from the government imposing whatever they want. The DEA can say, perhaps, this directive [from the Department] needs to be modified. At least it gives a voice from the public about the school system...[but] whereas before the DEAs were able to have more say and control...now we're just rubber stamping. (F. Piugattuk, personal interview, June 4, 2014)

As I will show in Chapter 6, even within the context of Nunavut - a territory designed to serve the majority Inuit population - local control is still favoured strongly as a necessary feature of an education system that contributes to Inuit self-determination.

The central argument of this dissertation is that the persistent problems with the school system are symptoms of a larger problem: a disconnect between citizens and the institutions that structure their daily lives. I will argue that the enduring focus on local control and parental engagement as means to addressing pressing challenges with the education system reflects an implicit recognition by Inuit that improving educational outcomes in Nunavut requires more than programmatic, curricular, or even personnel changes within the education system itself. It is going to require broader societal and governance changes, for who really *are* parents and families? They are community members; they are *citizens*.

The related calls for local control and parental engagement are, I suggest, an appeal for the inclusion and mobilization of citizens in one of the most important functions of any society: the education of future generations. The ongoing call for local control may

be symbolic of a way of thinking about politics and society – about citizenship in the sociological sense. In other words, local control may not only be a form of resistance against (neo)colonialism and a (neo)colonial state, it may also be an articulation of a particular way of looking at the world, one that is rooted in familial relations and a deep connection to place. A way of looking at the world that must be incorporated into social institutions, like the school, if they are going to be successful and meaningful to the people who engage with them.

1.5 Overview of Approach to Research

Only localized theories and historically specific accounts can provide much insight into the varied articulations of colonizing and counter-colonial representations and practices. (Thomas 1994)

Cameron (2009:17) argues that in the Northern studies literature “the dynamics of colonization and decolonization are rarely named”. This tendency perpetuates the assumption that colonization was – and is – the same everywhere.⁵ A more nuanced understanding of colonization (and decolonization) is required if academics, policy makers, and citizens themselves are going to move beyond analyses which rely on one-dimensional characterizations of the state and state actors as “colonizers” and Inuit as helpless victims rather than participants in a set of social, political, and economic relations.

It is generally accepted (though not always well-represented in the Indigenous-Canada relations literature) that the relationship between Inuit, the state, and other colonial agents is different than that of other Indigenous peoples in Canada owing mostly

⁵ For an interesting discussion of the term “colony” and the different types of so-called “domestic colonies” in Canada, see Arneil 2018.

to the geographic location of the Inuit homelands and the fact that the ceding of Inuit lands was delayed until very recently with the signing of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement in 1993. Because of this, Inuit were largely spared the imposition on, and occupation of, their lands by outsiders until well into the 20th Century. While explorers, fur traders, RCMP, and missionaries arrived in the North at least a century earlier, it was not until the inter-war period that the Government of Canada turned its sights to the North, and then following World War II, when “northern development” became a feature of federal policy in Canada. Since that time, Inuit have been mostly governed as Canadian citizens albeit, as Cameron points out, often in racist and paternalistic terms. (Cameron 2009)

The pre-dominantly Inuit settlements of what is now Nunavut share similar but far from identical histories. In part, differences among them can be explained by the rich social, material, and cultural pre-contact histories of the peoples who call the region home; and in part they can be explained by the specific circumstances surrounding the timing, nature, and intensity of their interactions with outsiders (named above), which were – at least in the early days – dictated by how easily accessible the territory they occupied was to travel to by ship. Despite their colonial origins, Nunavut’s small (by southern standards) and widely dispersed communities have played an important role in establishing and maintaining a citizenry in the territory. White has noted that, “in fundamental ways northern society is defined and politics are played out within the context of communities. It is impossible to overestimate their importance, both in

intangible, psychic ways, and in day-to-day social and political activities.” (White 2007: 11)

My approach is guided by these insights of Cameron, White, and Thomas, and by the belief that the only way to understand the implications of public policy is to look at how people have lived it and to try to understand what their experiences have meant to them *in their own words*. This requires a close understanding and analysis of particular people in a particular place. If I had chosen a different community, the main trajectory of events would likely have been more or less the same but the *meaning* of those events to the people living through them would be different. In developing this project I resisted the idea of comparing multiple Nunavut communities, or looking for a “common” experience from which to draw so-called “universal” lessons. The strength of the approach I have adopted is that it has allowed me to understand a strand of history in a single place (Igloolik) as each generation in that place has confronted their lives, to hear from them what they have encountered, and to learn from them what those experiences have meant to them and their families. I have taken seriously what Iglulingmiut thought and think about their experiences as agents of their own lives and stories.

1.6 Literature Review

Since the 1970s the dominant narrative of Northern political and economic development has centred on Indigenous - non-Indigenous relations, specifically the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the colonial Canadian state. Under this dominant paradigm, the analytical emphasis is upon the exploitation and marginalization of Northern Indigenous peoples leading to the privileging of certain social, cultural, political, and economic values and practices. These in turn gave rise to the rights-based

Indigenous movements of the 1970s, which led to the settlement of comprehensive land claims agreements and the reclaiming of the political, and to some degree economic, control the agreements represent. This narrative has become the accepted framework for discussions about Northern development by academics and by government and non-government decision-makers alike. Indeed, it has shaped Northern political and public policy discourse for close to forty years. And, although this narrative holds truth, it is incomplete. It ignores the diversity of experience at both regional and local levels, and equally important it leaves out an examination of society itself – that is, the “familial, local, and regional organizations and affiliations that constitute northern community life.” (Abele 2013)

In this dissertation, I document and reflect upon the experiences and perspectives of Inuit in Igloolik who lived through the period of study and who are now the parents and (great)grandparents of the young people who have become both a primary concern and a beacon of hope for Nunavut’s future. It is my hope that through a re-examination of the history of the development of one Nunavut community that new light can be shed on some of the challenges that Igloolik and perhaps other communities are facing with respect to education, and the full participation of its citizens in local society and beyond. Similarly, the lessons learned here may help policy makers, especially in the Government of Nunavut, identify more accurately the problems they are trying to address, particularly with respect to education and community development.

This dissertation builds on a long tradition of social research undertaken by archaeologists, historians, political scientists, anthropologists, sociologists, and more recently critical geographers, that intersects around documenting and explaining the

complex processes associated with the development of Northern Canada. There are two main strands in the literature upon which I draw: first there is a state-centred strand, which focuses on the various aspects of the post-war state-building project of Northern development” and the political and institutional responses to that project by Indigenous peoples, including the negotiation of modern treaties and the creation of Nunavut. The second strand is more society-centred, focused on the particular social, economic, and cultural changes taking place in Inuit families and communities as a result of historic and ongoing state intervention in their lives. As I will explain in greater detail below, most of the studies in this second strand treat the state as a monolithic background to social life, rather than part of a set of historical and ongoing relationships between citizens and the complex network of institutions that shape daily life.

The questions and processes under examination here require a blending of state- and society-centred approaches to understanding social change. I have found that by “seeing like a community” – i.e. by examining the dynamics of Inuit-state relations at the community level from the perspective of the people who live there – I am able to bring these two approaches together in a way that allows me to draw both methodological and empirical insights from the two strands of northern literature mentioned above.

1.6.1 Overview of the Literature on Northern Political and Institutional Development

Among the earliest state-centred scholarly accounts of Northern development is Rea (1968), which defined the North not just as an area of scholarly interest, but also as a location of importance for Canada’s economy. Rea published a second study in 1976. Together, these two works trace the evolution of northern administration and public investment in the territorial and parts of the provincial North up to the mid 1970s. The

next wave of contributions in this strand of the literature describes political and administrative development in the territorial North in the context of the emerging Indigenous rights movement, particularly around critical decisions about resource development in the Mackenzie Valley and Canada's economic future. (Abele 1987; Abele 2009a; Abele 2009b; Dacks 1981; Phillips 1967; Watkins 1977; Zazlow 1971, 1988)

As noted above, the Indigenous rights movement of the 1970s paved the way for modern treaty negotiations and the eventual settlement of 26 land claims agreements, or modern treaties, across Canada's Northern territories. This modern treaty-making process and the ways in which it has shaped northern political development have been the focus of northern political science and political economy literature since the 1980s (e.g. Dacks 1980; Dickerson 1992; Duffy 1988; Hicks and White 1997; Merritt et al 1989; Grant 1988; Mitchell 1994) These studies are appropriately focused on the large-scale institutional changes that have occurred in the North over the last 40+ years. With only a few exceptions (Graham 1990, White 1982), however, they are occupied primarily with interactions between federal and territorial orders of government and the newly established land claims bodies.

Since Nunavut was created in 1999 there has been an ever-growing body of literature analyzing all aspects of public and land claims governance in the territory, including various "made-in-Nunavut" approaches to public administration (e.g. Timpson 2009, 2010; Hicks and White 2015; White CORPUS), political culture (e.g. Henderson 2007; Kulchyski 2005); non-renewable resource development and resource governance (e.g. Cameron 2015; Keeling and Sandlos 2015, 2017; Tester 2014; Cameron, Mearns &

McGrath 2015; Kennedy Dalseg & Abele 2016; Kennedy Dalseg et al forthcoming), education (e.g. McGregor 2010; 2012a; 2012b; 2015a; 2015b; Berger 2009a, 2009b; Kennedy Dalseg 2015; Preston 2016), and other aspects of social wellbeing (e.g. Hicks 2009, 2017).

1.6.2 Inuit Education Literature

Situated within the literature on northern history and political economy is a small body of literature on the history and meaning of Inuit education. This literature is bound up with the history of colonialism and community development and provides important insights into the processes of institutional development in the North, although this is typically not its focus. The Inuit education literature is largely an exploration of the enduring legacies of colonialism and the processes and practices of self-determination and decolonization vis-a-vis the education system.

Inuit education research tends to focus on pedagogical issues – curriculum and teaching, particularly around language and culture – and administrative matters. And although this is likely to change in the coming years as more Inuit conduct their own academic research on education, at present the vast majority of the literature on Inuit education is based on the work of non-Inuit academics, many of whom are former educators. With some notable exceptions (e.g. Annahatak 1994; Arnaquq 2008; Simon 2017; Watt-Cloutier 2000; 2015), most of the literature available in print and in English that reflects the experiences of Inuit with the education system tends to be predominantly autobiographical accounts by prominent leaders.⁶ Among these is an edited collection

⁶ For example, see the *Life of Northern Leaders* series, a series of autobiographical accounts written by five prominent Inuit leaders. Also, see M. Freeman (1978).

based on the major research papers of the predominantly Inuit students in the Nunavut Master of Education (MEd) program, offered between 2006-2016 through the University of Prince Edward Island.⁷ (Walton and O’Leary 2015) This collection provides valuable insights into the Nunavut education system from women who have experienced it as students, educators, and in some cases administrators, over the last 40 years. Most of the authors explain in their contributions that the MEd program and the thesis-writing process were journeys in self-discovery, decolonization, and in making connections between their own experiences and the broader institutional context in which they live and work.

The most comprehensive non-case study, non-autobiography on the history of Inuit education is Heather E. McGregor’s *Inuit Education and Schools in the Eastern Arctic* (2010). McGregor’s primary objective is to document the history of education in the Eastern Arctic, and what its “meaning and importance” are to Inuit in Nunavut. Her account is built almost exclusively on the analysis of public archival materials and the seminal policies and events that have shaped the education system that now exists. A thorough historical account, it focuses primarily on curriculum, teachers, administration, and parental involvement. Since 2010, McGregor has published several academic articles on several of these individual aspects of the education system. (McGregor 2012a; 2012b; 2015a; 2015b; McGregor & McGregor 2017) Although the focus and purpose of our work is different, McGregor’s thorough and thoughtful histories laid the groundwork for the scholarly literature in this field, and as such they have informed my analysis of the evolution of education and formal schooling in Nunavut. It was through her work

⁷ To learn more about the Nunavut Master of Education program, visit: <http://projects.upei.ca/nunavut/>

(especially McGregor 2010) that I first came to see, for example, how important the regional boards of education were to Inuit.

1.6.3 Studies of Social Change

The second strand of northern scholarly literature I draw on comprises mainly ethnographic accounts by anthropologists, sociologists, and a growing number of human geographers. Although they vary in subject matter, they all attempt to document and analyze the breadth of social and cultural change experienced by Northern Indigenous peoples as a result of contact, first with outsiders, and then with the Canadian state. These studies have their roots in the early archeological and ethnographic studies of the 1920s-1940s, which were often comprehensive volumes documenting the full spectrum of Inuit social, economic, cultural, and material life. (e.g. Rasmussen 1946-1951; Birket-Smith 1929; Mathiasson & Calvert 1928) Between the late 1950s and the 1970s, the government of Canada sponsored a large number of social research studies under three separate initiatives: the Area Economic Surveys, the Mackenzie Delta Research Project, and the Northern Science Research Group.⁸ Each of these programs produced a series of reports based on research conducted by graduate students and early career academics, thus serving as a launching pad for a generation of prominent northern scholars. Some of the studies from this period are more classically anthropological such as Damas's (1964) study of Iglulingmiut kinship and Briggs' (1971) study of child-rearing and socialization among Inuit in the Central Arctic. Most, however, were concerned with the impacts that contact with outsiders had had on traditional Inuit life to that point, and with the

⁸ See Appendix B for a description of these programs.

transition from life on the land to life in permanent settlements. (e.g. Honigmann 1964; Honigmann & Honigmann 1965, 1970; Brody 1976; Birket-Smith 1971; Crowe 1974; Freeman 1969) Many showed that the negative impacts of colonization in Northern Canada were already evident, less than 10 years after permanent settlement.

Federal support for this kind of research waned in the 1980s and 1990s but community studies have re-emerged since the 2000s mainly in response to a shift toward community-based research methods reinforced by northern research licensing and university research ethics requirements, and the preferences of granting agencies. The most important of these “social change studies” for my purposes is Rasing’s *Too Many People* (2017) – a comprehensive historical study of “contact, social (dis)order and change” based on oral history interviews with Iglulingmiut in the mid-1980s, with some updates in 2014.⁹ Rasing’s primary focus is social control, specifically the ways in which Inuit traditionally maintained order and conformity, and the ways in which these practices have changed in response to the imposition of Christianity and the Canadian “justice” system. Although our approach and focus differ, Rasing’s work has helped me to understand the historical and contemporary dynamics of kin-based social relations in Igloolik, and as such was valuable for developing my analysis of the social impacts of state intervention in Iglulingmiut society.

1.6.4 “*We are still here*”: A note about social suffering

Given the well documented, often traumatic, effects of residential schooling in the North, any social research about Northern and Indigenous communities in Canada must

⁹ Rasing’s interviews form an important part of the original content for the Igloolik Oral History Project, described in Chapter 2.

acknowledge and confront the social impacts and enduring legacies of colonization. But I did not set out to study social suffering in its own right, and I have reservations about writing about the deeply painful experiences of others or appearing to claim knowledge of them. I especially do not want to contribute to the damaging and inaccurate narrative that Inuit are merely victims or, worse, that they lack agency or capacity in their own lives. At the same time, to ignore social suffering altogether would be wrong and incomplete. Many of the people I spoke with shared aspects of their personal stories of pain and suffering. These conversations and the experiences of the people who entrusted me with their stories, have informed my analysis but they are not the focus of it. Where I have offered any commentary on trauma or social suffering throughout this dissertation, I have done so guided only by what the people I spoke with told me. If it seemed appropriate, I tried to draw attention to themes or connections between people's stories and memories, but I have not attempted to connect what was shared with me to the secondary literature.¹⁰

In 1974, Lucien Ukalianuk¹¹ an emerging leader in Igloolik warned, “The people live in the same permanent place and there are greater problems to be solved...Now is the time to start setting things up in the proper manner, before the problems get too deep to be solved.” (Midnight Sun 1974a: n.p). It is impossible to speculate whether the social problems people are experiencing in Igloolik today are “too deep to be solved”. I cannot see how anything but harm could come from presenting an analysis that leads to such a

¹⁰ For an insightful and sensitive discussion of these matters in the NWT, see Irlbacher-Fox (2009). See also: Watt-Cloutier (2015); Walton & O’Leary (2015); QTC (2013a; 2013b).

¹¹ Lucien Ukalianuk would go on to become an Elder-in-residence with the Akitsiraq Law Program. To learn more about him, see: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/igloolik-elder-praised-for-preserving-inuit-justice-law-1.693572>

conclusion; however, one thing is certain - the majority, if not all, of Igloodik's social troubles trace their roots to the colonial interventions of missionaries and the Canadian state, and the rapid changes that people in the community have endured. The complexity of these social challenges (e.g. intergenerational trauma, substance abuse, sexual abuse, anomie) that Iglulingmiut are dealing with cannot be overstated. However, the tendency that we have in Canada to catastrophize and fetishize the lives and suffering of Indigenous peoples extends also to the North. It is easy to see only the problems that exist in communities and ignore the strengths and opportunities. Some of these strengths and opportunities may be invisible to outsiders or those without close relationships with community members. It would be wrong to assume that what was visible to me, as one such relative outsider, is all that exists or all that matters.

1.6.5 *Conceptualizing Colonialism in the Eastern Arctic*

There is only a small body of scholarly work theorizing colonialism in Canada's Eastern Arctic, and for the most part there has been little engagement among and between scholars on the topic. In part this may be a result of the multi-disciplinary nature of "northern studies"; those of us who are engaged in northern social research come at our work from different academic disciplines, choosing to publish higher-level theoretical and conceptual reflections in discipline-specific journals rather than the so-called "northern" journals that we might all read.¹² The result of this is that theoretical insights are typically not shared across disciplines. Another reason might be that theory-building in the northern literature has been delayed owing to the fact that the older generation of

¹² There are three Canadian decidedly multidisciplinary journals, which might be considered "northern studies" journals: *Arctic*, *The Northern Review*, and *Inuit Studies*.

northern-focused scholars was preoccupied with providing the background information needed to explain the processes they were examining.

In southern Canada and in other parts of the North, there are many Indigenous scholars who are developing theories and analyses of colonialism and Indigenous-State relations. (See for example: Alfred 2005, 2008; Coulthard 2014; Manuel & Derrickson 2015, 2017; Cardinal 1999; Helin 2006; Maracle 1996; Alfred & Corntassel 2005; Battiste 2013) There is a comparatively smaller but growing number of Inuit scholars and thought leaders who have produced analyses of relations between Inuit and the state. (See, for example: Watt-Cloutier 2015; Aodla Freeman 1978, 1981; Qitsualik 2013; Price 2007; Arnaquq 2008; Kunuk & Mauro 2010; Kunuk & Cohn 2015; Arnaquq-Baril 2016). In addition to this small body of literature and film, there are public statements and speeches, as well as commentary that appeared in periodicals by Inuit since the 1970s, and a collection of autobiographical accounts published by prominent Inuit leaders, most of whom were directly involved in the NLCA negotiations and the creation of Nunavut. (see the Northern Leaders Series published by NAC Media) I draw on insights and analyses from these authors and thinkers throughout this dissertation. In doing so, I acknowledge a critical limitation in this endeavor: that I am only able to access commentaries and writings in the English language and as such have likely not been able to engage with many important reflections and insights available to speakers and readers of Inuktitut.

For the purposes of this dissertation, I take colonialism to be a system of political, economic and socio-cultural relations, involving the subordination of peoples by an external power or powers and their dispossession of lands and resources. Arthur Manuel

identifies what he calls the “triad of colonialism”: dispossession, dependency, and oppression. (Manuel 2017) These are undoubtedly common features of colonialism in all places, and indeed they are all features of the colonial experience in Nunavut, historical and contemporary. However, following Thomas (1994), Smith (1999), and Cameron (2015), this dissertation is motivated by a desire to “name the particular dynamics of colonialism”, which must be historicized and contextualized in each case.

1.6.6 Settler Colonialism?

In recent years, a large international literature has emerged differentiating a particular form of colonialism – settler colonialism – in which the dominant power not only dispossesses Indigenous lands for the purposes of extraction and exploitation but also occupies those lands for the purposes of establishing “settler colonies.” (See for example: Bateman and Pilkington, 2011; Coombes, 2005; Elkins and Pedersen, 2005; Ford and Rowse, 2013; Thompson, 2008; Wolfe, 1999) As Patrick Wolfe famously observed, in settler colonial contexts, “invasion is a structure not an event.” (Wolfe 1999) In other words settler colonialism requires that settlers work to destroy, displace, and replace Indigenous societies through the introduction of new social, political and economic customs and institutions. (Wolfe 1999; Wolfe 2006) The logic of elimination, which is the central organizing principle of settler colonialism includes, “officially encouraged miscegenation, the breaking-down of native title into alienable individual freeholds, native citizenship, child abduction, religious conversion, resocialization in total institutions such as missions or boarding schools, and a whole range of cognate biocultural assimilations.” (Wolfe 2006: 388)

Although the international literature has not engaged in a serious way with

Indigenous-state relations in Canada, settler colonialism has emerged as the dominant theory of colonialism in contemporary Canadian scholarly and public discourses. The vast majority of scholars who engage with settler colonial theory do so in the southern Canadian context (i.e. with the relations between Indigenous peoples, the state, and settlers “south of 60”), although a small number of scholars of Northern Canada have chosen to work within a settler colonial theoretical framework while acknowledging that colonization happened/happens differently there. (Sabin 2016; Cameron 2016; Coulthard 2014) In his study of the evolution of settler society in the Northwest Territories and Yukon, Sabin argues that settler colonialism offers “analytic precision and wide applicability”, and thus “provides the necessary tools for understanding power relations in ‘settled’ societies where traditional colonial analytic frameworks fail to capture and explain political relationships and phenomena.” (Sabin 2016: 41) However, Sabin also acknowledges that settler colonial theory does not always “map comfortably on the Canadian case.” He attributes this, in part, to Canada’s federal nature arguing, for his purposes, that distinct subnational settler societies have emerged across Canada, including in the territorial North, and that a careful examination of these is required to further refine our understanding of settler colonial theory in Canada and abroad.

In a very different study examining the ways in which settler stories have been used to justify colonization in the Canadian Arctic, Cameron argues that, “the colonial project in Canada is defined by the specific dynamics of settler colonialism” while also contending that colonialism was (is) “different” for Inuit. She writes:

Inuit have always been held apart as a different Indigenous group in Canada, mostly governed as Canadian citizens (although in deeply racialized and paternalistic terms) and only briefly administered as wards of the state under the Indian Act. This is not to say that Inuit have not

experienced many of the same colonial incursions as other Indigenous peoples in Canada; they have, including residential schooling, forced relocation, the shooting of sled dogs, Christianization, unauthorized exploitation of their lands, the undermining and outlawing of cultural and economic practices, and other forms of dispossession. But the historical geographies and contemporary articulations of colonization in the North differ in important ways from those in the South. (Cameron 2016: 18)

One of those ways, Cameron acknowledges, is that settlers never settled in the North – particularly in what is now Nunavut – in the same ways they did in southern Canada. (Cameron 2016: 17-18) If settler colonialism requires the establishment of settler colonies then the framework may be more appropriate for Canada as a whole, and even perhaps for the Northwest Territories and Yukon where much larger settler populations along with distinct settler identities and institutions have developed. In Nunavut, by contrast, the settler population has never reached anything close to a majority figure and outside of the capital, it would be difficult to argue that colonies of settlers have ever emerged or that within the small settler population that a distinct identity or politics has emerged.¹³ Even in Iqaluit, the political and administrative capital of Nunavut, where the non-Inuit population is by far the largest, Inuit remain in the majority.¹⁴ In Igloolik, 90% of the population is Inuit.¹⁵ While settler colonial theory offers a number of compelling insights, its explanatory power for the particular dynamics of colonial relations in the

¹³ There is a small body of arctic anthropology literature that comments on what might be called “settler society” in what is now Nunavut. Most was written in the 1960s and 1970s during a wave of northern research that focused on how Inuit were adjusting to life in permanent settlements. See for example Brody 1975; Paine 1977.

¹⁴ The Nunavut Bureau of Statistics Population Estimates put the Inuit population in Iqaluit at 55%.

¹⁵ The current figure is 93%. It is interesting to note, though, that the non-Inuit population of Igloolik has been increasing steadily over the last 15 years (i.e. since Nunavut was created). The creation of the Nunavut government and the commitment to decentralized government has meant that in many communities, the number of outsiders has grown considerably. GN jobs are filled by southerners with higher levels of education.

predominantly Inuit communities of Nunavut remains unclear.

1.7 High Modernism, Two Planes, and the Case for Intermediary Social

Institutions

Scott's *Seeing Like a State* (1998) offers another lens through which to view colonial relations in Nunavut. Scott's approach is useful for conceptualizing the process of making citizens legible – that is visible and accessible – for the purpose of modern statecraft and in particular for the implementation of welfare state policies that were instrumental in the colonization of the Eastern Arctic. Scott argues that legibility is “a condition of manipulation.” (Scott 1998: 183) In *Seeing Like a State*, Scott observed that “the premodern state was, in many crucial respects, partially blind; it knew precious little about its subjects, their wealth, their landholdings and yields, their location, their very identity... It lacked, for the most part, a measure, a metric, that would allow it to ‘translate’ what it knew into a common standard necessary for a synoptic view.” (2)

Modern statecraft, by contrast, involved a sudden shift in approach, in which:

...processes as disparate as the creation of permanent last names, the standardization of weights and measures, the establishment of cadastral surveys and population registers, the invention of freehold tenure, the standardization of language and legal discourse, the design of cities, and the organization of transportation seemed comprehensible as attempts at legibility and simplification. In each case, officials took exceptionally complex, illegible, and local social practices, such as land tenure customs or naming customs, and created a standard grid whereby it could be centrally recorded and monitored. (2)

Unlike many explanations of colonial relations that assume colonization destroys everything, Scott's work helps to explain some of the ways in which societies respond to the imposition of outside institutions. In this way, Scott is able to bring together both

state- and society-centred approaches to explaining Indigenous-state relations, in historical perspective.

Scott (1998) gives us a checklist of four practices or “schemes” utilized by states to simplify and make legible their citizens: organizing and ordering space; creating surnames; standardizing language; and regulating mobility. According to Scott: the aspiration to such uniformity and order alerts us to the fact that modern statecraft is largely a project of internal colonization, often glossed, as it is in imperial rhetoric, as a “civilizing mission”. The builders of the modern nation-state do not merely describe, observe, and map; they strive to shape a people and landscape that will fit their techniques of observation. (82)

At the beginning of this chapter, I referred to the high-modernist policies of the Canadian post-war welfare state, and their role in the colonization of Northern Canada. The examples that follow briefly demonstrate this state-run project of re-ordering Inuit society, according to external ideas of what a modern liberal democratic society should look like and how it should operate. Before Inuit were drawn into settlements, the federal government assigned each person a unique identification number,¹⁶ which served as a way for state officials to keep track of the mobile and widely dispersed population. The government also introduced mandatory surnames through an initiative called “Project Surname”. (Okpik 2005; Alia 2008) Many people adopted their father’s or grandfather’s first name as their last name. Traditional kin-based naming practices, the forced adoption of surnames, and the taking of Christian names to conform to the demands of the

¹⁶ In the Eastern Arctic, these were (and are) known as “E” numbers; in the West, they are “W” numbers, for obvious reasons.

churches and schools meant that in reality, finding and keeping track of Inuit probably became more complicated, not less, depending on which name a person chose to go by at the time. In my own experience, the usage of last names and Christian names is reserved mainly for interactions with “outsiders” – teachers, government officials, and researchers. Within the family, kinship terms and Inuktitut names are used according to local customs. In this way, they serve as a protective socio-cultural divider – a way to separate the two planes of social relations.¹⁷

As I will explain in Chapter 4, federal day and residential schools for Inuit youth and adult education programs were also part of the state’s project to “improve” the lives of Inuit and transform them into “self-reliant” and productive citizens of Canada. Children learned English at school, the language they would need to operate in the changing political economy of the North. Little about their schooling reflected their family traditions, language or culture. Adult education programs were introduced in the 1960s and resembled what one might find today in “transition” programs for new immigrants: basic English, understanding basic Canadian laws and the rights and responsibilities of Canadian citizens (e.g. voting), but the federal government also provided a number of “handbooks” to help assist the newly created Inuit “housewife” learn how to maintain her new home, as well as books about personal hygiene, healthy eating, and proper manners to teach one’s children, to name a few. (MacNicoll et al 1999; Tester and Kulchyski 1994; Ford 1947) Vocational training programs were soon added to

¹⁷ Bryan Robinson, former school teacher and principal in Igloolik in the 1970s and 1980s, told me that after he had been in the community for some time, he began to use the children’s Inuktitut names in school. That he was able to do this shows that he was integrated into the community enough to know what the children’s names were, and also an awareness of why it might be important for the children to be called by these names in school.

encourage men (and sometimes women) to enhance their employability in the emerging wage economy. (Young & McDermott 1988; Carney 1983)

Scott contends that one of the main reasons that these state-led “schemes” fail is that through the re-ordering of society to serve the objectives and aspirations of the state, local knowledge and know-how (he calls it *mētis*¹⁸) is rendered invisible, excluded from the set of new imposed institutions. It is not that local knowledge disappears but that it exists on *another plane* that remains illegible to the state but is, as Scott argues, actually required for the functioning of institutions and systems imposed by the state. In his example of factories under the Soviet collectivization schemes Scott writes:

The formal order encoded in social-engineering designs inevitably leaves out elements that are essential to their actual functioning ...Collectivized command economies virtually everywhere have limped along thanks to the often desperate improvisation of an informal economy wholly outside its schemata. Stated somewhat differently, all socially engineered systems of formal order are in fact subsystems of a larger system on which they are ultimately dependent, not to say parasitic. The subsystem relies on a variety of processes-frequently informal or antecedent-which alone it cannot create or maintain. (Scott 1998: 352)

I take up this critical insight of Scott’s in my own analysis of what has happened in the Eastern Arctic as a result of colonization. I extend Scott’s analysis further to suggest that “local knowledge” encompasses not just practical technological “know how” but also the particular social relations and power structures that underlie a given society or community and a set of expectations, responsibilities and obligations that constitute what we might think of as that society’s concept of citizenship, in the sociological sense.

¹⁸ The term “*mētis*” –not to be confused with the Canadian term *Métis*, for the people-- is derived from the “classical Greek and denotes the knowledge that can come only from practical experience.” (Scott 1998: 7) Scott uses the term to capture “the kind of knowledge that can be acquired only by long practice at similar but rarely identical tasks, which requires constant adaptation to changing circumstances.” (179)

Building on Scott, I argue that citizens in high-modernist contexts operate on two planes simultaneously, sometimes integrating them but often not.

State intervention in the Eastern Arctic, which included the introduction of a suite of institutions (including schools) that were created in response to historical conditions elsewhere, resulted in the emergence of at least two planes, each one with their own set of ideas, practices, expectations, and relations.¹⁹ In what follows, I describe these two planes, as I understand them to be in the case of Igloolik.

1.7.1 *The Endogenous or Antecedent Plane*

The endogenous plane is based in the principles and practices of pre-colonial Inuit social life, which was, and continues to be, oriented around the family, the relationships and responsibilities inherent in extended kinship networks, and a cosmological relationship with *Nuna* (the land).

The history of colonialism in the Eastern Arctic is bound up with the paradoxical combination of high modernist desire for order and control rooted in a firm belief in the independence and supremacy of “man” over nature, coupled with the policies and programs of a perhaps well-intentioned but certainly paternalistic liberal democratic government, the agents of which believed they were bringing equality, social rights, and democracy to a people who were in their view, for all intents and purposes, living in a primitive and ignorant state of nature. As Scott has pointed out, “what is perhaps most striking about high modernist schemes, despite their quite genuine egalitarian and often

¹⁹ Rasing (2017) also hints at a similar observation in *Too Many People*. In his discussion about what he sees as the erosion of social cohesion and the breakdown of Inuit social life in Igloolik, he observes that “for some time, family heads were able to keep their families together *behind the scenes of public life*.” (440, *emphasis added*)

socialist impulses, is how little confidence they repose in the skills, intelligence, and expertise of ordinary people.” (Scott 1998: 346) Many historical accounts of pre-colonial Inuit society assume that Inuit had no formal political structures – that they were apolitical, egalitarian, and even “simple.” According to Rachel Qitsualik (2013):

...the Inuit relationship with the Land, especially as one refers to the pre-colonial era, is frequently *diminished* in literature pointing out shamanistic beliefs and/or traditional cosmology. Far from respecting Inuit for their knowledge of the Land and its trends – with sheer survival over millennia as proof of their capability – the majority of writers (all non-Inuit) tend to dismiss the culture as overly mystical and prone to supernatural hysteria. At best, Inuit are regarded as naïve children of the snow, with a charming tendency towards “animism” (the belief that all natural objects possess a life of their own); always fearful and wary of a spirit or two hiding under their beds. In such thinking, Inuit are painted as having disqualified themselves from any arena wherein they might offer a mature opinion, since their relationship to the Land is superstitious; numinous; neither objective nor empirical. (25)

Sahlins (2017) offers a helpful way out of conventional and dismissive thinking about “so-called egalitarian and loosely-structured societies known to anthropology”: (1) Drawing on Hocart, Sahlins argues that, “human societies were engaged in cosmic systems of governmentality even before they instituted anything like a political state of their own.” (2) He calls for “a shift in perspective from human society as the centre of the universe onto which it projects its own forms...to the ethnographic realities of people’s dependence on the encompassing metaperson-others who rule earthly order, welfare, and existence.” (20)

Sahlins observes that, “the Inuit could pass for the model of a (so-called) ‘simple society’ were they not actually and practically integrated in a (so-called) ‘complex society’ of cosmic proportions.” (5) Put another way, the endogenous plane I described above is based in a complex set of relations – a cosmic polity – in which “the human

social world is intrinsically part of a wider world in which boundaries between society and cosmos are non-existent.” (5)

Qitsualik compares Inuit with non-Inuit ways of viewing the Land:

Over thousands of years, Inuit have come to respect every aspect of the Land, including its *nalunaqtuq*²⁰ nature. Indeed, despite a reticence to perceive it as a place of boundaries and borders, they have come to love it, referring to the Nuna as though it were home beyond home.

...Time and again, colonial newcomers have dashed themselves against the Land’s *nalunaqtuq* nature over a few short centuries, their journals recording curses in harshest invective against what is apparently perceived as a refusal of the Nuna to submit (to what, they never exactly say; perhaps they mean divine right.) (Qitsualik 2013: 27)

She points out that “urban environments and ‘nature’ engender radically different expectations from the world; different realities so to speak. For anthropogenic peoples – there is the expectation that an environment is responsive to the human will. ...that cities organized in tidy blocks reflects a greater natural order.” (27) For non-anthropocentric peoples, like Inuit, humans cannot impose order on the world, “since it is the world itself dictating the conditions.” (27) Qitsualik acknowledges that those who ascribe to this worldview may appear passive “at the mercy of a capricious world but this is an [anthropocentric] way of perceiving [non-anthropocentric people]. “ (27) Rather, non-anthropocentric peoples are “active participant[s] in a dynamic system; and therefore not

²⁰ Literally: “that which causes confusion.” But Qitsualik explains that the term refers to the fact that there is no end to what can be known about the Land. (Qitsualik 2013: 24)

striving against any perceivable chaos but rather working with and within an acceptable whole that has little to do with human absolutism.” (27)

For Qitsualik, the notion of sovereignty as supreme or divine control over the land is “absurd”: “independence – that is, changeless and ultimate existence – has been and ever will be the great fantasy of the phenomenal mind; a ghost-concept that always seems superficially plausible, while dancing just out of reach.” (Qitsualik 2013: 32) She explains that, for Inuit, sovereignty is the Inummarik – the free human who is “sovereign over self, respectful of the self-sovereignty of others. It is the human whose awareness not only renders self-sovereignty possible but comprehends how self-sovereignities – those of others in society – synergize toward a system of self-perpetuating health.” (32)

As I mentioned earlier, many accounts of pre-contact or pre-colonial Inuit society claim or infer that Inuit had no formal political structures, that they were apolitical, egalitarian, and even communistic. In her treatise on classic Inuit thought and the concept of sovereignty Rachel Qitsualik writes:

Pre-colonial Inuit have often been compared to communism. In truth, classic Inuit society is more akin to the opposite of communism (not capitalism). In the communist model, individuality defers to the supposed whole, whereas the goal of Inuit philosophy is to strengthen – indeed to celebrate – individuality, in surety that larger systems are reflective by nature; that the health of society will iterate the health of its individuals; that in a changeful world, the human beings must never cease to develop. By contrast, mere behaviourism is bound to break down, since behaviours reflecting blind obedience are not guided by healthy awareness. As such behaviours are not impelled by the synergy of meaning and will, they are too easily hi-jacked by raw *umumaniq* (with its characteristic fear, hunger, and wrath) and are thus destined to become discordant. (Qitsualik 2013: 31-32)

Qitsualik’s explanation of classic Inuit thought and Sahlins’ notion of a cosmic polity help explain that a sophisticated system of social and political relations existed in

Inuit society before contact with outsiders, within which certain concepts and practices of leadership, education, and membership within the whole existed.

1.7.2 The Exogenous, or Imposed Plane

The exogenous plane is made up of all the institutions designed to be legible to the state and visible to anyone who spends time in the community. They include: a municipal government, an elementary and secondary school, a community college, territorial government offices, a community health centre, a post office, and a community or recreation centre. The institutions make up “the local state” (Magnusson 1985) and they are the ones through which citizens interact with the state on a daily basis. For the most part, this set of institutions traces its roots to the policies and programs of the high-modernist post-war welfare state, as I will explain in more detail in Chapter 3: Education and Northern Development in Historical Perspective.

I want to turn briefly to a discussion of the principles and practices that underlie the institutions that comprise the exogenous or imposed plane. Although liberal ideas about citizenship are rooted in Greek and Roman times, it was the Marshallian ideas about social citizenship and democracy that influenced the evolution of the Canadian welfare state and its expansion into the Eastern Arctic. Citizenship, as Marshall understands it, is affiliated with a process of increasing equality, whereas social class is, of course, a system of inequality. Marshall characterizes citizenship as an evolutionary concept, in which certain types of rights are achieved over time, in accordance with particular institutional developments: first civil then political, and finally, social rights. Marshall’s conception of citizenship is made fully possible only through the existence of

three institutions: the rule of law, democracy and the welfare state. According to his theory, full citizenship is not achieved until these three elements exist. (Roche 1987: 369)

Marshall's theory of citizenship asks us to think about how society is divided, how these divisions influence citizenship, and how different groups or segments of the population experience citizenship. Marshall's work also points to an interesting and important tension in the evolution of citizenship in Northern Canada. According to Marshall's evolutionary model, full citizenship is achieved when universal civil, political and social rights are in place. The protection of these rights requires a democratic welfare state. In the case of Northern Canada, the relationship between the welfare state and Indigenous peoples is paradoxical according to Marshall's model: the expansion of the Canadian welfare state into Northern Canada extended civil, political, and social rights (and their accompanying social programs) but it *also* meant the entrenchment of a colonial settler state through the importation of the southern institutions associated with these rights. The complexities and contradictions inherent in this process are under investigation here.

1.7.3 There's something about the school...

There is a clear relationship between the system of education in a given society and the reproduction of the set of traits, ideas, skills, and knowledge valued by that society that it wishes to pass on to future generations. This is exactly why formal schooling has been such a sharp instrument of colonial powers the world over. Inuit, of course, understood almost immediately the effects formal schooling were having on their children and on their own lives, as I will explain in Chapter 4. I suggested earlier that problems in the education system, particularly around the issue of local control, are

symptoms of a larger problem that I characterized as a disconnect between citizens and the institutions that shape their lives. These institutions are, of course, not neutral; they act as vessels for articulating, enforcing, and reinforcing the kinds of ideas, values, traits, and behaviours described above— sometimes with harmful consequences. Nor are the institutions all the same. When we talk about Inuit-state relations, or the relationship between citizens and the institutions that structure their lives, what we are really talking about is a complex web of relationships between and among people and institutions, each with its own historical evolution and present-day challenges. As will now be clear, all of the institutions that make up the “exogenous plane” in Northern communities were designed in response to a particular set of historical events and processes that took place elsewhere. In Western Europe where they originated, these institutions – local government, formal schooling, health care systems, etc. – evolved over centuries, while in the North, they arrived unsolicited and fully formed within a ten-year period.²¹

Despite the fact that this set of institutions arrived at more or less the same time in the North, their trajectory and meaning in the community has not been the same. Similarly, the ways in which Inuit have engaged with and made use of the various institutions they did not choose for themselves have also differed by institution, and across time. By this, I mean that in certain aspects of community life the two planes I described above have overlapped or intersected with one another without much tension or conflict. In other aspects, they have butted up against each other, sometimes with far-reaching consequences. I will tell this story throughout this dissertation woven in with the

²¹ This is not to suggest that institutional development was not difficult or without conflict in Western Europe. Of course, there was considerable suffering for many wrought by so-called “development” in that region.

stories of the educational experiences of the different generations of Iglulingmiut, the ebb and flow of local control over education, and the changes that have taken place in Igloolik as a result of intervention by government.

1.8 Dissertation Structure and Chapter Outline

This dissertation is divided into six remaining chapters. Before I turn to a chapter-by-chapter outline, it is important to explain the overall structure of my analysis. As I explained earlier, my approach has been to try to blend state- and society-centred approaches to understanding social change. This required an analysis of the dynamics of Inuit-state relations on two scales: the federal/territorial scale, and the local scale. The dissertation moves between these two scales over the course of the chapters. It begins with a comprehensive, high-level analysis of federal and territorial politics and policy on education, and then moves into a detailed micro-level examination of Igloolik society in order to explore and understand the nuances and lived-experiences of the people – the citizens – who were (and remain) directly affected by political and policy decisions made elsewhere. I then use the experiences and lessons from the Igloolik case to examine contemporary attempts by the Government of Nunavut to institute a system of education to meet the aspirations for Nunavut.

This structure mirrors the experience of Iglulingmiut with education governance and government more generally in the North, which began as a highly centralized and distant institution administered from Ottawa, before undergoing a gradual transition to a more decentralized governance model under the Government of the Northwest Territories, and once again becoming more centralized under the Government of Nunavut. This structure also, importantly, provides texture to the dominant narrative on

northern “development” and, I hope, offers more than what Cameron (2015) refers to as “well-worn account[s] of domination and resistance.”

1.8.1 Chapter Outline

Chapter 2: Methodology and Research Design provides an overview and discussion of my methodological approach and research design in three sections. In this chapter, I explain why it was important to take an interpretivist approach to this project in recognition of the role that research has played in the colonial project all over the world, including in Northern Canada. Specifically, I explain why it was important for me to make the analyses and insights of the people who lived through the large-scale social changes wrought by colonialism in Igloolik, a central feature of this work. I also explain my research design, which included archival and interview research conducted between 2013-2015 in Ottawa, Yellowknife, Iqaluit, and of course, Igloolik. In total, I interviewed more than 60 people, the majority of whom were residents of Igloolik representing different age groups, life experiences, and positions in the community. In the final section of the chapter, I reflect on my experiences with northern community research, situating them within the broader historical and contemporary context of social research in and about the North.

Chapter 3: Education Policy and Northern Development provides a detailed history of education policy and governance in the Eastern Arctic and its relationship to federal and territorial aims for “northern development” as well as to the Inuit rights movement, which culminated in the Eastern Arctic in the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement and the creation of Nunavut Territory in 1999. Chapter 3 shows how education has been used as both an instrument of colonization and Inuit self-

determination in the Arctic. The higher-scale historical account serves as the background for Chapters 4 and 5, which offer on an analysis of what this history has meant for, and to, the people of Igloolik in their own words.

Chapter 4: Iglulingmiut Society Part One (up to 1970) is the first of two chapters focused on Igloolik. The strand of argument I am making about the emergence of two planes of community life originates in the years immediately preceding, and immediately after the federal day school is built in Igloolik in 1961. While the bulk of this chapter covers the early history of formal schooling and settlement life – in other words the origins of the exogenous plane – the endogenous plane I described above is rooted in thousands of years of Iglulingmiut social history. As such, the first part of the chapter is dedicated to explaining (as best as I can without adequate knowledge of Inuktitut) the various elements of pre-colonial Iglulingmiut society, including leadership and power structures and the role of education in society. Towards the end of this chapter, I show that the spectrum of institutions described above also begins to take shape. As I will show in Chapter 4, it is evident from the start that Inuit in Igloolik sought out and found what I am calling “zones of overlap” between the two planes in at least two of the imposed institutions: the local settlement councils and the Co-op. Meanwhile, the origins of the school as an instrument of family separation and social engineering position it as an island in the community right from the beginning.

Chapter 5: Iglulingmiut Society Part Two (1970-1999) examines the processes of community-building that were underway in Igloolik throughout the 1970s and 1980s mapped against the trend of decentralization and regionalization of governance under the GNWT. Building on the insights of a cohort of Iglulingmiut (most of whom are former

residential school students), I argue this period was an important moment of local empowerment and innovation in Igloolik, in which Iglulingmiut were engaged in the important process of sorting out whether and how they could work with and through the new set of institutions in ways that made sense to them. Although this chapter does comment on the school in Igloolik, the main focus is on the role that adult education played during this period in helping to support the goals Iglulingmiut set for themselves. This period offered the greatest potential for a convergence of the two societal planes that emerged as a result of colonization, and thus the potential to develop meaningful institutions at the local level. As I argue, however, the locally driven community building taking place at this time was interrupted. The expanding expectations and evolving priorities of the GNWT territorial bureaucracy after the mid 1980s shifted the focus of state actors and the institutions they represented away from the local level at the same time as the demands of the Inuit rights movement shifted the attention of both established and emerging leaders in Igloolik to the regional and national levels into the 1990s.

Chapter 6: Education in Nunavut (1999-Present Day) returns to the territorial scale to examine the main developments in education governance in Nunavut from 1999 to present day. The chapter offers a brief explanation of governance in Nunavut, followed by an abridged historical overview of the road to the 2008 Nunavut Education Act. Centred on the persistent theme of local control over education, the bulk of the chapter analyses four assessments of education under the new Act: the Qanukkanniq? GN Report Card (2009); the Auditor General Report on Education in Nunavut (2013); the Special Committee on the Review of the Nunavut Education Act (2014); and most recently,

debates around the now-infamous Bill 37 and its proposed amendments to the 2008 Nunavut Education Act (2017).

I argue in this chapter that these assessments reveal that many Nunavummiut are frustrated with the education system broadly, and with the GN's Department of Education specifically. For its part, as I will show, the Department of Education has responded to the challenges it is facing with (what I am describing as) high-modernist attempts to centralize control and design and govern the system from the centre. These attempts have been met with strong resistance by stakeholders in Nunavut who have expressed deep concern over what they perceive to be a move by the Government of Nunavut away from the principle of local control and a clear refusal by their government to foster opportunities to enhance Inuit leadership and Inuit self-determination in the education system.

In the final chapter, Chapter 7: "We Have to Keep Trying": A Case for Intermediary Social Institutions, I return to the question of how to make institutions meaningful to the people they are meant to serve. I summarize and try to tie together the main themes covered in this dissertation. In particular, drawing on key insights from Scott (1998) and the people I spoke with in Igloolik, I contend that if the goal of Nunavut is to develop a set of institutions that is more reflective of, and meaningful to, Nunavummiut – the majority of whom are Inuit – then the citizens of Nunavut must have opportunities to find areas of overlap between the two planes of social life they navigate on a daily basis. I argue that there is much to be learned in this regard from the brief period of community-building in the 1970s and early 1980s in Igloolik, when local leadership was encouraged and when Iglulingmiut had access to and were supported to

develop a range of intermediary social institutions at the local level. These local institutions became important vehicles for civic participation and expression, and it was through these institutions that Iglulingmiut began to find zones of overlap between the two planes that emerged as a result of high-modernist state intervention in their lives. Although the challenges facing Nunavummiut are great and recent signals from the territorial government have been frustrating, it is absolutely clear that the citizens of Nunavut understand the value of intermediary social institutions and remain committed to designing and implementing an education system that contributes to Inuit self-determination.

Chapter 2: Methodology and Research Design

What is inadmissible, both morally and scientifically, is the hubris that pretends to understand the behavior of human agents without for a moment listening systematically to how they understand what they are doing and how they explain themselves.

~ James C. Scott (2012: xxx-xxiv)

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I provide an overview and discussion of my methodological approach and research design. The chapter is divided into three main sections: In the first section, I explain my methodological approach, which is rooted in interpretivism, and draws on both archival and oral history research methods; then I describe and explain my research design. In the final section of the chapter, I reflect on my own research experiences, situating them within the larger historical and contemporary context of social research in and about the North.

2.2 Methodological Approach

This dissertation employs an interpretivist approach to social inquiry, taking as its methodological starting point that neither knowledge nor research is value free, and similarly that the researcher is neither a neutral nor an objective figure in the research or knowledge-development process.

I have been inspired by the Indigenous methodologies' literature, which makes clear that research has been and, in many cases, remains bound up with colonialism and in particular with what Linda Tuhiwai Smith calls the "naming" and "claiming" of Indigenous knowledge by outsiders (primarily Europeans). (Smith 1999; also see: Wilson 2008; Kuokkanen 2007) Indigenous scholars have worked to develop and articulate Indigenous research paradigms and practices as a way to regain control over the creation

and sharing of knowledge in and about their communities and peoples. There is, of course, no single “Indigenous” approach to knowledge or to research but there are some common themes in the literature. Foremost among these is the understanding that knowledge is relational. I interpret this to mean that what we know and what we do not or cannot know is bound up with our place in the world, with our familial and social relationships and identities. I also interpret this to mean that the process of gaining and producing knowledge is also grounded in relationships, and that with these relationships (with people, with the environment, with institutions) come certain practices and certain responsibilities.

The approach to research that I have taken relies on active listening, extending and establishing trust, and creating the conditions for ongoing communication. This approach to research is messy, challenging, and often deeply personal and emotional. Non-Indigenous researchers, like me, must examine our assumptions and our motivations, and, in doing so, confront the uncomfortable reality that we are part of a long tradition of extraction and exploitation. I return to this discussion in the final section of this chapter.

As noted in the introductory chapter, my approach is motivated by a strong desire to place, front and centre, the perspectives and analyses of the people who lived through – and now live their daily lives with the results of – radical exogenous social change. Although this is not a traditional ethnography, my approach is informed by Julie Cruikshank who has written extensively about the use of oral history and narratives for understanding social change in Yukon First Nations communities. Cruikshank’s work documents and interprets the life stories of Yukon First Nations women who lived

through the building of the Alaska Highway in the 1970s. Cruikshank set out to answer a set of conventional anthropological questions about the changing lives of Indigenous women in the Yukon by conducting oral history interviews but, over time, her work evolved to reflect the priorities of the women she was working with – which centred primarily around documenting their traditional stories and narratives about spirituality, history and social institutions. Cruikshank became interested in narrative as a social and historical framework: “narrative provides a framework for experiencing the material world and how local stories intersect with larger social, historical and political processes.” (Cruikshank 2001: xii) Building on the assertion that “narratives have the power to inform other forms of explanation rather than as data for analysis using conventional academic paradigms,” Cruikshank asks: how can local voices contribute to theoretical paradigms that frame contemporary scholarship? (xiii) And, her work also provides insight into what happens when “externally imposed categories [intersect] with local concepts.”

Cruikshank’s approach reflects a commitment to active listening, building and sustaining relationships, and most importantly the concept that knowledge is not simply information to be collected, counted, and communicated. The stories that people and communities tell about their own histories and experiences should not be mined for “data” but rather should be taken seriously as analyses in and of themselves.

2.2.1 Why Igloolik?

I chose to base my research in Igloolik in large part because of my pre-existing relationship with the community. I have been working with the community since 2008, first as a master’s student, then as an independent researcher, and finally, as a PhD

student. I was the primary researcher for the 2009-2010 community socio-economic baseline study – the first of its kind in Nunavut. (Kennedy and Abele 2011) I was also involved with a project called *Digital Indigenous Democracy*, which produced mixed media programs intended to democratize the regulatory process for mining by improving access information and public discussion in oral Inuktitut. Through these projects I came to understand the importance of “society” in Igloolik – that is of the full complement of institutions and actors – both formal and informal – that make up and shape community life in Igloolik. In other words, I came to see the importance of grassroots, locally driven institutions and initiatives in infusing meaning into community life. Additionally, by participating in these projects, I was able to build relationships with people in the community, some of whom I have worked with to complete my dissertation research.

While my experience in community research and my particular experience in Igloolik was important, it is equally important that I acknowledge here, at the outset, my own limitations as an outsider and especially as a unilingual English speaker, and non-community member. I discuss in more detail the challenges and limitations I experienced in carrying out this research in the final section of this chapter.

2.3 Research Design

I employed primarily qualitative research methods for my dissertation, including archival and interview research. Knowledge and insights for this project were collected through a number of phases, beginning with background research and preliminary fieldwork, followed by several months of archival research in Ottawa and Yellowknife, and two phases of interviews, which included three separate research trips to Igloolik (with stopovers in Iqaluit) taking place between Fall 2013 and Spring 2015. A summary

table of the project timeline appears in Appendix C. In the pages that follow, I describe the research process in more detail.

2.3.1 Background Research and Preliminary Fieldwork

Since my master's research began in 2008, I have compiled all available secondary source historical materials on Igloolik and the North Qikiqtaaluk region, including my own previously completed projects undertaken in Igloolik. I have drawn on these throughout the duration of this project, and they have informed several chapters of this dissertation. In addition to these Igloolik-related materials, I also compiled and reviewed all academic and government materials related to education and community development in the Eastern Arctic (now Nunavut) available in libraries (Carleton, the University of Toronto, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development) and online.

Caine et al. define preliminary fieldwork as, “the formative early stages of research in the field that allow for exploration, reflexivity, creativity, mutual exchange and interaction through the establishment of research relationships with local people often prior to the development of research protocols and ethics applications.” (Caine et al 2009: 491) They argue that preliminary fieldwork is especially important in Northern communities, where research and researchers have been complicit in the larger colonial project, and where cross-cultural communication is often a critical aspect of most projects.²² Preliminary fieldwork can: open “opportunities for new research and relationships, satisfy community’s desires for meaningful participation (incorporating

²² For a thorough examination of the relationship between research and Indigenous peoples, see Smith (2001).

issues of trust, ethics, and collaboration), and expand the scholarly frontiers of field-based research.” (Caine et al 2009: 492)

My experiences in Igloodik before undertaking my doctoral research contributed to my knowledge of the community, and to my relationships with community members and organizations. Indeed, without this previous work, I would not have been in the position to complete my doctoral research as I have done.

As mentioned, between 2009 and 2011, I served as the primary researcher for a community-driven socio-economic baseline study, which involved a community household survey, two hundred interviews with working-age adults, a business survey, focus groups and several meetings with local organizations including the Hamlet Council and staff, the District Education Authority and school principals, the local Elders and youth societies, the Co-op managers, and members of the Housing Association. During the course of this project, I also assisted with some capacity-building projects in the Hamlet economic development office and provided grant-writing support to the Hamlet government as well.

Since 2011, I have been involved in a number of proposals for a community-based research and monitoring project to measure the impact of a new iron ore mine now operating in the region. In the spring and summer of 2012, along with colleagues in the School of Public Policy and Administration, I worked in a supporting role with community leaders in Igloodik to put together a series of local radio programs on issues

related to regulatory processes associated with the mine in the North Qikiqtaaluk. These relationships are ongoing.

In March 2013, I conducted preliminary meetings/visits with key community members and organizations to discuss ideas for my doctoral research. During this trip, I was able to re-establish contact with a number of community members, and by happy coincidence was able to spend several hours speaking with the mayor on the journey to Igloolik. We spoke about education and youth employment, and the challenges he saw the community facing, in general. Most importantly, I met with Francis Piugattuk, then chair of the Igloolik District Education Authority. Francis and I worked together on the Igloolik baseline study and developed excellent rapport and trust. Francis agreed to act as a co-researcher with me on this project. During this March 2013 trip, I also had the opportunity to conduct a preliminary review of the Igloolik Oral History Project files. An important part of all my trips to Igloolik, including this one, was participation in, and observation of community life.

2.3.2 *Foundational Interviews*²³

Another important part of my preliminary research involved meeting with a number of established leaders and advisors with whom I shared my research ideas and plans, and from whom I was able to gather early insights to guide the next steps of my research. Between October 2013 and April 2014, I conducted 18 semi-structured interviews with both Inuit and non-Inuit senior advisers. These individuals were selected based on their extensive personal and/or professional experiences either specifically in

²³ See Appendix C for a list of interview participants cited in this dissertation.

northern education or because they have thought about and been engaged in social issues, northern public life, and social change in the North for many years. The purpose of these interviews was to help me develop a more dynamic and comprehensive picture of the history of education and education policy, and of the experience of northern development and social change. These interviews were a necessary starting point to help me move between the existing academic and autobiographical literature, and the community interviews with participants in Igloolik. I also used what I learned in these interviews to help me interpret what I heard and observed in Igloolik as a visitor over the last few years.

The majority of the individuals I interviewed in the “foundational” category were those who were involved in education at important moments of change or transition (for example when responsibility for education was transferred from the federal to territorial government, or during the changes that occurred following the NWT Special Committee on Education recommendations). I was able to speak to people who were involved in the political and administrative spheres of these moments, and those who were adjusting or reacting to these changes at the local level during these moments of transition. This proved to be immensely helpful in searching out and interpreting archival materials, and in helping to shape my plans for the community interviews, both of which I describe in detail in the following pages.

2.3.3 Archival Research

Archival research for this study was undertaken at the public archives in Ottawa (Library and Archives Canada and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Departmental Library), and Yellowknife (Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre and

the NWT Legislative Library). These archives offer extensive government (federal, territorial and municipal) records, including departmental reports, legislative materials, policy documents, and correspondence, as well as media/news records, and the records of local, regional and territorial organizations that received state-funding. I also examined the local archive in Igloolik known as the Igloolik Oral History Project (described in more detail below). During the course of my dissertation research, two significant commissions of inquiry into the history of Indigenous-State relations in Canada published their final reports: the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, and the 2013 Qikiqtani Truth Commission, developed by the Qikiqtani Inuit Association. Both inquiries gathered a huge number of archival records, official testimonies, and academic research to support their efforts, some of which was made publicly available. I have relied on the work of these two Commissions throughout this dissertation.

Public Archives

I spent about nine weeks in total examining the public archives, collecting hundreds of documents and records related to education and education policy in the Eastern Arctic, and the history of Igloolik as a permanent settlement. For example, at Library and Archives Canada I examined RCMP detachment and patrol reports from the North Qikiqtaaluk from the late 1950s and 1960s; federal records related to building houses and schools in the Eastern Arctic; cabinet minutes of discussions about federal education policy and responsibilities for “Eskimo” education; reports and correspondence related to schooling and settlement from the 1960s; adult education and training records from this same period into the early 1970s; and periodicals such as the Native Press and other newspapers and newsletters. In the territorial archives, I examined the Department

of Education records, which included reports and correspondence related to the Eastern Arctic, and Igloolik in particular; meeting minutes and Hansard records from the NWT Council and the Legislative Assembly related to education and permanent settlement; correspondence between community agencies such as the adult education centre or the local education authority and the Department of Education; and media items such as periodicals or photographs from the Eastern Arctic.

At present there is no public archive in Nunavut. All archival materials and records related to Eastern Arctic for the period leading up to 1999 when the new territory of Nunavut was created were housed in the Northwest Territories at the time of my research, although there are now efforts underway to move materials to Nunavut. All post-1999 materials are available in Nunavut, but they are not housed in a single place. Some materials are available through the Nunavut Legislative Library and others may be found at the Nunavut Arctic College Library; however, their collections are each relatively small. There are also other initiatives by Nunavummiut to collect and store important materials and records. I had the opportunity to examine the collections of two such initiatives: the Igloolik Oral History Project and the Qikiqtani Truth Commission files housed at the Qikiqtani Inuit Association headquarters in Iqaluit.

The Qikiqtani Truth Commission records contain thousands of archival and academic materials, as well as the transcripts of the individual testimonies made to the Commission over its life. The Qikiqtani Truth Commission was established in 2002 to examine issues related to the federal government's forced settlement and relocation of Inuit families and the RCMP's systematic slaughter of Inuit sled dogs. Over the course of its life, the Commission's work evolved to include research into other social and policy

issues related to northern development. The Commission produced a series of reports, including community histories of the Qikiqtaaluk (Baffin region) communities, and thematic studies on policy areas such as education and housing, among others. The extensive archival and oral testimony records collected by the Commission the files are not publicly available yet; however, I was fortunate to be able to access them with special permission by QIA staff. As far as I understand, there are plans to make these files available through an online database, with conditions for access and use.

Local Archives

Founded in 1986, the Igloolik Oral History Project (OHP) is a community-initiated project, which sought to systematically document as much accumulated local knowledge as possible through a series of oral history interviews with Elders. These interviews were audio-recorded by volunteers who worked on the project and have since been transcribed and translated into English. They are available through a database located in Igloolik, which is searchable by keyword. The OHP also houses a small archive of materials written in and about Igloolik (including government reports, academic research and the like). Between 1986 and the late 1990s, the OHP employed a small corps of Igloolik residents - many of whom have become well-known Inuit leaders – to record the oral testimonies of community Elders. The majority of this work was completed by the early 2000s. Over the years, several researchers and local research participants have shared their interviews with the Oral History Project, and I made

arrangements early on in my dissertation research to do the same. (MacDonald 2014, 2018)

In the winter and spring of 2014, the Oral History Project and the community of Igloolik suffered two tragic losses: first the death of co-founder and long-time project manager Leah Otak²⁴ to cancer and then the unexpected death of the Project's sole remaining staff member Ruby Irgaut. A new manager was hired in 2015 (Rachel Qitsualik, whose work I refer to in Chapter 1²⁵), and the project underwent some institutional restructuring, which has resulted in the closing of the decades-old Igloolik Research Centre and a narrowing of the project's scope and activities. The future of the project is uncertain; however, I have honoured my commitment to the OHP and to my research participants to contribute the oral history interviews to the local archive.

Igloolik has a small library located in the elementary school. During one of my research trips, I was attending a school book fair and noticed a dilapidated box atop one of the bookshelves. I took it down, and found inside yellowed copies of *The Midnight Sun*, a short-lived community newspaper run out of the Igloolik adult education centre in the 1970s. I digitized most of the copies using an application on my iPad called "GeniusScan". *The Midnight Sun* holds many articles written by the local education authority chair, the school principal, and the local community council chair, serves as an

²⁴ To read more about Leah Otak's legacy in Igloolik and in Nunavut oral history, see MacDonald & Wachowich 2018.

²⁵ For more information about Rachel Qitsualik, see: <http://www.inhabitmedia.com/authors-Rachel-Sean.html>.

excellent window into the discussions that were taking place amongst the community leadership at this time regarding education.

There is also another source of local Igloolik archival material, which overlaps somewhat with the OHP, and which was used for this study. *IsumaTV* is an Igloolik-based digital interactive media project (sometimes described as YouTube + Facebook), which creates space for Indigenous filmmakers and artists around the world to upload digital (audio, video, visual) content to the *IsumaTV* website (www.isuma.tv). Anyone may post videos or audio files of their thoughts and ideas in response to events in their lives and communities. Since the mid-1980s, world-renowned Inuit filmmaker, Zacharias Kunuk, has been documenting the local history and knowledge of his ancestors in and around Igloolik. Nearly all his audio and film-work, as well as that of other budding Inuit filmmakers is available through this website that he and his team created. The material, and the project itself have served as sources of information and inspiration for my research.

2.3.4 Benefits and Limitations of Archival Research

Archival research was important for this study because it allowed me to trace the evolution of ideas and perspectives of government actors and the relationships between the different institutions involved in northern development, including northern education. Archival research is useful for identifying actors, and for developing a chronological map of the events and changes that occurred over time. Despite these benefits, archival research also has its limitations and challenges, particularly in cross-cultural and (post)colonial contexts. The first and most important limitation is that the archival records typically do not reflect the voices of marginalized actors, especially in cases

where a society does not have a tradition of written record keeping. While the territorial archives did have some materials, such as community correspondence, the vast majority of the archival records did not contain the voices or perspectives Inuit in the communities. In this way, the archival records are incomplete.

Moreover, even where there are some records of community responses to the housing program, or the building of the schools, for example, these are often found in official government reports or correspondence between the settlement manager and the federal government on behalf of certain citizens who were not proficient in English. In these cases, there may be a discrepancy between what is recorded and what was actually said, either deliberately or simply through miscommunication or misinterpretation. Indeed, in many cases, by the time a researcher, like myself, is examining records from 60 or 70 years ago, the “facts” contained in these records may have been interpreted – or misinterpreted – at least two or three times. There are countless examples in the literature, as well from the recent reports by the Qikiqtani Truth Commission, and the TRC of instances where non-Inuit actors – government or otherwise – interpreted a lack of protest by Inuit to certain activities or decisions as consent when in fact Inuit were very unhappy with what was taking place. It was important that I approached the archival records with these limitations in mind.

Archives are, of course, not neutral sources. Decisions are made at several points throughout the archiving process about what documents and materials hold value, and thus which materials are included and excluded. Although there are exceptions, archives tend to hold primarily written materials, which privileges certain types of historical documentation and certain perspectives. It was important for the purposes of my research,

and indeed for all historical northern research, that I consulted a range of archives, including both public and what may be called “oral history” archives, like the Igloolik Oral History Project and archival initiatives like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Qikiqtani Truth Commission. These archives employ different selection criteria, allowing for a greater variety of perspectives and historical experiences.

Oral history is one antidote to the limitations of the “official record” but it also has its own limitations and challenges. One of these is that oral histories, by definition, rely on memory and our memories are not entirely reliable. Beyond simply forgetting the objective facts as the years go on, we are also unavoidably influenced by our subsequent life experiences. As we age, we are likely to reinterpret our past using the knowledge, experience, and perspective we gain as we move through life. A person in his or her 80s may look back at events that took place in when they were in 20s or 30s very differently than they could have when they were only 50 or 60 years old. It is also possible that what we remember is not what happened at all. However, even when our memories are factually unreliable, they reveal important information about how we *perceive(d)* what happened and how those events shaped our understanding of our circumstances and ourselves. (Allen & Montell 1981; Thompson 2010; Shopes 2008; Doyle 2015)

Oral history accounts are essential to developing a more comprehensive and complete narrative of not only the events themselves but the enduring meaning of those events for individuals and the community as a whole. There is, as Plummer notes, an important difference between the “objective factors of the situation and the subjective interpretation of the situation.” (Plummer 1983: 41) The purpose of this study was not to search for the objective facts of what happened but rather I tried to document and analyze

the range of responses – sometimes constructive, sometimes destructive - in a single community to the rapid changes endured by members of that community over time, and the evolution of the relationship between imposed state institutions and the community. The time for this kind of work in the North must be now. For only a short time longer, the people who lived through the early days of these changes will be able to tell their stories in their own words (in their own languages). It is important to record these memories, stories, and analyses to ensure that they form part of the public record. (Kennedy Dalseg 2016; MacDonald & Wachowich 2016; Cruikshank 2001; Cameron 2016)

2.3.5 *Community Interviews*²⁶

After completing the archival research and most of the foundational interviews, I undertook three research trips to Igloolik, all several weeks long. The main purpose of these research trips was to conduct oral history interviews with community members representing different age cohorts. As Blee and Taylor point out, oral history interviews are useful for “exploration, discovery, and interpretation of complex social events and process.” (Blee & Taylor 2002: 93) The purpose of the community interviews was to document the different ideas people have about the school and its history, and the role that it played in shaping the community of Igloolik over time.

The community interviews were an essential complement to the archival research I conducted. The historical records I examined provided important information about events and about what state actors believed they were doing when they were establishing communities and schools in the Indigenous communities of the North, but as

²⁶ A list of interview participants cited in this dissertation, see Appendix C.

Cruikshank reminds us, “meaning does not inhere in events but involves weaving those events into stories that are meaningful at the time.” (Cruikshank 2001: xiv) In order to understand how these events and actions by the state and its representatives affected

people in communities, it was critical to speak with those individuals who had personally lived through the period under examination.

As expected, all but one of the interviews with Iglulingmiut took place in Igloolik. I planned to interview members of the community who represented different segments of the local population, which I called “cohorts” for the purposes of the project. The first cohort comprised the parents of the first generation of students who attended formal schooling (both residential and day school); the second comprised the first classes of children to attend the federal day school in Igloolik during its first decade or so of existence, beginning in 1961. Once I began the interviews, it became clear that I should also speak with some Iglulingmiut who attended residential school in their early years. Some of these former students transitioned from residential school to federal day school and thus were able to compare their experiences in both settings; others experienced only residential school but were important participants in this project because they returned to live in the community while it was in its early stages of development. In many cases, it was the residential school-educated cohort who took on early leadership roles in the new governance institutions at the community level. For this reason, their insights and perspectives were invaluable to this study. Initially I had resisted the idea of interviewing this group because the Truth and Reconciliation Commission had recently visited the community, and I did not want to ask the former residential school students to revisit their stories again so soon. Francis Piugattuk helped me to find a small number of participants who he thought would be willing to speak with me, and for the most part they were.

The subsequent cohorts were defined roughly around the three decades following the 1970s. I planned to interview the same number of people in each cohort, aiming to secure representation from different families with different socio-economic and religious backgrounds. By structuring my sample this way, I would be able to situate each interviewee in the family and in the community, aiming to find the full range and diversity of experience in Igloolik. As my research developed, it became clear that the period between the late 1950s and the mid 1980s was critical in the development of Igloolik as a community, and it was most important to focus my research on these years in order to understand the institutional and socio-political roots of the present-day community of Igloolik. Although the main focus of my interviews was on this 30- year period, I did speak with several younger community members, as well as with current school staff to get a sense of the contemporary relationship between the school and the community.

In total, I conducted 40 community interviews and 1 focus group. Together, I spoke with 49 individuals in Igloolik, ranging in age from 16 to (roughly) 90 years of age.

Table 1. Number of Community Interviews, by Type

Interview Type	Number of Interviews
Elders (parents of first generation of students)	11 (4 men; 4 women) *3 men were interviewed twice
Early Residential School Students	7 (5 men; 2 women)
Igloolik Federal/Territorial Day School Students (1960s -1970s)	10 (7 men; 3 women)
Ataguttaaluk Elementary + High School Students (mid 1980s-early 2000s)	5 (4 men; 1 woman)
Current High School Students	5 (3 men; 2 women) *Focus group
Local School Staff (Current & Former)	7
TOTAL	49 *counting focus group as 1 interview

The process of selecting participants evolved somewhat as the project developed and differed slightly according to cohort. For example, during my first research trip in February 2014, Francis Piugattuk and I spoke at length about participant selection, beginning with Elders. As will be described in more detail in Chapter Four, the community of Igloolik – particularly in the early days – was divided along religious lines with one side of the community inhabited by Anglicans and the other by Catholics. Religious division played a critical role in the settlement of the community, and it had important bearings on formal schooling as well. As I have explained elsewhere, for the most part it was only the children of Catholic families who were sent to residential school (in Chesterfield Inlet) from the North Qikiqtaaluk; whereas the children of Anglican families were generally kept in communities, although they may have attended secondary

and vocational training at the Churchill Vocational Centre in northern Manitoba in their teen years. With this in mind, I chose to approach Elders (and thus families) who would represent both the Catholic and the Anglican experience. Francis Piugattuk also helped me to approach Elders who had a range of experiences with representatives of the state in those early years of settlement and social change – some, for example, worked as guides with the RCMP, while others worked more closely with the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) or the Cooperative. These early relationships, it became clear, have had long-term impacts on the experiences of particular families and their place in the community over time.

This initial framing of Igloolik’s origins as a permanent settlement, and of the range of experiences with imposed institutions (i.e. the churches, the HBC, the government, and of course formal schooling) shaped the selection of participants in the other cohorts as well. There were practical limitations to this approach, however. The main limitation was the willingness and availability of individual participants. In some cases, I was able to interview different generations of the same family as I intended but where this was not possible, Francis and I opted to approach individuals who we identified as having some of the same characteristics (i.e. same extended family with the same religious affiliation; classmates in school; similar socio-economic circumstances, etc.). Some of the participants were selected for very specific reasons, such as that they had gone on to pursue post-secondary studies in southern Canada, or because they or their parents taught at the school(s) in Igloolik. Two participants self-selected; they heard through word-of-mouth that I was interested in speaking with people about their

experiences with and perspectives about the school and they approached either Francis or me to say that they wanted to be involved.

As is the case in all projects of this nature, it was not possible to speak with everyone I wished to interview. Some people who had extensive involvement in the evolution of the local school or in the regional board of education, for example, have passed away or were too ill to meet at the time of my research. A small number of people who I reached out to while I was in Igloolik were simply unwilling or unable to participate for other reasons. As such, this may mean that some views are missing from my analysis.

In all cases, I prepared a list of questions in advance to help guide the conversation, and these evolved somewhat over time. Generally speaking, I did not ask each participant all the questions, choosing instead to allow the conversation to take its own course. Interview questions differed somewhat by cohort, due in large part to the specific circumstances of the day; however, for all cohorts, I began each interview with the same one or two questions. I asked participants to tell me about their early years – where they were born and what they remember about growing up – and then I asked them to tell me about their earliest memories of school. By starting this way, it gave participants a chance to warm up by talking about something very familiar and it allowed me to get a sense of their willingness to share personal memories. The interviews then typically moved into a series of questions about their own schooling from childhood onwards, what they remembered about their parents' involvement (or lack thereof) in their formal education, and often the conversation would turn to their own experiences as parents with the school and in their children's education. In the cases where the

participant were directly involved (previously or currently) in education themselves – either as DEA members, school staff, or elected officials – I would ask more specific questions about those aspects of their experience as well. In most cases, I knew about these affiliations in advance and so could prepare questions in advance. Generally speaking, I tried to let the participant guide the conversation; however, this was not always successful.

All community interviews were audio recorded for posterity. Each participant²⁷ was asked if they would consent to sharing their interview with the Igloolik Oral History Project, and the vast majority agreed. Although I will interpret these interviews for my analysis in this dissertation, it was important to me and to the participants that the audio and verbatim transcripts of these interviews be available so that community members and others could hear from the participants in their own words – and in the case of the Elders, in their own language. In most cases, these interviews were conducted either in a small meeting room at the Hamlet offices or in the participants' homes. Interviews with Elders were set up by first making an introductory visit to their homes to introduce myself and explain the project, followed by a discussion about when we could return to conduct the interview. Francis Piugattuk served as interpreter for all visits and interviews with Elders, except one. Some Elders chose to meet me at the Hamlet office, while most preferred to meet at home. For all other cohorts, the majority of the interviews were conducted at the Hamlet office, although I offered to meet anywhere that the participants were comfortable. Igloolik homes tend to be very busy, as there are often many people living

²⁷ The small number of people in their late teens and early 20s who I interviewed were not given this option.

in small spaces. As such, I have found that community members typically prefer to meet outside their homes for reasons of privacy and noise levels.

By happy coincidence, the meeting room at the Hamlet had a very large map of the area surrounding Igloolik, which allowed participants – especially Elders - to physically point out to me where they were born, and where their families lived on the land before moving into the settlement. I found this to be immensely helpful because it helped to bridge the language barrier much more effectively. All the traditional camps and hunting areas have traditional place names that do not translate well into English. In the absence of this map, Francis would simply say, for instance, “a camp on Baffin Island about 100 kilometers from here.” This was, of course, interesting but did not have the same impact as being able to see the participants trace out their family’s seasonal rounds with their index fingers on the map. The younger generations – certainly those who were born on the land, and to a lesser extent those who were born in the community – were also able to point out where their families migrated from by using the map on the wall. Towards the end of this phase of the research, Francis and I spent an afternoon mapping out all the camps where the Elders and their families lived. This map was given to the Oral History Project, but it was lost unfortunately during a recent “purge” of library files.

In addition to oral history interviews with community members, I conducted a strand of interviews with people who were drawn into communities or northern governments by their status as employed educators or other government officials, particularly those in the territorial departments of education. In total I spoke with eight former administrators and officials. These interviews helped to contextualize and enrich the archival materials I examined; they served to put a human face on government

attempting to implement policies across vast distances; and they offered an important perspective of individuals who held a great deal of power but who were also (in most cases) community-minded and struggled with their role as interlocutor in the wave of institutional and social change across the North.

It is also important to note that over the years that I have been traveling to the North and working with a variety of people on northern projects, I have had occasion to meet with many people who were or currently are involved in northern education and/or political development. I have also had conversations and interactions with dozens of community members who have given me insight into community life in Igloolik. While I did not formally interview all of these individuals for this project, these conversations have been invaluable in helping me to interpret what I have learned over the course of my dissertation research.

2.3.6 Participatory Community Research

The time I spent in Igloolik both in the past for previous projects and during the course of my three research trips for this study have included a number of activities beyond conducting interviews with community members. These activities fell into two broad categories (with occasional overlap): first formal meetings with representatives from local organizations and informal participation in community life. All of these activities were important for several reasons, chief among those that they gave me the opportunity to establish and maintain relationships with community members and different organizations in town.

During my time in Igloolik I met regularly with the mayor and Senior Administrative Officer at the Hamlet government offices, and I arranged several meetings

with the two school principals and members of their staff usually in the first few days of my return to the community. Along with Francis Piugattuk, I reported on my research progress at two District Education Authority meetings, and regularly stopped into the DEA office in the elementary school to maintain contact with the committee's administrator. I also spoke at a meeting of the local Elders' society; and I made presentations to the three grade 10/11 social studies classes at the high school about my research.

In addition to these more formal activities, I also aimed to participate in everyday life in Igloolik to the greatest extent possible. Over the years I feel that I have been able to develop a good sense of what community life is like by engaging in community activities and events. I regularly attended Hamlet council meetings whenever possible, and tried to participate in whatever events were taking place while I was in town. Some of these have included: public events such as those held by mining companies, the regional Inuit organization, or the community's MLAs, community fundraisers, book fairs, hockey games, fishing derbies, performances by local musicians and artists, community feasts and dances, and most recently community Easter celebrations. By participating in these events, I was also able to step away, at least somewhat, from my role as "researcher" in the community. While I don't believe it was possible to shed the "researcher-participant" dynamic entirely, involvement in daily life and community events allowed me to interact with community members –many of whom I now consider friends – socially, and it allowed me to demonstrate that my sincere interest in getting to know not only the community's challenges but also its strengths. This is important because most social science research is focused on the "negative statistics" (as it is often

explained by community members), and there is a sense among community members that researchers do not try to understand what is good about life in the community, or what the sources of strength are, there.

2.3.7 *Data Analysis*

Although I did not follow Billson's *progressive verification method*²⁸ (PVM) exactly, I drew some inspiration from her method. Briefly, PVM is a form of ethnography, which combines participant observation with historical and demographic analysis (mixed methods). In PVM research "subjects" are understood to be equal partners in the research process rather than objects of study. In this way, it seeks to break down the traditional authority structure between researcher and researched. On-going communication of results and insights with my co-researcher and a few of the research participants helped me to interpret what I was learning through the oral history interviews. It helped that Francis Piugattuk was with me for the first set of interviews with Elders, so he was very aware of the types of questions I was asking and of the sorts of responses we were getting. As I was able to return to the community several times, I was able to complete a few follow up interviews, or at least have conversations with participants about the project. I did not record all of these conversations, as many of them were informal and brief; however, they were useful and important not just for the results

²⁸ Janet Mancini Billson is a feminist sociologist who has worked with Inuit communities in Northern Canada. With her daughter, she published a book called *Inuit Women: Their Powerful Spirit in a Century of Change* in which she outlines the method she developed in order to conduct sensitive research on female oppression in a cross-cultural way. She has also published several articles critiquing conventional social science research, offering her method as a possible way forward. For more information, see: Janet Mancini Billson and Kyra Mancini, *Inuit Women: Their Powerful Spirit in a Century of Change* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2007). Also see: Janet Mancini Billson, "The Progressive Verification Method: Toward a Feminist Methodology for Studying Women Cross-Culturally," *Womens' Studies International Forum* 14.3 (1991), 201-215.

of the project but also in maintaining communication with the community.

All interviews were transcribed, and carefully reviewed several times. I looked for common themes across and within cohorts, and analyzed the language used by participants to describe their experiences with and perspectives on education, in addition to using the interviews as a way to complement available archival materials and other documentary evidence I collected. I originally intended to use a software program such as NVivo to code and analyze these interviews but after some preliminary efforts, I chose not to pursue this further. I quickly realized that the software was more useful for mining interviews for data, rather than taking the interview as a whole – as an analysis in and of itself. I also found that, as more time passed since I completed the interviews, I stopped being able to hear the voices of the participants and began to read the interviews with my own voice. For these two reasons, I chose instead to simply listen to the interview recordings and review the written transcripts many times, making notes on themes and key insights as well as the particular language and tone used by the speakers.

Guided by Cruikshank (2001), Smith (1999), Scott (1998) and others, I have treated the insights and analyses of the people I spoke with in Igloolik and elsewhere in Nunavut as at least equal to those found in the academic literature and those of outside observers who are often identified as “experts” because they have published their thoughts in academic journals. I engaged in conceptual discussions with community members and Inuit thought leaders throughout the duration of my research. I viewed participants not as informants but as subject matter experts in their own right, and I tried to meet people on their own terms – to let them guide the conversation, to keep conversations jargon-free and to talk about things that seemed important to *them* based on where our conversation was going.

My knowledge of the community allowed me to get to a place where I could have higher-level intellectual connections with people who were open to speaking with me and sharing their insights, which, I hope has enriched what I present here. I found that the assumptions about research and the goals of research that underpin nVivo and other data coding software did not accord easily with this approach.

Since 2009, I have kept field notes during each research trip to Igloolik. These notes have served as documentation not only of empirical observations and conversations but also of my own learning and analysis over time. Five years of these notes provides a relatively detailed progression of changes in the community and changes in my own thinking about what has taken place and how my relationships have evolved. In addition to my own notes, I have always kept in regular contact with my supervisor both during and in between my research trips. Regular in-depth discussions with my supervisor and my colleagues (including faculty and fellow doctoral students engaged in Northern research) have helped to evolve my understanding of my empirical and theoretical observations. Moreover, I have been involved in a number of writing projects related to my own research as well as other themes of northern development. All of these activities supplement and complement my empirical research, allowing for deeper analysis and interpretation.

2.3.8 *Dissemination: “Now that you know, what are you going to do with it?”*²⁹

In addition to completing this dissertation, I plan to continue working with the community of Igloolik to develop a plan for next steps. One of my hopes for the research is to support the efforts of the teaching staff, the District Education Authority and the community (parents) to build a better relationship through improving communication and understanding. As mentioned above, I have made a small contribution to the Igloolik Oral History Project, and I hope to support efforts of the schools and the OHP to improve collaboration and access by students and teachers to these materials. These goals may

²⁹ This is the question that Rachel Qitsualik, renowned author and then-Director of the Igloolik Oral History Project, asked me when we spoke about my research.

seem ambitious, but I believe that my existing relationships in the community, including with the schools, the Hamlet, and the Oral History Project and Nunavut Arctic College make this possible.

I am committed to the principle of open access, particularly in Northern Canada where so much knowledge has been collected but little has been shared or made available to the people who live there. I have created an Excel database containing all the files and documents that I collected for this project. Once I have completed my dissertation, I plan to send a curated version of the database, along with any appropriate PDF documents on a flash drive to the Igloolik elementary school library so that these records and documents may be available to anyone in Igloolik who wishes to see them. I will also make sure that the school principals and staff, especially at the high school, are aware of them for future use by students in their social studies courses. The files have also been shared with the Oral History Project, which keeps a small but substantial collection of research and archival materials relevant to Igloolik. Another possible repository for some of the archival material I collected may be the Nunavut Social History database founded by Dr. Frank Tester and housed at the University of British Columbia.³⁰

2.3.9 *Serving a Community Purpose?*

It is important to me that the research I have conducted and may conduct in Igloolik in the future serves a local purpose; however, there are very high expectations on the part of the Nunavut Research Institute as well as local organizations and citizens that the benefits of research be relatively immediate. This expectation can pose many

³⁰ Nunavut Social History. Available at: <http://nunavutsocialhistory.arts.ubc.ca>.

challenges, especially for student researchers in the social sciences who work with limited resources and are typically not working as part of large teams as students tend to do in the natural sciences. At times the weight of these expectations can be overwhelming, but they are an important and, arguably, a necessary part of Northern research. (Gladstone & Kennedy Dalseg 2015; Sabin 2016)

Here I offer an anecdote to illustrate the challenge of serving an immediate community purpose as a student researcher. In April 2015, I attended a community meeting held by then-Nunavut Minister of Education and Igloolik MLA, Paul Quassa on parental engagement in education – an area that has been identified as a high priority in Nunavut and across Inuit Nunangat. (Department of Education 2015; National Strategy on Inuit Education 2011) I had hoped that this meeting would help me to see how my research might be able to support local and territorial initiatives with respect to improving school-community relations in Igloolik. At the meeting, the Minister released a parental engagement toolkit, *It Starts at Home*, which outlines a number of activities and strategies for schools and parents to help them work better together. One of the recommended tools was a parent survey to be sent out by schools at the beginning of the year. The short survey asks parents to identify the ways in which they have previously been involved with the school, and it asks them to make suggestions for future engagement projects.

After listening to the parents' comments at the meeting and reviewing the toolkit, I decided to approach the Minister of Education with a proposal to carry out a pilot project using this parent survey as a starting point. I proposed to support the school in carrying out the survey, and then I would analyze the data and present it to the

community in a report, in exchange for being able to use the data for my dissertation. I would be able to use the historical work I have done in Igloolik to enrich the survey report and make a valuable contribution not only to the local schools but also to the Department of Education. The Minister was enthusiastic about the proposal and put me in touch with staff in the Department of Education. Very quickly, it became clear that they did not share the Minister's enthusiasm and were not prepared to offer their support. I was told that in fact *It Starts At Home* did not have any financial or personnel resources attached to it and was meant to serve as a "best practices" resource. To the best of my knowledge, no further developments have been made on this file since. I remain hopeful that I will be able to find a way to make this project happen in the future but at the time of writing it was not possible to pursue it further without direct financial support from the GN. I recount this here to show that there *are* opportunities for research to be useful in very practical short-term ways, but it often requires collaborating with other researchers or organizations, including government. This was not a project I could take on, on my own, however much I would have liked to do it.

2.4 Reflections on Community Research in the North

As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, my research is situated within a relatively long tradition of northern social science research, much of which, unfortunately, was undertaken with little consideration for the people whose lives were being documented and analyzed. Although significant empowering changes have been made to the research process that place a great deal more control in the hands of northern communities, the legacies of this asymmetrical relationship remain, not only in the minds

of the people who live there but also in the institutionalized privileging of certain “types” of knowledge over others.

Despite widespread recognition and acceptance of the problematic and complex role that research, and researchers have played in the Indigenous communities of northern Canada, there are very few reflective pieces published in the academic literature by northern researchers,³¹ and to my knowledge no scholarly critical inquiry into northern research and northern research methods. I have documented carefully my experiences with and reflections on community research in the North throughout the duration of this project as well as my previous projects in Igloodik. Ultimately, I intend to write about this in some length and have been in discussions with other northern researchers of my generation about the possibility of co-authoring a critical inquiry into northern research. Here, I offer some reflections and observations based on my own experiences.

2.4.1 Community vs. “Community-Based” Research

For as long as I have been involved in northern research, there has been significant pressure on researchers to engage in “community-based research”. This trend in northern research arose from a recognition that far too often and for far too long researchers were extracting knowledge from communities for their own use and benefit, and communities were not seeing any benefits from the research. Community-based research has become for all intents and purposes a requirement, and both funding and research licensing in the North are tied to approaching research in this way. At

³¹ Exceptions include: de Leeuw et al 2012; Dolson 2013, 2018; Cameron 2015. Also see Volume 6.1 of *Northern Public Affairs* magazine, entitled “The Future of Research in Northern Canada.” Available at: www.northernpublicaffairs.ca

conferences, (primarily) southern-based northern researchers seem to spend more time talking about all the ways in which their research engaged and benefited communities than they do sharing what they learned.

While there are certainly important reasons why collaboration is important and, in some cases, necessary, there is little reflection in these calls for equal partnership and community-driven research projects for the burden this places on small communities with limited resources and the few people trained to be full participants in a research team. I have written about some of these challenges briefly with Joshua Gladstone in an editorial we published in *Northern Public Affairs*, a publication we co-founded in 2012 to help bridge the gap between researchers, decision-makers, and communities across the North. (Kennedy Dalseg and Gladstone 2015). For students, who rely on small research grants and scholarships to carry out their work, the expectations and resources required to do community-based research may be neither realistic nor accessible.

My experience with community research has been deeply enriching and deeply uncomfortable. The notes I took during my many research trips to Igloolik highlight the many ups and downs I experienced while trying to complete this project. Warm welcomes at the airport, spectacular moments of connection with community members, awkward interactions with people who were trying to avoid me after deciding they would rather not be interviewed after all, tense meetings with community members expressing their frustration and anger with research and researchers, embarrassing situations where I simply misunderstood or misread a situation. My notes reveal a gradual progression in

my thinking about the nature and utility of community research and my own place within it.

While undertaking my research in Igloolik, I tried to build meaningful relationships based on trust and mutual respect. During the course of my interviews, many people shared with me painful and private moments and events in their lives; they talked to me about their families, their childhood memories, and their aspirations for the future. On the one hand, these conversations were vital to the project if the project was going to be anything more than, as Cameron writes “a well-worn account of colonial dominance and resistance”. In short, I could not and would not have undertaken this particular project without speaking directly with Iglulingmiut. On the other hand, the process of documenting, analyzing, and then writing about what they told me has forced me to confront all the things that I find uncomfortable about my community research experience and about northern community research in general.

There are significant and, I think, unavoidable tensions inherent in Northern community research. Those of us who are engaged in northern research all feel these tensions and we may talk about them amongst ourselves but there has not yet been a large-scale attempt by Northern scholars to critically engage with one another on the subject of methodology. Perhaps this is because we are afraid that in speaking honestly about our experiences, our limitations, and our failures that we will detract from our positions as “experts” – a word that I know makes many of us uncomfortable. Perhaps it is because we are all grappling with how to articulate our experiences and the complexities inherent in all human relationships and interactions in ways that may be

useful for others to build on. What I have tried to do here is, I hope, an indication of the way that I tried to carry out my research: in an open, respectful, and constructive manner.

2.4.2 Language and Interpretation, Working with a Co-Researcher

Language and interpretation were a significant consideration for this project. As mentioned above, Francis Piugattuk³², a skilled and experienced co-researcher, acted as my interpreter for interviews with Elders. Interpretation involves much more than just translation. Francis acted as a cultural interlocutor between the Elders and me, which was invaluable, and during the inevitable moments where I spoke or acted in a way that had the potential to cause offense or embarrassment, Francis immediately stepped in to smooth things over.

Early in the interview process, Francis and I worked with some of the questions I had prepared in advance to make sure that they made sense to him, and I incorporated his feedback. After each interview, we de-briefed and I asked him what his impressions were both of what the participant told us but also about how the interview went. These conversations helped me to refine the questions, and they also gave Francis a chance to tell me things that he may have glossed over in translating the conversation in real time. It was also during these conversations that Francis would make recommendations for other people to approach for interviews. Once I began interviewing people in English, I would conduct the interviews alone. Nonetheless, I arranged to meet with Francis

³² Francis Piugattuk attended federal day school as a boy in Igloodik, and then went on to attend high school in Iqaluit (then Frobisher Bay). He has extensive post-secondary education through the Arctic College system. In addition to his formal education and comprehensive language skills, Francis has substantial experience working with researchers across many disciplines. He is a highly skilled researcher in his own right.

regularly to talk to him about how things were going, and to ask him for help locating and approaching other community members.

One of the challenges of conducting research in this way is the potential strain that it can put on the community co-researcher or interpreter. I was always aware of the dual role that Francis was being asked to play: co-researcher and community member each with its own social obligations and responsibilities. As I have mentioned, researchers are not always warmly welcomed in Nunavut communities, and for good reason. There tends to be a healthy skepticism about research and so there is some risk involved for community members who choose to work with researchers, especially as closely as Francis and I did.

2.4.3 Research Ethics and Licensing

This project required research ethics approval from the University's Research Ethics Board, and it also required that I obtain a Nunavut research license. All researchers carrying out their work in the territory of Nunavut are obligated to apply for a research license. The primary purpose of the research license is to attempt to place more control over research into the hands of communities. At the very least, researchers are required to communicate about their projects with the community where they intend to work and have plans for communicating the results of the research. The licensing process also requires researchers to provide a copy of the project description in Inuktitut as well as English, for the public record.

There were a number of ethical considerations for this study. First and foremost, I had (and continue to have) the responsibility and commitment to carry out this research with the utmost respect for the people of Igloolik, in recognition that I am a guest in the

community. My primary concerns surrounded the potential issues or sensitivities related to residential and early day schools that may have arisen during the course of interviews. Early on, I raised this concern with the then chair of the Igloolik District Education Authority, who told me that since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's community visits, his sense was that people in Igloolik were more open to discussing their experiences. Perhaps unsurprisingly, I found that there were many people who were willing to talk to me about their experiences with formal schooling but there were still a number of people who, in some cases, reacted negatively to hearing about my research, or in other cases, agreed to meet with me but then did not appear on the date of the interview and noticeably avoided contact with me thereafter. I will never know the exact reasons for their reactions, but it was clear that they were not willing to share their experiences, and of course I respect that. I made every effort to proceed with caution and consideration, and I sought regular advice from my Francis, who was able to help me better understand some of the underlying dynamics that may be influencing different community members' reactions to the research. The "rejections" and "no-shows" were informative and helpful as well because they forced me to confront some of my own discomfort with this project (and with this kind of community research in general), and

they highlighted the wide range of responses people in the community have to their experiences with formal schooling, and residential schooling in particular.

Another consideration I faced was the payment of research participants. There is an increasing trend in Northern social science research to pay research participants. Although there are no formal rules to follow, this trend is self-perpetuating. As one of Nunavut's most researched communities, Iglulingmiut have, perhaps, more well-defined expectations of researchers. One of these expectations is that individuals – Elders in particular – be compensated in some way for sharing their knowledge. While recognizing the importance of meeting these expectations in a respectful and fair way, I was (and remain) uneasy about paying participants large sums of money, based on an assessment of what their time or knowledge is “worth”, for example. However, I feel that an honorarium is a symbol of respect not only for the time participants take but also for their sharing of knowledge, which cannot be commoditised. In my experience, some participants clearly did expect to be paid - and in some cases wanted to know what the honorarium was in advance- while others seemed pleasantly surprised by the offer.

Each community participant (who was not acting in his or her role as a public figure) was offered an honorarium of \$50.00. It was important that the amount was high enough (particularly given the cost of living in the North) but not so high that it induced people to participate because they felt they could not turn down such a large sum. In Igloolik, \$50.00 can buy a can of fuel, or maybe the groceries for a day or two for a small family. In addition to the monetary compensation, I also offered small tokens of appreciation to Elders who participated in the study, as a marker of respect and traditional practice. These tokens took the form of tea or coffee, cookies/biscuits or small materials for sewing and/or harvesting. For the other research participants (foundational interviews and former government officials/administrators), I did not offer honoraria.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview and discussion of my methodological approach and research design in three sections. In the first section, I explained why it was important to take an interpretivist approach to this project in recognition of the fact that neither knowledge nor research is value-free, and similarly that research has played a central role in the colonial project all over the world, including in Northern Canada. And I explained why it was important to place, front and centre, the analyses and insights of the people who lived through the large-scale social changes wrought by colonialism in Igloolik.

In the second section of the chapter I described my qualitative research design, which included archival and interview research between 2013-2015. Archival research was undertaken at public archives in Ottawa and Yellowknife, as well as the territorial legislative libraries in Yellowknife and Iqaluit. I also consulted archival records associated with the Qikiqtani Truth Commission, with the permission of QIA in Iqaluit, and the oral history records at the Igloodik Oral History Project in Igloodik. Between 2013 and 2014, I conducted semi-structured interviews with 18 Inuit and non-Inuit advisors with extensive experience with education in the Eastern Arctic or deep historical knowledge of social change in the North. Between 2014 and 2015, I conducted 40 oral history interviews and one youth focus group in Igloodik. In total, I spoke with 49 individuals in the community representing different age groups, life experiences, and positions in the community.

In the final section of the chapter, I offered some reflections on northern community research based on my own experiences, situating them within the broader historical and contemporary context of social research in and about the North. I plan to expand upon these reflections in a future article. In the next chapter, I examine the history of education and northern development in the Eastern Arctic.

Chapter 3: Education Policy and Northern Development

3.1 Introduction

Recent assessments of the state of education in Nunavut acknowledge the central place that education will play in shaping the future of self-determination in Nunavut, even while they highlight many governance and policy challenges.³³ The problems in education today have a long history, rooted in federal northern development policy, education policy, and the relationship between the two. In examining the history of the education system and its role in the broader project of northern development, it is possible to document and analyze what decision-makers and administrators believed they were doing from the state's earliest interactions with northern Indigenous peoples up to 1999, when Nunavut was created. This chapter offers an analysis of federal and territorial education policy as it relates to political and community development in the Eastern Arctic. It is divided into five chronological sections. In each section, I endeavoured to cover the main educational policy and programmatic developments, as well as the main themes and/or debates that characterized each time period regarding both education and the broader northern development objectives of the day. Where appropriate, I offer some commentary on what these political and administrative goals can tell us about the nature

³³ These assessments include: Thomas R. Berger's *Conciliator's Final Report 'The Nunavut Project': Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Implementation Contract Negotiations for the Second Planning Period 2003-2013* (2006); the *Qanukkanni? The GN Report Card: Analysis and Recommendations*, commissioned by the GN in 2009; the 2013 *Report of the Auditor General of Canada to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut—2013 Education in Nunavut*; the final report of the 2015 *Special Committee on Education to Review the Education Act*; and the public debates and hearings around Bill 37, *An Act to Amend the Education Act and the Inuit Language Protection Act* (2017). I discuss these in Chapter 6.

of Inuit-State relations in the Eastern Arctic.

The first and second sections of this chapter explain how the Government of Canada moved from a policy of non-interference in the pre-war years to adopting and implementing a full-scale high-modernist state-building project by the late 1960s, in the name of universal citizenship, social welfare, and progress. This project included, of course, the introduction of residential and day schools through the 1950s and 1960s across most northern communities, and the accompanying policy of settlement. Even though some state officials and affiliates had first-hand knowledge of Inuit society to the contrary, as the government began to “see like a state” in the North, it problematically viewed Inuit (and other Northern Indigenous peoples) as destitute and unsophisticated – a blank canvas onto which it could project its values and ideals.

In the third and fourth sections, I examine how the high-modernist state-building project led by the federal government gave way to a more decentralized form of governance under the GNWT, which was simultaneously a response to the increasingly powerful Inuit rights movement, and also helped to create conditions at the regional and local level for Inuit self-determination. Education played a key role in the Inuit rights movement in the early 1970s when it was heavily critiqued by a new generation of Inuit leaders, many of whom had attended residential schools in the 1960s. The GNWT responded (some may say reluctantly) to increased calls for local control over education by Inuit rights advocates and parents by providing resources for local education councils and creating the conditions under which regional boards of education could emerge to help support the design and implementation of community-based bicultural education in

Indigenous communities across the NWT.

The further institutionalization of a decentralized “made-in-the-North” education system through the 1980s and 1990s brought both welcome and unwelcome results. The active and well-resourced regional boards of education supported local education authorities to develop meaningful curriculum, engage a cohort of Inuit leaders in education, and foster a sense of ownership over the system. The principle of local control – an important feature of all education systems in Canada - was activated and sustained by the regional boards of education. However, just as these boards were gaining momentum and beginning to see results, once again major political and institutional changes were on the horizon. In 1993, the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement was signed, and attention largely turned to preparing for the creation of Nunavut Territory. When Nunavut came into being on April 1, 1999, “the momentum of educational change toward local control and the growing expertise of the Baffin Divisional Board of Education were interrupted.” (McGregor 2010:145) Nunavut’s first cohort of MLAs opted to dissolve the divisional boards of education, making local control over education nominal at best. The dissolution of the regional boards of education is now considered by many to be a critical turning point in the evolution of education policy and governance in Nunavut. (Note that contemporary debates around education and its relationship to political and community development in Nunavut appear in Chapter 6).

3.2 Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Northern Policy up to 1953³⁴

The Canadian government's approach to northern development changed dramatically in the years after World War II. Whereas in the pre-war years, the government largely ignored the North, and especially the Eastern Arctic, the post-war years were characterized by the rapid expansion of the Canadian welfare state across the Northwest Territories. In 1953, Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent famously stated that Canada had up to this point, "administered these vast territories in an almost continuing state of absence of mind." (Canada 1953: Vol 1, 698)

The Cold War highlighted the strategic importance of the North for Canadian sovereignty and security. St. Laurent announced the creation of a new Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, which he considered to be "symbolic of the actuality of the exercise of Canadian sovereignty in these northern lands right up to the pole." (Robertson 2000: 115) The new interest in Northern Canada, as evidenced by the newly minted Department's name, also included an interest in northern resources.

By the time the Canadian government turned its eyes northward in the mid 1950s, the presence of outsiders across Northern Canada was well established. With increasing frequency over a 150-200-year period, the Indigenous inhabitants of Northern Canada encountered *Qallunaat*³⁵ who came to the North as explorers, traders, missionaries, and eventually as RCMP officers. These outsiders made their mark on Inuit social and economic life: along with new technologies and materials like guns and ammunition and non-perishable food stuffs, the Qallunaat visitors also brought infectious diseases like

³⁴ Throughout this section, I draw on Rea (1968; 1976); Mitchell (1994); Coates (1985); Jenness (1962; 1964); and Zaslow (1959; 1971; 1988).

³⁵ Qallunaat is the Inuktitut term used to describe non-Inuit.

small pox and tuberculosis. Missionaries introduced Inuit to the Christian god and a system of written Inuktitut using the Bible as the primary teaching tool. What changed in the post-war years was the level and intensity of attention and the perceived quality of life of Indigenous people; and a public declaration by the federal government that Northern development was in the national interest.

Prior to St. Laurent's declaration that the Canadian government would take an active role in the North a number of important institutional and policy changes were made, which shaped the constitutional and political relationship between northern Indigenous peoples and the Canadian state. The groundwork for the constitutional relationship between Inuit and Canada was laid in the 1939 Supreme Court of Canada *Re Eskimo* decision, which established that "Eskimos" were a federal responsibility. Although Inuit were technically enfranchised in 1946 when the Canadian Citizenship Act was passed they were not afforded the practical means to vote in the Eastern Arctic until 1962.

As part of the expanding post-war welfare state, the federal government passed the Family Allowance Act in 1944. The introduction of family allowance was, in many ways, the catalyst for a marked change in relations between state agents and Inuit. Family allowance would become an instrument of coercion used by state agents in their effort to populate northern schools and draw Inuit families off the land into permanent settlements. In its early years, either the local HBC manager or RCMP constable typically administered family allowance. (Brody 1975; Damas 2002; Kulchyski 2005; TRC 2015;

QTC 2013; Rasing 2017) Later, this task fell to Northern Service Officers, a role created in the mid 1950s.³⁶

Throughout the 1930s and 40s, reports of “food shortages, local destitution, and even starvation among Eskimos at isolated posts” prompted a post-war review of northern policy and administration. The Northern Administration “argued forcefully that ‘there should be a uniform policy for all Eskimos in regard to education, welfare and economic problems accompanied by an integrated development of the whole Eskimo group.’” (Clancy 1987: 191) A former HBC trader, James Cantley, was tasked with assessing the trapping economy in the Arctic. In his report Cantley warned that the so-called “relief economy” could potentially undermine the traditional Inuit way of life by drawing families into permanent settlements around the trading posts forcing them to survive on the goods and materials made available to them through social assistance. Cantley recommended that Ottawa enter into a close working relationship with the HBC, which would see the HBC managing each individual Inuk’s trading account “to control his level of credit so as to avoid the accumulation of excessive credits or debts.” (Clancy 1987: 192) The hope was that together with social transfers, this arrangement would help to stabilize fur prices in periods when the fur markets were depressed and would

³⁶ In the early 1950s, the “patchwork field network” was deemed no longer practical and the northern Administration decided to establish a new headquarters unit, the Arctic Division, which would handle all “Eskimo programs, except education and game.” (Clancy 1987: 195) Under the Arctic Division, a new position - Northern Services Officer (NSO) — was announced. The NSOs were not intended to take over the functions served by the RCMP or others “in the field” but rather they would serve as coordinators for all the activities of the various “field organizations” “with a view to making the greatest possible use of all resources available and to improving the economy and living conditions among the Eskimos in the areas to which they are assigned.” (195) By 1959, there were more than 20 NSOs; however, within just a few years, the NSOs were re-designated “settlement managers” - a title which signified a move away from a developmental role (akin to Foreign Service officer), to a more permanent position as administrator of the growing number of permanent settlements in the Eastern Arctic.

reinforce Inuit commitment to remaining on the land.

The Northern administration decided to hold a meeting - called the Conference on Eskimo Affairs - to consider their options. Representatives from the HBC, government agencies, and both the Anglican and Catholic churches were invited – none were Inuit. This conference in spring 1952 drew wide participation and topics of discussion ranged from the “new Eskimo economy” to education, employment practices, housing, health, and wildlife harvesting. (Clancy 1987: 193) Although no major conclusions were reached about northern policy at this meeting - the foundations of what would later become the state’s plans for intervention in the North were laid down, including the creation of the Eskimo Affairs Committee (EAC), chaired by the deputy minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources.

3.2.1 The Council of the Northwest Territories and the Eskimo Affairs Committee

At the same time as the federal government was expanding its presence in the North, important political developments were also taking shape through the evolution of the form and function of the Northwest Territories Council. The NWT Council, established in 1921, functioned as a senior coordinating committee for northern affairs. At first, the Council had four appointed members – all federal public servants based in Ottawa. It was not until 1947 that the first Northerner was appointed to the Council (Abraham Okpik), and it was 1951 before the Council welcomed its first three elected members (all from the Mackenzie District). At this time, the Council began to alternate its meetings between Ottawa and northern communities.

The Eskimo Affairs Committee (EAC) met twice yearly between 1952 and 1962, and its membership included the RCMP commissioner, the director of the Indian Health

Service, the head of the Arctic Section, the Anglican and Roman Catholic Bishops of the Arctic, and the Fur Trade Manager for the HBC. The EAC “served as a special mechanism to deal with some major public policy issues affecting the barren lands of the Northwest Territories...and as a useful device in the formative stages of Ottawa’s developmental efforts” in the Arctic. (Clancy 1987: 191; 194) The EAC played an important role in facilitating communication between Ottawa and the government and non-government agencies and organizations working “in the field.” Although Inuit were not politically organized at this time, the EAC was one of — if not the only - avenues through which some of their concerns could reach decision-makers in Ottawa, although it was not until 1959 that any Inuit were invited to participate in a committee meeting. The four Inuit who were asked to participate are not named in the literature. According to Clancy’s profile of the EAC, the DNANR “explained their selection ‘on the grounds of intelligence, assertiveness, and ability to express themselves clearly,’” (Clancy 1987: 194). They were not intended to be representative of the Inuit population, and it is notable that all four held wage-earning jobs in their settlements. Clancy notes, “certain committee members lamented the absence of at least one hunter-trapper” (194)

The Committee viewed education as “a crucial lever for social adaptation [and] the churches were...front and centre. It was not yet clear how the arctic school system would evolve. While the Arctic Section had placed its first six ‘welfare teachers’ in the field, the churches furnished the core of the instructional manpower and facilities in the Mackenzie District.” (Clancy 1987: 193) The churches were determined to “extend their reach” into the Arctic district as well, and “would not be displaced easily.” (193) The Sub-Committee on Eskimo Education was struck to address the question of how the

school system would expand into the Arctic, and how the responsibility for education would be allocated. The Sub-Committee on Eskimo Education membership included James Wright, Head of the Arctic Section (Chair), Father Laviolette, (O.M.I.), Reverend H.G. Cook (Anglican), the Superintendent of Education (Department of Resources and Development, later DNANR), and a representative from the Indian Affairs Branch, which was still part of Citizenship and Immigration at this time. (Clancy 1987) They met regularly to discuss all aspects of developing education facilities and activities in the Eastern Arctic. This committee was also responsible for decisions about the eligibility of students to participate in formal state-run schooling, identifying in which communities' schools would be built, and making decisions about curriculum for the growing number of pupils in the East. It is clear from the committee's meetings minutes that members were concerned about the quality of the school facilities themselves, as well as the quality of the teaching carried out in the newly emerging federal schools.

In March 1955, Northern Affairs Minister Jean Lesage announced that the federal government's new Arctic education policy would involve, "an extensive program of construction of schools and hostels to provide better education for children in the NWT," to be rolled out over a six-year period. As Clancy points out, this announcement marked a decisive change in the government's position vis a vis education in the North. After a decade of political "maneuvering" around church activities and interests, the government decided to establish an integrated system of residential and day schools across the whole Northwest Territories. The schools were to be funded and operated by the federal government, while the hostels would remain under church control. This new policy was the beginning of a major shift in federal Arctic policy because of its implications for

migration and settlement of Inuit. (195) That same year – 1955 – the Education Division of the DNANR was set up “to build a staff suitable for the unique problems of educating Aboriginal children and also with the capacity to develop a curriculum that would suit them.” (Robertson 2000: 141)

3.2.2 *The Role of the Church in the Emerging Education System*

Competition between the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches marked the early years of formal schooling in Northern Canada. In the Western Arctic, missionary schools were established in the late 1850s. The Indigenous peoples of the Western Arctic were the main focus of missionary schooling for most of this early period, which meant that only a small number of Inuit were affected by Church-run boarding schools at this time. Gradually through the 1920s and 1930s, the Anglican Church abandoned its “Indian” boarding schools, choosing instead to turn its attention to Inuit education. (Johns 1976: 45) In 1936 a 150-student Anglican boarding school opened at Aklavik in the northwest region of the Northwest Territories. In the East, no schools were opened although some missionaries were actively pursuing Inuit education through the teaching of syllabics based on the Bible.

Officials in the federal Department of the Interior were content to continue this model of church-run boarding schools well into the 1940s, although there is some indication that the government had concerns about the shortage of qualified teachers. The first mention of specific measures for Inuit schooling appear in the 1943-44 annual report of the Northern Administration, coinciding with the 1939 *Re Eskimo* decision, in which the Supreme Court of Canada stated that, constitutionally, Inuit were to be classified as Indians in Canada. (SCC 1939; AANDC 2013; also see QTC 2013b:) This means that the

federal government held responsibility for both “Indians and Eskimos” in the NWT and Arctic Quebec:

As the NWT Administration is responsible for the welfare of all Eskimos, arrangements have been made for the maintenance of a number of destitute children at the residential schools at Fort George, QC. Schools supplies are also furnished for a number of mission day schools operated within the northern portion of the Province of Quebec. (Moore 1944 quoted in Johns 1976: 46)

In 1946, the federal government appointed an inspector of schools in the Mackenzie District – a sign that its interest in what was happening in the church-run schools was increasing. In 1947, the NWT Council set up a Special Education Committee made up of NWT Commissioner Hugh Keenleyside, Deputy Commissioner Roy Gibson, and R.A. Hoey from Indian Affairs. Their role was to oversee the expansion of schools across the NWT and Arctic Quebec. By 1948 the Northwest Territories Administration began to recognize that the Eastern Arctic was lagging behind the Western Arctic in terms of its educational facilities and activities. This committee had commissioned several studies on education aimed at helping to determine how education should unfold across the Arctic. It is noteworthy that few of these studies favoured residential schooling. (TRC 2015: 52)

One study by J.G. Wright (later to become Chair of the Eskimo Affairs Committee’s Sub-Committee on Eskimo Education) concluded that Inuit education should “equip [the Inuk] to meet changing conditions in the north but should not make him discontented.” (TRC 2015: 52) According to the TRC, Wright advocated for classes in English, arithmetic, hygiene, and the use of technology, and more over that, “pride of race should be fostered, and folklore encouraged”, aspects that were “rapidly disappearing under missionary instruction.” (Wright qtd in TRC 2015: 53) In 1948, S.J.

Bailey also conducted a study of education in the Eastern Arctic in which he spoke with residents to get a sense of their views on the future of education in the region. In Chesterfield Inlet he found that students were only receiving about one hour of instruction during the summer and reported that, “in discussing this problem, everyone agrees that the establishment of a residential school is NOT the answer as these children must remain with their parents during the winter months.” (Bailey qtd in TRC 2015: 53) The preference of the residents that Bailey spoke with was for the establishment of day schools that would allow children to remain with their families on the land. Bailey was clear: “it should not be our educational policy to train the Eskimo children into being ‘white men.’ Rather they should be helped to live their own lives more successfully, which should result in better health, more prosperity, and greater happiness for them.” (53) He did not support the policy of separating children from their parents.

In 1947, the Administration had hired Dr. Andrew Moore, Inspector of High Schools for the Manitoba Department of Education, to conduct a survey of the educational facilities and activities in the very small number of settlements that existed in the Eastern Arctic prior to 1950. Moore’s instructions were to: “examine the educational situation at each settlement, and to submit recommendations concerning the nature of an instructional program which might be initiated for the benefit of all the residents.” (Lamberton 1948: 1) Dr. Moore never completed his report - he died when the HMS Nascopie was lost at Cape Dorset. H.R. Lamberton (an educator by training) joined the Northwest Territories Administration and in August 1948 was authorized to proceed to Fort Churchill for the purpose of boarding M.V. Regina Polaris and visiting as many settlements as possible before the return of the ship to Quebec City. Lamberton visited

Chesterfield Inlet and Repulse Bay in what is now Nunavut, and a handful of communities in Arctic Quebec.

He found that the only formal educational instruction available in the Eastern Arctic at this time was that provided by Catholic and Anglican missionaries. Instruction by missionaries was typically ad hoc and occurred whenever a large enough group of children was available in the settlements during the summer months, or whenever the missionaries could reach families on the land during the winter. According to Lamberton's 1948 report, the Northwest Territories Administration did provide some funding to support the educational activities of the church missionaries.³⁷ (5)

Lamberton's report notes that missionaries found it difficult to provide much consistent or sustained formal education because of the seasonally determined way of life of Inuit families at this time. Instruction was confined normally to the summer months when families visited HBC posts to stock up on provisions, for example. According to the reports from Dr. Moore's survey expedition, much of the formal instruction provided to children was basic, consisting of counting and some reading and writing. Moore concluded that the teaching by missionaries was "largely ineffectual." (Lamberton 1948: 8)

The general conclusions of this report align well with what Damas has described as the "policy of dispersal", characterized by a desire on the part of the state and its affiliates to keep northern Indigenous peoples "living off the land":

For the present the natives in the Eastern Arctic must continue to live off the country. Consequently, it is admittedly more important that the Eskimo youth become expert at hunting and trapping than that he acquire much of

³⁷ The funding amounted to \$62.60 per quarter or \$250 for the full calendar year in addition to providing any school supplies and equipment requested by the missionaries for their teaching activities.

the information and training generally associated with elementary education in Canada. However, the rate of development in the Eastern Arctic is such that an educational program for the Eskimo should now be formulated in order that the children may be prepared for the changed living conditions which will inevitably ensue as industry moves north. (Lamberton 1948: 7)

The report made 20 recommendations, including that an educational program be established in the Eastern Arctic, taking the form of day schools rather than residential schools, which were already considered to be controversial by this time:

The opponents of residential schools feel that the [residential] schools would give the Eskimo children a wrong environment and would result in making them half Eskimo and half white. They take the stand that there is no point in introducing residential schools which will make it necessary for the children to revert to the true native way of living when they leave the school. Such a reversion might become a difficult or impossible situation for them. (Lamberton 1948: 9)

By this time, the Northwest Territories Council had adopted a new policy to establish day schools in the Western Arctic. The report recommends that “experimental day schools” also be established in two Eastern Arctic communities - Chesterfield Inlet (Northwest Territories) and Fort Chimo (Northern Quebec). The report differentiates between such experimental full-year day schools and so-called seasonal day schools, which Dr. Moore saw as being the most practical option at the time, given that most Inuit families were not yet living in permanent settlements. Although day schools were identified as the preferred option, the report still makes clear that officials wished to discourage parents from spending too much time in the settlements: “Arrangements should be made to care for the children at the settlement during the period the school is in operation in order that the parents will not be encouraged to remain there.” (Lamberton 1948: 19) In short, education for both children and adults was seen as a means to improve

the life of Inuit but should not go so far as to interfere with their day-to-day existence.

As MacNicoll, Tester, and Kulchyski point out, the official/state approach to Inuit affairs in the early post-war period was wrought with contradiction. On the one hand, there was a strong sense that Inuit must not become dependent on the state and efforts were made to promote self-sufficiency. On the other hand, however, changes to northern policy and administration, which included the introduction of family allowance and curious initiatives like the now-infamous *Book of Wisdom for Eskimos* sent early signals that significant and more permanent state intervention into the social and economic life of Inuit was on the immediate horizon.

The Book of Wisdom was introduced first in 1947, published jointly by the Department of National Health and Welfare, and the Bureau of Northwest Territories and Yukon Affairs. The Book was created primarily to serve as a tool to educate Inuit about the proper uses of family allowance, which had been introduced in 1944 as a universal social program to all Canadian families. The Book has many pages of advice regarding health and hygiene, as well as information about government benefit programs, hunting tools and game conservation. The Book also makes declarations about the RCMP as, “the Eskimo’s friend”, and explains that the King is happy to help the Eskimos. The *Book* has been described as reflecting the paternalistic humanitarianism that characterized the State’s “welfare liberalism” during this period. (MacNicoll, Tester & Kulchyski 1994: 4)

In 1949, a report submitted to then- acting Commissioner of the NWT, Roy A. Gibson, on conditions and education in the Eastern Arctic stated that *The Book of Wisdom* was a “fine introduction for education in the Eastern Arctic” and that “the interest [in the Book] of the white man and the Eskimo was amazing.” (Storr 1949: 5) It

is striking to compare this assessment of the response of Inuit to the Book of Wisdom with the testimony of Elders interviewed by MacNicoll et al, which suggest that for the most part Inuit used the pages of the Book to add colour to the walls of their dwellings. This juxtaposition highlights an important feature of Inuit-State/Qallunaat relations – the (perhaps willful) misinterpretation of Inuit responses by government to its policies and activities. (See also Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1994 and Grant 2016)

This early period was characterized by an increase in state-led activity in the North, prompted by the post-war welfare state expansion and a surge of new information about what was perceived by southern Canadians and governments as “appalling” living conditions among northern Indigenous peoples; conditions deemed unacceptable for any Canadian citizen. The government was not directly involved in the education of northern Indigenous peoples during this period, content to leave educational activities to missionaries despite the reports of the poor quality of education children were receiving, and the already-known problems with residential schooling. Of course, the implications of this approach are now well-understood. Despite the seemingly haphazard nature of government policy during this period, we can see the roots of a tendency in Northern development policy to apply institutional “solutions” without careful consideration of the resources (human and otherwise) needed to animate and sustain them.

3.3 Seeing like a State (1953-1970)

During this period, federal northern policy and administration underwent significant changes. Prior to 1953, responsibility for various aspects of northern affairs (namely lands and resources) was divided across several government departments but in 1953, the St. Laurent government established a dedicated Department of Northern

Administration and National Resources (DNANR) under the direction of Minister Jean Lesage, thus signaling its intent to focus greater attention and resources on governing and developing the North in a new and more coherent way. In 1954 Lesage published an article in the HBC's magazine, *Beaver*, in which he outlined the Government of Canada's main objectives for development that would benefit both Inuit and Canada as a whole. Lesage believed that it was possible for the Government to help Inuit "climb the ladder of civilization," while also maintaining their strong cultural identity and practices: "the Eskimos do not need to be made over into white men." (Lesage qtd in TRC 2015 Vol 2: 79) To achieve his vision for a modern but culturally grounded North, Lesage explained that the Government of Canada would focus on education, health care, and developing a northern economy that was not so heavily dependent on the fur trade. (79)

It is important to highlight that Lesage was firmly against the idea of establishing boarding or residential-style schools in the North. He saw the problems inherent in children being away from their parents for long periods of time. (TRC 2015: 79) Despite similar statements appearing in the 1955, the report then goes on to explain the Department's plans to roll out an extensive six-year program to construct federal day schools and hostel facilities across the North (mainly in the Mackenzie Valley, with one school in Frobisher Bay, now Iqaluit). Under this new program, the hostels would be built by the federal government but would continue to be operated by the churches. The DNANR report explains that the program was designed to:

Prepare native children – both Indian and Eskimo – to meet the changing conditions of the times and to enable them, through knowledge and training, to take advantage of new employment opportunities. Since their nomadic or semi-nomadic lives make it impossible to provide continuity in their education except at centres where residential facilities are

provided, the new program includes the provision of hostels.

As Johns notes, even though the federal government expanded its role in Northern education at this time, the churches were able to retain – and indeed in some ways were able to expand - their previous power and control over the education of Indigenous Northerners. Whereas before the churches were able to reach only those within their immediate geographic regions with very limited resources, now, “in operating all but one of the government-built hostels, filled at government expense through massive annual air-lifts, the churches now reached many more children than was ever possible through the residential school system.” (Johns 1976: 50) The “ultimate aim...[was]...the provision of basic elementary education for all children in the NWT, and advanced academic or vocational education for students and adults with special aptitudes.” (DNANR 1958: 35 qtd. in Johns 50) The DNANR was clear that under the federal education system, students were not to be segregated along ethnic lines; however, division on the basis of religion (Anglican or Catholic) was upheld – a symbol of the power retained by the churches.

Federal spending on northern education and northern development increased significantly between 1956 and 1965, stimulated by the education program and the federal “Eskimo” housing program, established to entice Inuit to move off the land into permanent settlements where they could access social and health services. (Rea 1968) The “patchwork field network” of state agents (i.e. RCMP and a small cohort of administrators located in larger settlements) was deemed no longer practical and the northern Administration decided to establish a new headquarters unit, the Arctic Division, which would handle all “Eskimo programs, except education and game.” (Clancy 1987: 195) Under the Arctic Division, a new position - Northern Services Officer

(NSO) — was announced. The NSOs were not intended to take over the functions served by the RCMP or others “in the field” but rather they would serve as coordinators for all the activities of the various field organizations “with a view to making the greatest possible use of all resources available and to improving the economy and living conditions among the Eskimos in the areas to which they are assigned.” (195) By 1959, there were more than 20 NSOs. Within just a few years, the NSOs were re-designated “settlement managers” - a title which signified a move away from a developmental role (akin to Foreign Service officer), to a more permanent position as administrator of the growing number of permanent settlements in the Eastern Arctic.

By 1958, the expansion of the education program was well underway. Between 1949 and 1959, the number of Inuit students receiving full-time schooling in the Eastern Arctic grew ten-fold from 111 to 1165. (TRC 2015: 83) Plans for both large and small hostels were made, with some buildings expected to hold up to 200 beds. A 100-bed hostel was planned for Igloolik but never came to fruition. Large hostels were typically in larger centres and housed older students, while the smaller so-called “family type” hostels, located in smaller communities, were mainly for elementary school students, and often run by Indigenous hostel parents. (TRC 2015 Vol 2: 83)

As the federal government expanded its administrative machine³⁸ - and thus its financial stake in northern development, its expectations for what formal schooling and the budding school system might accomplish in the North also began to rise. For example, in 1960, then Director of the Northern Administration Branch in the DNANR,

³⁸ Headquarters Office in Ottawa had: Chief of Education Division; Assistant Chief; heads of four sections; three vocational supervisors; and seven curriculum specialists. The Mackenzie District had its own Superintendent plus staff; and the Arctic District had a Superintendent in Ottawa.

Ben Sivertz³⁹ wrote an article on Northern administration and development in which he explained the government's vision for the place of northern Indigenous peoples in Canada and the role that schools would play in helping to achieve this vision:

On the human side this means that the hitherto forgotten people, the northern Indians and the Eskimos, are regarded as citizens of Canada and not under any disabilities, or subject to any discriminatory practices of any kind...The aboriginal people of the northland will be seen as a group specially useful to Canada to form the continuing core of workers in northern industrial and government operations.

By 1968, when schools for all have become a fact, several other things will come to pass:

1. TB will be reduced from a scourge decimating the people to the proportions it has elsewhere in Canada.
2. Wage employment will be the livelihood of more of the people, and they will be operating most of the works in most northern communities.
3. Elementary schools will be graduating several thousand children
4. Secondary schools will have graduated several hundred.
5. There will be scores of northern Indians and Eskimos in the universities and in business. (Sivertz 1960)

Sivertz's statement reflects a new way of thinking in the upper ranks of the federal public service. The previous decades' "policy of dispersal" was beginning to give way to the idea that education may have important economic and civic implications for Inuit – and for Canada - and that the traditional lifestyle of northern Indigenous peoples was no longer sustainable. Although there is *no doubt* that high modernist colonial attitudes informed Sivertz' views, or northern development policy as a whole during this period, it must also be noted that Sivertz' statement does not seem to indicate a belief that "Indians and Eskimos" were intellectually inferior or incapable of learning as any other

³⁹ Ben Sivertz held this position from 1957-1963 before becoming Commissioner of the NWT from 1963-1967 after which he retired. He wrote a memoir of life and career published in 2000. (Sivertz 2000)

Canadian children or youth might.

Further evidence of this attitude about the capacity of Indigenous children to learn as any Canadian children might learn in school appeared in a 1953 Indian Affairs Branch report, which indicated that the government expected Indigenous and non-Indigenous students to be educated together where possible and expected its schools, “to conduct, where possible, elementary school programs approximating those designed for comparable, non-Indian schools.” (Indian Affairs Branch, quoted in Johns 1976: 48) However, the department also recognized that not all students would begin school at the same level, and that in some regions schooling would be introduced more slowly than in others: “in less advanced areas: teachers are encouraged to and assisted in adapting the school program to foreseeable environmental requirements for better living. It is expected in such areas the teacher will place greater emphasis on functional language, arithmetic and activities, personal and community hygiene, and the development of good citizenship.” (48)

Whereas students in the West followed the Alberta curriculum, in the Eastern Arctic the first rudimentary efforts at creating a “northern” curriculum (mainly, Indigenous language materials) were underway. Between 1950 and 1968 33 federal day schools were built across the Arctic District, which included Arctic Quebec as well as the Baffin and Keewatin (now Kivalliq) regions. (Mouat 1969-70: 4) In 1966, students in some Eastern Arctic federal schools had access to a very small suite of language and cultural curriculum materials, called the *Arctic Reading Series*. (Duffy 1988:112) By 1967-68, over 9000 children were enrolled in northern schools – a number four times that

of the previous decade. (Johns 1976)

3.3.1 Adult and Vocational Education up to 1967

The aforementioned introduction of the so-called Eskimo housing program led to the first iteration of adult education programming in the Eastern Arctic in the mid-1960s. There are only a handful of scholarly studies of the history of adult education in what is now Nunavut. Here I draw heavily on an article I published on the subject in 2015. One of the main arguments in that paper is that in spite of its colonial origins, adult education has served as a tool for local empowerment and community engagement in the Eastern Arctic (now Nunavut). Through the various formal and informal initiatives that fell under the umbrella of community adult education, Inuit adults began to interact with and work through new ideas and new institutions. Very quickly they started to take on these institutions for their own purposes. I argue that community adult education was instrumental in creating the conditions under which many local institutions and opportunities for local self-determination were established. As adult education became increasingly institutionalized the focus shifted away from democratic community development towards training for labour market attachment. (Kennedy Dalseg 2015: 100)

Since the 1940s, adult education has undergone three major transitions, the first of which occurred in 1966 with the introduction of the Home Management Education Program, championed by then- Superintendent of Education for the Arctic Region, Al Simpson (the next transitions will appear chronologically in the appropriate sections of this chapter). Prior to 1966, adult education had largely been administered as part of the overall school system with ad hoc instructors working part-time in addition to their other duties or roles in a particular settlement. In 1960, DNANR Education Division

established an Adult Education Section, staffed at first by one person with very limited resources. During this time, the so-called “welfare teachers” and other non-Indigenous residents such as the wives of RCMP officers, taught English in night classes on request by community members. Some students were sent south to continue their studies in Ottawa or at the Churchill Vocational Centre after it opened in 1964. Others went west (to Fort Smith or Yellowknife) or south to complete vocational training.⁴⁰

The Home Management Education Program, funded by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, offered courses to men and women on a variety of topics taught mainly by southern educators on short-term contracts. In the first phase, courses were offered to the men of a given settlement on money management and rent, how to establish and run housing associations, and how government worked. Next, home economists (mainly women) were sent to the community to teach the women about appliance safety and operation, cleaning, cooking, and meal planning. In the third phase of the program, the assigned educator was tasked with helping the community to establish a housing association.

The Home Management program arose at a time when the federal government was actively supporting social development and citizen engagement across the country for the purposes of fostering a healthy Canadian democracy. (Welton 2002: 184; Sandwell 2012) The government believed it had a responsibility to teach Indigenous

⁴⁰ Between 1953 and 1964, more than 1,300 Inuit completed vocational training at various locations in southern Canada. In 1964, the Churchill Vocational Centre (CVC), which became an important secondary and vocational educational institute for Inuit, opened; and in 1968, the Adult Vocational Training Centre, which would later become the Arctic College, opened in Fort Smith, NWT. These vocational centres provided training in a wide variety of areas from heavy equipment operation to office administration and nurses’ assistants. In order to pursue high school and vocational education at this time, the vast majority of students had to leave their home communities. For more on this, see Northern Regional Committee (1965); Lidster (1975); and Young & McDermott (1988).

people how to be democratic Canadian citizens, capable of taking full advantage of their rights and responsibilities as such. Inuit were considered to be a “people under tutelage” in need of direction, guidance, and “re-socialization.” (Kennedy Dalseg 2015)

The underlying philosophy of adult education during this period - which elsewhere (Kennedy Dalseg 2015), I have referred to as “guided democracy” - was clearly articulated in the 1966 final report of the Carrothers Commission - established by the federal government to advise on the nature of the evolution of the GNWT.

(Carrothers 1966) Carrothers “conceptualized local government structures as transformative bodies that would educate Inuit in democratic principles and processes.”

(Cameron 2009: 200) In the Commission’s final report, Carrothers writes:

In terms of education, too, local government...has an important role to play in the north at this time...Experience in public affairs at the local level provides a means to a greater interest in broader public issues and offices at the territorial and federal levels. (Carrothers 1966: 189-190)

In Chapter 5, I will explain the role that local government and adult education played in community development in Igloodik.

In essence, Carrothers’ vision for the development of northern settlements was for them to be modeled after their southern counterparts, evolving along a spectrum from unorganized and completely dependent settlements, to hamlets, to fully autonomous towns. The purpose of adult education in this vision was to ensure Inuit adults developed the skills and knowledge they needed to adapt to these new structures and institutions through a mixture of classroom-based and experiential learning. The housing associations conceived by the Home Management program—along with local settlement councils, which were also established during this period—were in effect “practice governments”

for Inuit, designed to introduce liberal democratic ideas and institutions in emerging settlements. (Cameron 2009: 200)⁴¹

By January 1968, all the communities in the Eastern Arctic except for Repulse Bay and Coral Harbour had completed the home management education program. Although the home management program was winding down, its perceived success sparked interest in the possibility of more programming. The regional directors of adult education began a process of building up an administrative structure for a more comprehensive program that would meet the various needs of Indigenous individuals and communities, as the government understood them at the time. (Forth, personal interview, March 12, 2014)

In 1964, Churchill Vocational Centre (CVC) – a large secondary and vocational school for students from Nunavut and Nunavik – was opened in Churchill, Manitoba. The architect behind CVC was Superintendent of Vocational Education, Ralph Ritcey.⁴²

Although there are those who remember their time at CVC as lonely or uncomfortable,

⁴¹ The notion of the “readiness” of Indigenous peoples for self-government is a long-standing one in Canadian discourse. See, for example, Kulcyski 2005 and Penikett 2012.

⁴² In the eulogy that Peter Irniq (former CVC student and then-Commissioner of Nunavut) gave at Ritcey’s 2003 funeral, he recalled: “Mr. Ritcey encouraged and challenged Inuit youth to move ahead through education and work. He cared greatly about the future of Inuit, defended their rights and played a big part in eventually dismantling colonialism in the Arctic. Mr. Ritcey stood very tall among his fellow Canadians. Inuit from my age group and somewhat younger, from Nunavut and Nunavik, identify Mr. Ritcey as the person who sent them to southern Canada and gave them the best education they could get. Youth went to Guelph to work at factories, to Esquimault, and Chilliwack, B.C., to become heavy equipment operators, to Penticton, B.C. to be a helicopter pilot; to Ottawa for higher education, and to Smith Falls to be a nursing assistant, to name a few locations and training opportunities. Ralph Ritcey was responsible for the pioneering government program that brought young Inuit to the South for immersion in academic studies in public schools. I have been asked by two of the original three young Inuit in that program, Peter Ittinuar and Zebedee Nungak, who went to Ottawa in 1962 and 1963 respectively, to express sincere condolences to Mr. Ritcey’s family... Mr. Ritcey possessed a genuine regard and respect for Inuit as a people, which was unique among Qallunaat in the civil service at the time. He did everything in his power, and more, to help all Inuit equip themselves for the great transitions that took place in the 1960s and 70s all across the Arctic, by making access to educational opportunity available to Inuit on a wide scale.”

most had a positive experience there. For her part, former Nunavut Premier Eva Aariak explained to me that the education she received at CVC helped her to become the person she is today:

I really appreciate my residential school years in CVC. I often say I wouldn't be where I am today if I didn't go. We learned so much in CVC – both life skills and academic. The core academic skills – math science, English history, and life skills as well. I've always been very interested in early childhood education [ECE], and it stemmed from Ms. Macpharlane who was our home ec teacher. She taught us nutrition, budgeting, cooking, including ECE. Which had a huge impact on me because she taught us how children grow at different stages and I was interested in that. So when I became a home management educator trainee when I got back to Arctic Bay (and in Iqaluit and Pond [Inlet]) – I did have ECE sessions but with Elders because then, too, I think what made me pay more attention to what we were learning about early childhood development because whatever she was saying “the research today says that putting a child in the corner is not effective” well “yah I already know that”. Everything they were discovering in the 70s through research, we [as Inuit] already knew. It was just affirmation of what we knew and what we had gone through.

.... And also at CVC – as a vocational school – we gained work experience in various workplaces. In the office because we learned how to type – starting out with Remingtons and then electric typewriters the next year and we learned how to touch type. We gained work experience at the office, stores, the hospital (Ward 8 training – you go through every ward, the Elders ward where we had to sponge bath Elders and stuff like that, [and at the] regular sick peoples wards providing lunches, etc; and children's wards where we had to bottle feed them and burp them, and we weren't allowed to put them back until they burped! It was a hands on experience at all levels. One of my favourites was 2 weeks of experience in the office of the National Research Centre, where I got to launch a rocket. The counting down and then press the button. It was a weather observatory so they had to do all the balloons, and every once in a while they would launch a little rocket. And we were also very much involved in sports – our teachers were the ones who organized all the extra curricular, volleyball, basketball, radio clubs, badminton, curling (I curl now because I gained that experience in Churchill).

[We had] wonderful teachers. Looking back, I feel sorry for their families because they were so involved with the students. (E. Aariak, personal interview, April 1, 2014)

John Amagoalik of Resolute Bay and celebrated “Father of Nunavut” remembers

that staff at CVC had a different approach to engaging with the students than most of the students who had attended other residential schools experienced:

The attitude was different, and we had excellent teachers. To this day, we still talk about them . . . They treated us as ordinary people. We had never experienced this sort of attitude before and it was, in a way, liberating to be with new teachers that treated you as their equal. (Amagoalik qtd in QTC 2013b: 122)

Perhaps most importantly, though, was the connections that students were making amongst themselves. Many of the young men and women who would go on to become leaders in the Inuit rights movement and in Nunavut, today, spent time at CVC.⁴³ As the QTC final report explains:

This institution brought Inuit students from many communities together where they were directly exposed to emerging ideas about civil rights and anti-colonial movements. The educational and social opportunities at CVC allowed many students to become aware of their political rights, and to receive the education needed to take positions in the territorial government and campaign for land claims. (QTC 2013b: 122)

3.4 Establishing the Principles of Local Control and Indigenous Self-Determination (1970s)

The years between 1967 and 1982 saw significant political and administrative changes in the NWT. Not only did the seat of government for the GNWT move from Ottawa to Yellowknife bringing with it a large cohort of southern administrators as well as other segments of a rapidly growing settler population to the NWT, but also northern Indigenous peoples began to organize politically, establishing representative bodies, such as the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories (later to be called the Dene

⁴³ For example: John Amagoalik, Paul Quassa, Peter Irniq, Peter Ittinuar, Zebedee Nunangak, Sheila Watt-Cloutier, Eva Aariak, Rebekah Uqi Williams. Jose Kusugak taught Inuktitut classes at CVC.

Nation), COPE and the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada. The northern Indigenous rights movement led to a proliferation of opportunities for Inuit involvement in advocacy as well as governance and administration. In recognition of the significant impacts that church and state-led education had already had on families and communities, education and formal schooling was one of the first areas over which Inuit sought to regain control. (McGregor 2010; Darnell & Hoem 1996; Duffy 1988; Arvaluk 2007; Quassa 2008; Tapardjuk 2013) In fact, dissatisfaction with and concern over the nature and quality of education in the NWT could be considered one of the primary drivers of Inuit political development. In his final report from the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry published in 1977, Justice Berger observes:

The Dene and the Inuit today are seeking to reclaim what they say is rightfully theirs. At the core of this claim, and basic to their idea of self-determination, is their right to educate their children – the right to pass on to them their values, their languages, their knowledge and their history. (Berger 1977: 93)

The transfer of powers from Ottawa to Yellowknife brought with it new possibilities and a sense that government could now be closer, and therefore more responsive, to the needs and priorities of northern peoples. Over the next three years, there was a gradual transfer of powers from Ottawa to Yellowknife, along both departmental and regional lines. On April 1, 1970, the Government of the Northwest Territories took control over education in the Eastern Arctic. What had previously been the responsibility of the federal government was now officially in the hands of territorial politicians and administrators, and they were keen to establish a made-in-the-North system of education. The main priorities of the day were to develop a strong teacher training program for northern Indigenous teachers and to design and implement a

culturally relevant curriculum that responded to the various cultural and linguistic groups represented across the vast Northwest Territories. (McGregor 2010: 86) At this time, roughly 10,000 students were enrolled in schools in the NWT, and the physical infrastructure needed to accommodate these students had been built over the previous decade. As McGregor points out, the territorial government and the newly minted GNWT Department of Education were faced with a fundamental question – perhaps the most difficult of all – what is the purpose of education? (McGregor 2010: 89; GNWT 1972: 1)

In 1972, the GNWT released its *Survey of Education*, which covered a wide range of topics related to the creation and implementation of a more coherent and relevant education system than the one set up by the federal government. Despite calls by some members of the NWT Council for a more comprehensive review of the education system,⁴⁴ the Department of Education opted to do an “in house” survey of Departmental administrators and staff, which resulted in the publication of the 1972 *Survey* report. The report makes clear that administrators during this period were keen to develop a “made-in-the-North” education system that served the needs and wishes of northerners. (NWT 1972: 4) The *Survey* makes 223 recommendations, which, taken together, “represent a shift from the view that the basis of education should be assimilation to the view that it should be focused on the recognition and preservation of culture.” (McGregor 2010: 90) According to the *Survey*, the purpose of education was to:

...provide for all people opportunity for maximum development of their aptitudes, skills, and competencies along with an understanding and appreciation of the sum total of human experience. Such development

⁴⁴ See for example, Tom Butters’ call for an Education Commission during the 44th Session of the 7th Council of the NWT. Northwest Territories. Council of the Northwest Territories. 'Debates: Official Report.' 44th Session, 7th Council, (11 February 1971). Yellowknife, Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, 1971.

should enable each individual to choose freely between different courses of action in such a manner that he can live a satisfying personal life while discharging his responsibilities as a participating member of a complex society. (GNWT 1972: 8)

The NWT Council struck a four-member committee to respond to the *Survey*. The committee's report provides some insight into the thinking of the territorial politicians with respect to the purpose of education in the NWT at this time: to equip northern residents to live in the ever-changing and rapidly developing North; to give everyone an opportunity to receive an education but in the area they are best suited for; and to have the opportunity to adapt to the White Man's ways without losing their traditional way of life, their own language, and their cultural heritage. (McGregor 2010: 93-94) The committee also recommended that, "the whole education process should be slowed down so that the adults can be brought along in the learning process." (Report qtd in McGregor 2010: 94) These two reports – the *Survey* report itself, and the NWT Council response - show the origins of the thinking behind a territorial education system that was expected to provide its diverse student population with a bicultural and bilingual education that would prepare them to achieve "the best of both worlds" (i.e. a traditional lifestyle and a so-called "modern" one). It is clear from the archival records that politicians and administrators in the 1970s were making significant efforts to reshape the northern education system. There are a large number of reports and policy documents from this period on different aspects of the education system (mostly focusing on the integration of Indigenous languages and cultures into the schools). The territorial Hansard shows that education featured in most of the Council's sessions, usually in the form of passionate

debate.

3.4.1 *Inuit Political Organization and Re-Claiming Control over Education*

Despite these efforts by the new GNWT to re-imagine schooling, the newly evolving system was still considered by many to be a product of top-down decision-making by “departmental experts” based in Yellowknife. (Dickerson 1992: 130; McGregor 2010) In 1970, Inuit met in Kugluktuk (then Coppermine) to discuss the creation of a national Inuit organization, Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (now ITC). Education featured prominently in these discussions. The delegates at the meeting concluded that the school system was failing their children in all areas. In their view, it did not provide students with a meaningful education suitable to their environment; it did not support the preservation of Inuit language or culture; and it did not create useful Canadian citizens. In response, the fledgling ITC demanded that: the power of community councils be expanded to include influence over curriculum content and the school calendar; that local schools be built as rapidly possible so that children were no longer be separated from their parents; and that Inuktitut be introduced immediately as the language of instruction in the primary grades. (ITC qtd in TRC Vol 2 2015: 170) As the TRC points out, these demands became the basis upon which Inuit and other Indigenous peoples across the North would evaluate their education systems. Indeed, as I will show in Chapter 6, they remain the standard today.

By the mid 1970s, Inuit Tapirisat of Canada and the Inuit Cultural Institute (ICI) were regularly calling for greater Inuit involvement in education-related decision-making, and pressure from communities for increased local control over schools and education began to mount. Then-President of ITC, Tagak Curley, wrote in 1974 that the *Survey on*

Education:

..seems to indicate the needs of southerners residing in the North is a major factor in designing the goals of education in the Northwest Territories... The southern civil servants are possibly the strongest lobbyists for changes with regard to the educational structure amongst Inuit in Canada.

The survey and its recommendations may be one of the best tasks the educational system produced but there still remains a question as to how involved the Inuit were and how well aware were they when the survey was carried out?" (Curley 1974b: 37)

Curley was critical of the GNWT, which he saw as favouring the creation of institutions and organizations to solve problems without adequately addressing the human resource needs of those institutions and organizations. His four-part series on education published in *Inuit Today* made a direct link between Inuit access to high quality, meaningful educational opportunities and the success of institutions and organizations designed to enhance Inuit participation in decision-making about education (or any other matters):

The governments are oriented towards institutional representation. Because of this, Inuit are faced with forming organizational methods in dealing with their needs. The parents must now deal with their concerns regarding their children through advisory boards, native organizations or whatever. These organizations so often are not properly equipped to make the institution perform as they are intended to do... The most serious problem or handicap is the human resource. The number one problem is the lack of Inuit able to carry out the responsibilities and roles of these organizations.

Our government (GNWT) has succeeded in making provisions to create any kind of institutional organization to deal with the various needs in social, cultural, and political fields. But it has failed to obtain people (particularly Inuit) with the knowledge and experience needed by the organization to make a sincere effort to represent their people. This is a complicated problem but should not be ignored. This is an educational

problem. (Curley 1974b: 34-35)

In the fall of 1976, ICI created a National Council on Inuit Education, “to examine the feasibility of Inuit educational institutions in the North planned and administered by Inuit themselves.” (Duffy 1988: 120) One of the conclusions from the first and only meeting of this Council held in April 1977 was that schools were “a liability rather than an asset to Inuit youth.” (Duffy 1988: 121) ICI, run by Tagak Curley, began to articulate a view for Inuit education – one that differed significantly from the one emerging from the GNWT. Later that year, ICI made the following statement at a meeting of the NWT Council in Rankin Inlet:

Education, especially among Inuit, is an all-embracing process, which involves training and development of knowledge, skills, mind, and character...The southern-modelled educational system has not prepared Inuit people to face modern society with confidence and efficient training, while the traditional Inuit approach has done just that – enabled Inuit to face the formidable challenge of their physical environment and their way of life. Traditional training then must be the major focus in any successful Inuit educational programme. (ICI qtd in Duffy 1988: 118)

In 1976 the Baffin Regional Council (a political organization comprising the mayors of each Baffin community) established a subcommittee specifically for education – the Baffin Regional Education Society (BRES) (a precursor to the regional boards of education established a decade later). Colbourne explains:

From the outset the group saw itself as having much broader terms of reference and asked the Territorial Government for official recognition as the Regional Education Authority for the Baffin Region...In October of 1979 the powerful Baffin Regional Council endorsed the proposed constitution of BREC as well as its request for a name change to the Baffin Regional Education Society (BRES). This act in itself legitimated

the existence of a Baffin citizens' organization with its primary goal of being the governing body in regional education (Colbourne 1986: 8-9).

Five years after the release of the *Survey on Education* and directly on the heels of calls by Indigenous organizations and communities for more increased community involvement, the GNWT passed the *New Education Ordinance* in 1977. Unlike the 1972 Survey, which was based on “in-house” consultations with Departmental and teaching staff, the Ordinance reflected consultations with northern organizations including schools, local education committees, municipal councils, ITC and the NWT teachers' association. The 1977 Ordinance entrenched the principle of local control over education by giving formal status and devolving certain powers to local education authorities in each community. The Ordinance introduced, among other things, three models for local or parental engagement with increasing formality and responsibility for decision-making. The first was a five-member elected community education committee that served in an advisory capacity to the school principal; the second was a community education society - also comprising five elected members –with an operations budget for school programming and the right to take an active role in school planning. The third model was a seven-member board, which could be established in any community where a community education society had existed for at least two years. The education board would have a similar set of roles and responsibilities as most other school boards in Canada. (McGregor 2010: 103)

While officials realized that many communities were unlikely to ever establish their own school boards, the hope and indeed the intention in the legislation was that most would create community education committees, which would eventually evolve into

societies: “by supporting local education authorities, [the 1977 Education Ordinance] provided the grounds for change that would significantly alter the structure of educational decision-making in the Northwest Territories during the 1980s.” (McGregor 2010: 104)

3.4.2 *Residential Schooling in the 1970s*

Although the transfer of power from the federal government to the GNWT officially took place in 1967, it was not until 1969-70 that any real changes were made to the administration of education in the NWT. On April 1, 1969, the GNWT took over six of the seven large hostels in the NWT but arrangements with the Anglican and Catholic churches remained in place, such that the schools were still operated as they had been under the federal government. The only exception was Turquetil Hall in Chesterfield Inlet, which was shut down completely in 1969 as a student residence.⁴⁵ With community schools in place, and more and more families living in settlements, the need for the large hostels decreased. While the territorial government accepted that some residences would be required, it was keen to reduce the number of young children attending school away from their home communities. The age of residential school students increased through 1970s: in 1950, very few teenagers attended school above Grade Six; in 1961, 93% of the Arctic District’s 727 pupils were in Grades One to Three; by 1970 the territorial government claimed that only 10% of students living in residences

⁴⁵ In 1969, Adult Education took over the building for its own purposes. (Forth, personal interview, March 12, 2014)

were under age 10; and by 1977 63% of students living in the four largest pupil residences in the NWT were actually 16 or older. (TRC Vol. 2 2015: 165-66)

Table 2. Age Distribution of Pupils in Residences, Northwest Territories (1970)

Age	6	7	8	9	10+	Total enrolment
Number	3	27	36	48	886	1000

Source: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Volume 2: The Inuit and Northern Experience (2015), 166.

Grade extensions in the community day schools meant that many students were completing elementary school near home and were ready to go on to high school or pursue vocational education outside their communities. When it became clear that the Churchill Vocational Centre would close, planning began for a federal secondary/vocational school in Frobisher Bay (now Iqaluit). While CVC was operational, it developed a negative reputation with parents who were concerned about their children’s exposure to “adult social activities” at Fort Churchill.⁴⁶ There had been reports on the radio about “alleged drinking and sexual misconduct” at the school, which caused some parents to withdraw their children or refuse to let them attend. When discussions began about building a similar school in Iqaluit to replace CVC, parents were similarly concerned. In fact, a community meeting was held in Igloolik in November 1968 to discuss the proposed Iqaluit school. Seventy residents attended this meeting. Josiah Kadlutsiak, Chair of the Igloolik settlement council, wrote a letter expressing the

⁴⁶ Parents from the Igloolik and Hall Beach areas raised concerns about Fort Churchill to Anglican Bishop Donald Marsh as well as Father Fournier, then the Roman Catholic Priest based in Igloolik. See, for example, Gordon 1966.

community's views on the high school. Attached to the letter was a petition signed by community members. The letter reads, in part:

...The people of Igloolik want their children to grow up in their own home. The people of Igloolik think if there were too many children from many different places, some of them would forget what their parents have taught them about home life. This doesn't mean that we are against school. What we think is that, if there was a big school in Frobisher Bay and many children from many different places or settlements the children would not get any better. What we think would be better is if there were high schools in various places where the children are much closer to their own people. The idea of having high schools in some places is hard for there are no landing strips in these places.

We know that our suggestions will not work out, but we like you to know that some of the people are against the high school in Frobisher Bay. We want your help to let the government know, too. We are just trying out to see what answer we would get. We are not against the government plans. The people were not being asked whether they want high school in Frobisher Bay or not. [They] probably had just picked the place and plan [sic] there. The letter to us would be much appreciated. The people who do not want the high school have added their names. (Kadlutsiak 1968)

In 1971, the Anglican Bishop of the Arctic, Donald Marsh, wrote an open letter to "all Inooeet", praising the people of Igloolik for standing up to the government on the question of sending their children away to school, and encouraging other parents and communities to do the same if they felt it was right. He concluded the letter reminding parents of their rights:⁴⁷

It is good that they attend school for they can there learn many things which you perhaps don't know, but they also need to know their father and mother as well. You as parents have to make the decision and if you really are sure you want them taught in the home school till they are finished Grade 8, you should say so to the Principal of the school, so that he is aware of this and can order in the things needed for teaching them. (Marsh

⁴⁷ Although the Anglican Church did not play a big role in residential schooling in the Eastern Arctic, it is not lost on me, nor will it be on any readers of this dissertation, the irony of the Bishop of one of the two main churches involved in the systematic removal of Indigenous children from their families and communities, reminding Inuit parents of their rights and responsibilities.

1971)

Despite opposition to the idea, the Gordon Robertson Educational Centre and the affiliated Ukkivik hostel opened in Iqaluit in 1971.⁴⁸ GREC and the Ukkivik residence were in operation until 1996. From reports by various government officials, including one from the Regional Superintendent and school principal when the school opened, it appeared that the parents' concerns were well founded. C.D. King wrote in a memo that he would "not want my own children living at our residences at present." (TRC Vol. 2 2015: 139) Early 1970s Iqaluit had a reputation for drinking and violence. It is clear from King's reports that both staff and students in the residence were exposed to regular threats of violence, and that fighting and intimidation was common among students. The TRC found that the conditions at the school and residence caused high staff and administrator turn over in the early years, and significant levels of stress among students. (139-140)

For their part, students in the Ukkivik residence did not feel supported by the staff who were responsible for the students' wellbeing while they were away from their families. A letter signed by students living in the hostel offers some insight into the conditions: the students explained that their wellbeing was suffering and that they felt unsupported by staff. The students saw a connection between their emotional and

⁴⁸ GREC is named after Gordon Robertson, who served as Deputy Minister of Northern Affairs, and Commissioner of the Northwest Territories between 1953 and 1963.

psychological needs not being met and the tension and violence they were experiencing in the hostel. (140)

The negative reputation that GREC and the Ukkivik hostel gained in the early years, coupled with the fact that attending GREC meant leaving home and families behind meant, in turn, that the majority of students chose to remain in their home communities once they reached the highest grades offered at their local schools. For many this was the end of their experience with the public school system, although it was (and remains) common for people to return to formal education, either to do some “adult upgrading” as it is often called or to complete training courses offered at local College campuses. In the early 1970s and 1980s, people who did not go on to high school or left school before graduation would often connect with adult educators in their communities who would assist them with decisions about how to continue their education at home.

3.4.3 Adult Education and Community Development

The second transition in the adult education system came following the full transfer of responsibility for education in the Eastern Arctic from the federal government to the GNWT. The newly minted GNWT Department of Education created a Continuing and Special Education division (CASE), which housed both adult and vocational education, bringing them together for the first time. (Lidster 1975: 5) Despite having official responsibility for adult and vocational education, the GNWT lacked the resources at this time to carry out a full-fledged adult education program entirely on its own. The federal government continued to provide funding for certain basic and vocational skills programs, such as the Basic Training for Skill Development, Basic Job Readiness Training, and Industrial Training Skills Development. The Department of Education also

decided to contract a third party, Frontier College, to provide adult education services in some communities, and to help develop an adult education program for the NWT.

The “community adult education” model developed by Frontier College at this time involved sending full-time adult educators into communities experiencing periods of social or economic transformation. Only a handful of Northern communities were staffed directly through the Frontier College contract (one was Igloolik) but many of the adult educators who came North during this period were either former Frontier College employees or had community development experience in Canada or abroad. As I will explain more in Chapter 5, together with a growing cohort of Inuit colleagues, this new generation of adult educators carried out their work according to the principles of community adult education and, in particular, with an awareness of the potential it held for contributing to, and supporting, Inuit self-determination and community-centred development. (Aariak 2014; Lloyd 2013; Stiles 2013; Cleveland 2013; Olovson 2013; Balanoff 2013; Thomas 2014)

By 1974, the GNWT had approved permanent adult educator positions in 26 of the 60 communities across the Northwest Territories, “thereby [giving] official status to this discipline as an integral part of the community offerings of the Territorial Department of Education and as basic human rights for adults in the NWT.” (Lidster 1975) Whereas in the previous decade, the educational and development needs of the communities had been identified by the government, CASE now identified “developing programs to meet needs as expressed by the citizens of a community” as the primary objective of adult education. The role of adult educators was to “help communities identify their own needs” and to “act as sources of information on any matter of

concern.” Interestingly, another of the stated objectives was “establishing local advisory boards to enhance local control over education.” (CASE 1974: 19-21)

As noted in the previous section on adult education, I will provide a more detailed account of what this approach meant at the community level in subsequent chapters. Here, I will just point out that at the community level adult educators served as important resources both for individual learners as well as for community organizations as they began both to adopt and confront the set of imposed institutions that now structured daily settlement life. The pre-determined programming of the Home Management days gave way to a new approach in which adult educators, upon arriving in a community, would often meet with local leaders and organizations to learn about the community and to discuss possibilities for collaboration and learning priorities. Adult educators often saw themselves as being accountable to the community, first and foremost. (MacNeill 1975; Lloyd 2013; Thomas 2014) This generation of adult educators, both Inuit and non-Inuit, tended to align themselves with the movement toward Inuit self-determination, and worked to support this at the community level by creating space for grass roots rather than top-down development. The radio societies and Inuktitut-language community newspapers created public space for citizens and local organizations to share information and ideas, express concerns, tell stories, and trade goods and services. These public spaces became important tools for political development and Inuit self-determination in Nunavut. (Amagoalik 2007)

During this period the Department of Education’s goals for adult education aligned well with those of the community adult educators it hired, and generally speaking the department took a hands-off approach, allowing communities, community leaders,

and adult educators to work together with minimal administrative interference. The departmental philosophy of local control over education gained momentum, which gave communities and community adult educators considerable power over the substance and direction of adult education and community development initiatives during what was a critical period in the political and social history of the Northwest Territories. In short, during these years, communities, educators, and governments realized what was possible with adult education in terms of its ability to contribute to local development, as well as to the larger-scale political development underway at the time.⁴⁹ (Balanoff 2013)

As the 1970s drew to a close, though, significant changes were beginning to take place at the political and administrative levels. By this time of course the Indigenous rights movement had spread across Canada and the North, gaining significant traction and attention. The end of the 1970s saw the culmination of a decade of political activity by Inuit, including a call by the national Inuit association, Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, for an Inuit territory called Nunavut.⁵⁰ Inuit demanded greater voice in decision-making at the territorial level and greater control over their own affairs in the eastern regions of the NWT. At the same time, the GNWT Department of Education was beginning to move toward a more institutionalized and streamlined adult education program. This included increased resources and oversight over adult education programs, regular community

⁴⁹ For an account of the growing struggle between the GNWT and Indigenous leadership vis-à-vis training for self-governance, see Stiles 1982. Also see NWT Archives, G-1995-004, 5-9, Resolutions Drafted at the Baffin Region, Adult Education Conference, 5-10 May 1978. Thank you to Mark Stiles (personal interview, November 6, 2013) for sharing this part of the history with me.

⁵⁰ For a detailed account of Inuit political activity in the years leading up to the establishment of the national Inuit association, Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, see Okpik 2005. For detailed accounts of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement negotiation process, see Amagoalik 2007; Quassa 2008; Arvaluk 2007; Ittinuar 2008; and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Oral History Project*, available at: <http://oralhistory.tunngavik.com/interview/uriash-puqiqnak/> (accessed 25 Jan 2015).

visits by regional supervisors, an annual conference of adult educators, and a vision for a more cohesive and institutionalized system of adult education. In response to these changes, adult educators in the Baffin region began to organize themselves, creating the Baffin Adult Educators' Society so that they could have an independent voice outside of their positions as employees of the GNWT Department of Education, to advocate for their vision for community adult education. (Lloyd 2013; Cleveland 2013)

3.5 The Decade of Decision (1979-1990)

The early 1980s were an important turning point for political development as well as for the education system in the NWT. In 1979, a cohort of new MLAs were elected who all had connections with the burgeoning Indigenous rights movement.⁵¹ This 9th territorial assembly is widely recognized for ushering in responsible government in the NWT, and for its role in supporting the settlement of land claims agreements and other initiatives and measures to enhance Indigenous control over development in NWT communities. (White 2007; Dacks 1990) Former Government Leader of the 9th Assembly, George Braden, referred to the 1980s as the “decade of decision”. (Braden 2013) Against the backdrop of Prime Minister Trudeau’s commitment to patriate the Canadian constitution, political leaders and administrators in both the GNWT and the growing number of Indigenous organizations and groups that were active during this period were committed to seeing constitutional, institutional, and policy change that would benefit citizens of the Northwest Territory. One of the primary objectives of the 9th Assembly was to establish a self-sufficient multi-cultural society, supported by a

⁵¹ Tagak Curley (ITC); Dennis Patterson (ITC) Nellie Cournoyea (COPE); Richard Nerysoo and James Wah-Shee (Indian Brotherhood of the NWT); Nick Sibbeston (Metis).

representative and progressive political system. Education continued to be perceived as a critical instrument through which to achieve this goal.

It was clear by this point that many of the Indigenous groups represented in the NWT (broadly: Inuit, Dene, and Metis) were interested in establishing governments in smaller territories that would allow them to maintain their linguistic and cultural identities while asserting greater control over their own lives. For Inuit, they had already made clear statements in 1976 and 1979 about the idea for Nunavut. (ITC 1979) Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, a number of influential special committees were struck.⁵² One was the Special Committee on Unity established in 1980, which looked into the issue of division, and ultimately recommended that the GNWT hold a territory-wide plebiscite to determine public support for division of the NWT along East-West lines. In April 1982, citizens of the NWT went to the polls to answer a simple question: “Do you think that the Northwest Territories should be divided?” Fifty-six percent voted in favour of division, with the biggest support (79%) coming from the Eastern Arctic communities, and the predominantly Indigenous communities in the West.

Although the results of the plebiscite were not constitutionally binding, the federal minister of Indian and Northern Development responded to the results by announcing the government’s conditional agreement to divide the NWT. (See Abele and Dickerson 1985 for a full analysis of this period) After the plebiscite, the Legislative Assembly formed the Constitutional Alliance, composed of MLAs and representatives of Indigenous organizations to undertake the business of dividing the territories. Two subgroups – the

⁵² For example, there were Special Committees on: Housing (1985); the Impact of Division (1981); the Northern Economy (1989); Aboriginal Languages (1989); Constitutional Reform (1989); and Health and Social Services (1992).

Western Constitutional Forum and the Nunavut Constitutional Forum – were created as formal sites of debate and planning, the main focus of which was determining the boundary for division. After reaching a tentative agreement in 1987, negotiations broke down between Dene-Metis and the Inuvialuit in the West, and the Constitutional Alliance (and the two Forums) were disbanded.

3.5.1 The Special Committee on Education (1982)

Another of the influential committees struck by the 9th Assembly was the Special Committee on Education (SCOE), which was established in 1980 following a motion put forward by then-MLA for Keewatin South Tagak Curley (former President of ITC). In his statement, Curley highlighted many problems with the education system in the NWT: “high dropout rates, poor comprehension, poor parent/teacher relationships, low recruitment of Native teachers and foreign curriculum, lack of proper high school facilities, and [a] lack of continuing and special education facilities.” (NWT Hansard 3rd Session 1980) Curley’s statement in the territorial legislature captured a sentiment shared by many that it was time for an education system that met the wants and needs of all the people who called the NWT home.

The terms of reference for the SCOE included both reflective and proactive elements. The Committee was tasked with examining all aspects of the education system in the NWT and making recommendations to the Legislative Assembly for reform, both in the short and long terms. The Special Committee would: “inquire into current problems and public concerns about education...[and] review all aspects of existing legislation, policy and philosophy concerning education.” It was also expected that the SCOE would hold public hearings and meetings “in all parts of the Northwest Territories

[with] members of the public, local education authorities and interested groups [and would] initiate action research projects to demonstrate new approaches to solving education problems.” (SCOE 1982: 7) Upon completion of its work, the Committee presented its findings and recommendations to the Assembly in the form of a final report called *Learning: Tradition and Change in the Northwest Territories*, which was made available to the general public.

The Special Committee comprised five members, all of whom were members of the NWT Legislative Assembly, each representing a different region of the territory.⁵³ Over its two-year life span, the Committee’s work employed twenty-one staff members, primarily academics and practitioners; and interviewed close to one hundred educators, academics, and public servants from all levels of government, as well as representatives from Indigenous organizations, industry, and the not-for-profit sector. In total, the SCOE held forty-three public hearings in thirty-four different communities across the NWT, where the committee members heard from local educators, leaders, and – most importantly - parents. *Learning: Tradition and Change in the Northwest Territories*, was tabled in 1982, making 49 recommendations, which covered seven main aspects of the education system: its administrative structure, the school program, language, the teaching staff, special services, adult education, and implementation.

The Special Committee’s work came at an important time in the political and economic development of the NWT. The Berger Inquiry into the development of a northern gas pipeline in the Mackenzie Valley had just come to an end; many of the

⁵³ Tagak Curley, co-chair (Keewatin South), Bruce McLaughlin, co-chair (Pine Point), Nellie Cournoyea (Western Arctic), Dennis Patterson (Frobisher Bay), and Robert Sayine (Great Slave East).

Aboriginal organizations formed during the 1960s and 1970s were engaged in land claims negotiations with the federal government; and talk of dividing the Northwest Territories along east-west lines had led to the aforementioned referendum on division also in 1982. The relatively young territorial government had entered a period of introspection, following more tumultuous times in the previous decade. Indeed, the events of the 1970s had made it clear that the legitimacy of the GNWT was challenged, and for many – especially the Indigenous citizens of the NWT - it was seen as a colonial institution. Darnell and Hoëm observed that “the activism of the 1960s and 1970s [came] to fruition in the 1980s” with, among other things, the establishment of the Special Committee on Education, and the reforms that followed. They contend that these reforms were indeed critical events in the land claims negotiation process that had been building momentum for more than a decade. (Darnell and Hoëm 1996: 167) The SCOE was also “part of a larger process taking shape across Canada of education committees and reports,” (Abele, Dittburner & Graham 2000: 12-13) in which provincial and territorial governments emerged as “prominent participants in the discourse on Aboriginal education with efforts to include the views of Aboriginal people.” (16) In essence, the SCOE was part of a much larger process of institution-building – a process which was beginning to re-orient itself toward compromise, rather than conflict, between and among Indigenous and settler actors.⁵⁴ Several years later, reflecting on the Special Committee on Education, Tagak Curley noted, “involvement in the examination of educational effectiveness through *Learning, Tradition, and Change* indicates that Inuit were

⁵⁴ I am grateful to Jerald Sabin for sharing his knowledge of territorial politics during this period with me.

becoming politically engaged, and one of the first Qallunaat institutions they took on was the school system.” (Curley qtd in McGregor 2010: 118)

The SCOE’s final report is evidence that a more coherent vision for education and learning in the territory was emerging – a vision that took seriously what citizens thought of and wanted for the education of future generations. The report is widely recognized as ushering in “sweeping changes in both the administration and philosophy of education.” (MacPherson 1991: 281) It incorporates the knowledge the committee gained from extensive consultations with key stakeholders, including for the first time, formal consultations with parents and families of school children. (McGregor 2010: 118) The voices of parents, educators, and other stakeholders appear throughout the report in the form of quotations and verbatim statements made to the Committee.

Learning: Tradition and Change suggests that the Committee saw its work as supportive of, and complementary to, the land claims negotiation process, highlighting its belief that education must be community-driven, mindful of the “special historical and regional conditions” of the NWT, and that it must be flexible and motivated by the current and projected future social, economic and political priorities and needs of the people and their communities. (NWT Legislative Assembly 1982: 11-12) Underlying the Committee’s work is evidence of a dynamic conversation about the nature of society in the Northwest Territories as the territorial government set out to build institutions that sought to reflect the people who lived there in meaningful ways. It is clear from the language in the final report and the submissions made to the SCOE that the Committee and its participants were grappling with fundamental questions about cultural and

linguistic diversity, identity, civic engagement and the role that education plays in shaping healthy and productive citizens.

The opening paragraph to the final report reads:

Change, growth, and development are characteristics of any living society and, beyond question, the Northwest Territories is now experiencing an extraordinary surge in these natural processes. We cannot refuse the challenges they pose, but we can say something about the direction in which they may take us. Central to any society's efforts to influence the direction of change is its people's ability to participate in the planning processes. And, beyond question, learning is the major factor in a people's ability to participate in such planning. We argue, therefore, that learning is the key to our future. (NWT Legislative Assembly 1982: 11)

If implemented, the Committee's recommendations would establish a new institutional architecture for the education system, leaving much of the operational elements to be determined at the local level. This deliberate decision on the part of the Committee reflects a commitment to the principle of local control and the goal of increased parental participation in education. It also indicates a desire on behalf of legislators and administrators in this period to encourage "ownership" over an important societal institution – one, which, historically, had segregated families and communities from schools. The Committee's 1981 interim report clearly states these beliefs:

"The SCOE believes that the agreement between the people of the communities and the school system regarding the aims and objectives of education is the critical variable in the success of the school....

...The task is to provide communities with a structure and the human and financial resources that will help create schools and programs that people in communities consider *theirs*. The people must believe in the aims and objectives of these programs." (NWT Legislative Assembly 1981:2)

Even though the ideas that underlie many of the Committee's recommendations in the final report were not necessarily new ones, they were considered at the time to be

innovative, leading to a surge of optimism following the publication of *Learning: Tradition and Change*. The report brought together in a cohesive way the “radical” ideas about education that had emerged over the previous decade: that children should be first taught in their own language; that schools and curriculum should reflect the cultural context in which they operate; and that parents should have a significant voice in their children’s education. (Darnell and Hoem 1996: 165)

After the report was published there was a feeling that the education system in the NWT could become a model for other culturally and linguistically diverse societies. One commentator went so far as to say that Northern schools would be “bastions of cultural identity for Native peoples.” (Welsman qtd in Duffy 1988: 130) The philosophy of community-based education, which underlies the SCOE’s recommendations, relates to both control over the direction of education and the physical location where education takes place. In effect, the idea was to change the organizational structure from “top-down” to “bottom-up” with the GNWT playing a coordinating role. Many of the Committee’s recommendations were relatively simple yet transformative, and a considerable number of them were, indeed, implemented and can be seen in the education system today in both the NWT and Nunavut.

Another legacy of the Committee’s work is the institutionalization in the education field of the discourse on “tradition” and “change,” which of course also appears in the report’s title. This way of conceptualizing northern development has shaped public discourse and policy making in the North for more than forty years. The Special Committee’s work was itself framed by this discourse, but it also contributed to it. In important ways, this discourse has created space for the inclusion of Indigenous

knowledge and perspectives, and it has also allowed for the recognition of the magnitude and speed of change experienced by the original societies of the North. Perhaps also, though, it has contributed to a sense of incongruence between Indigenous and settler worldviews and institutions.

3.5.2 Re-affirming Local Control through Regional Boards of Education

One of the central recommendations in the Committee's final report was that the GNWT make resources available to support the establishment of regional bodies that would serve as boards of education across the territory. The first regional education board created was the Baffin Divisional Board of Education (BDBE) in 1985. Many of the individuals who had been involved with education (especially adult education) in the 1970s were instrumental in setting up the BDBE.⁵⁵ The BDBE comprised representatives from all the Baffin community education societies. It had its own budget, and a small staff. BDBE board members received training in board governance and policy making. The Board developed and publicized a mission statement, mandate and goals as an organization. Right away the Board began to take on the enormous task of developing a renewed vision for education in the Baffin region, one which included creating Inuit language classroom materials and teacher resources, training existing staff, and meeting directly with parents and communities, among other things. The BDBE had two main objectives: to provide the opportunity for deliberate and meaningful family and

⁵⁵ And, in fact, many of the key players in the early days of the BDBE were from Igloolik.

community involvement in education, and the development of a bilingual and bicultural education system for students in the region.⁵⁶

Importantly, the Board and its staff were independent from government, which allowed it to play both an active role in education policy and curriculum development, and an advocacy role between communities and the Department of Education headquarters. In this way, the Baffin Divisional Board of Education and its eventual counterparts in other regions in the NWT provided an opportunity for Indigenous peoples to engage in active public policy leadership and decision-making as well as institution building related to education at a critical time in the Inuit rights movement and in the development of the GNWT.

That the GNWT, a relatively new government, was willing to decentralize power in this way is noteworthy. In 2014 I interviewed Nunavut Senator Dennis Patterson, who had been a member of the Special Committee on Education and was subsequently appointed Minister of Education responsible for implementing the SCOE's recommendations. I asked him to reflect on this important period:

It was a very centralized system [previously]. Curriculum development was done in Yellowknife. There had been minimal success in language and culture because it was [being done] in downtown Yellowknife where there are no leaders, no significant cultural resources. It was a no-brainer to decentralize it to the regions. We learned from the [SCOE's public] hearings that there was no sense of ownership of the education system. It

⁵⁶ For more information about the Baffin Divisional Board, see Geoffrey B. Isherwood et al., "Educational Development in the North: Preparing Inuit Leaders for School Board Control," *Education Canada* 26.3 (1986), 9-15. Also see McGregor 2010. Special thanks to Cathy McGregor, Joe Enook, Helen Balanoff, George Braden, and Dennis Patterson for helping me to understand the origins, activities, and importance of the BDBE for educational development and Inuit self-determination.

was considered to be a foreign colonial system where people didn't have ownership.

How to fix it? Joe Handley⁵⁷ [former SCOE staff member and Deputy Minister of Education] said, "You can give people control – policy control- leave the operations to administrators but make them accountable to representatives from the communities that they serve."

[Education] was a high priority of the 9th Assembly. We decided to make it a signature of the 9th Assembly. Everyone was on board. No one disagreed that it wasn't a priority. When I was made the Minister of Education, having endorsed the recommendations it was like OK, what are you going to do to implement them? I think I had a lot of support in the Assembly for getting the money to make the changes [that were] recommended so it was a very smart move....

I was able to get money to do stuff as well as support for administrative change as well. Some of it was, "ok we're going to hand money (operations and management) to school boards. We're going to give up control. The boards even got the money in such big sums that they could manage money and earn interest. The Department of Finance didn't like this. (D. Patterson, personal interview, March 12, 2014)

Patterson chose Joe Handley, a former Frontier College employee who also served as a senior staff member on the Special Committee on Education, to serve as Deputy Minister of Education. Soon after his appointment, Handley began to bring in people from the communities to work at the departmental headquarters in Yellowknife. During this transition, many of the long-serving Departmental staff were pushed out or left. Among them was Brian Lewis, former superintendent of schools for the Eastern Arctic. Like many of his contemporaries Lewis believed that schools should reflect the communities they serve, and he had worked hard to implement a more culturally inclusive education system in the NWT; however, the loss of centralized power that

⁵⁷ Joe Handley would later go on to become the 10th Premier of the Northwest Territories between 2003 and 2007.

would result from the major reforms in governance proposed by SCOE were difficult for Lewis and his cohort to accept. The 9th Assembly was committed to Indigenous self-determination and tried to create opportunities to institutionalize Indigenous leadership while maintaining a system of public government. This was reflected in the people chosen to serve in the departmental headquarters in Yellowknife and in divisional board model described above.

3.5.3 *Changes to Adult Education and the Creation of the Arctic College*

Interestingly, at the same time as these developments were taking place in the public education system aimed at children and youth, the era of community-focused adult education was coming to an end replaced by a more labour-market focused approach. *Learning, Tradition, and Change* (1982) provided a framework for adult and post-secondary education in the Northwest Territories premised on the belief that lifelong learning should not be limited to the classroom, and that the education program should be community-controlled. These values responded to three perceived needs: “the need for overall planning and for the integration of economic and industrial development with requirements for manpower; the need for adult education that is delivered close to home; and the need for adult education that is subject to community control.” (NWT Legislative Assembly 1982: 136)

The report characterized adult education in the NWT up to that point as lacking vision, resources, and organization, stating that, in making their recommendations, the Committee was “seizing [an] opportunity to reduce confrontation and conflict in opinion about the future of adult education.”(NWT Legislative Assembly 1982: 135) The Committee recommended that “post-school education” have a statutory basis to ensure a

clear, coherent mandate and access to dedicated, reliable resources. LTC laid the foundation for an Arctic College to be governed by an independent board with representatives from regional education boards, educators, labour, industry, and the public. (135) The proposed College system would comprise a network of regional campuses and Community Learning Centres, combining “attractive features of universities, technical institutes, community colleges, and manpower-planning agencies.” (12)

The period following *Learning: Tradition and Change* was “administratively intensive.” (NWT Legislative Assembly 1982: 10) In 1984, a vice president (Mark Cleveland) was appointed to develop the college system in the Eastern Arctic.⁵⁸ Cleveland’s mandate included consolidating existing post-secondary education programming; developing an expanded array of programming for the Eastern Arctic’s three regions; and creating an Eastern Arctic campus (now the Nunatta Campus of the Nunavut Arctic College in Iqaluit) for the new college system. Just four years after the Committee’s report was tabled, the NWT Legislative Assembly passed the *Arctic College Act* and on April 1, 1987, Arctic College was officially established. In the Eastern Arctic, it took one more year for Adult Education to officially transfer from the territorial Department of Education to the College. The institutionalization of adult education through the College resulted in an almost immediate increase in the number of communities served by adult educators, increased enrolment, and access to a wider and

⁵⁸ The Arctic College was preceded by the Arctic Vocational Training Centre (AVTC) established in 1968, and Thebacha College, based in Fort Smith, NWT.

more consistent range of courses and resources. (NWT Forum on Continuing Education 1988) By the late 1980s,

...most Inuit communities in the Northwest Territories had buildings, capital equipment, supplies and staff people dedicated specifically to adult education programs. To justify the large expenditures associated with such programs, educational administrators required adult educators to rigorously document the content of their educational programs, the level of student participation in those programs, and the academic progress of the students. (McLean 1997: 10)

This adult education system embodied by the Arctic College had its own mission and mandate, its own accountability structures, and its own measures of success. One of the recommendations from a 1988 Continuing Education Forum in Inuvik was that “consistent measuring standards be used for adult education courses, [and that] teachers should be held accountable for meeting those standards.”(NWT Forum on Continuing Education 1988) The application of performance standards was, perhaps, to be expected given the expenditures and resources going into adult and post-secondary education during this time; however, these new accountability measures reflected a shift in thinking about the goals of adult education, and the connection between adult education and local self-determination.

Over time, the administrative procedures and requirements, coupled with a depoliticized approach to adult learning and community development that privileged the needs of the labour market, effectively erased “community adult education” as it had once been. One former adult educator explained:

We didn't fit after 1985. There was no “community” left in “community adult education.” They [the Department of Education] wanted us to teach English literacy not adult education. They said, “you will be teachers of English.” That isn't what we were there to do, and it isn't what we believed in. (Mary Ellen Thomas, personal communication, February 27, 2014)

As further evidence of this shift in orientation, in her closing remarks at the 1988 Continuing Education Forum, Nellie Cournoyea (then an NWT Cabinet Minister and former member of the Special Committee on Education) went so far as to say that the biggest educational problem facing the NWT was literacy, and that pre-employment training and work experience for welfare recipients were particularly pressing needs for economic development. (NWT Continuing Education Forum 1988: 19)⁵⁹ Locally driven educational activities supporting the development of local social economies and contributing to the creation of public spaces for political—as well as social and economic—self-determination, was replaced in the 1980s by a narrower vision of adult learning as “an instrument for the development of an appropriately skilled workforce.” (Rubenson & Walker 2006: 181)

During this period the development of the education system in the Northwest Territories affected K-12 education much differently than adult education, with important implications for communities. On the one hand, the Department of Education seemed to take seriously the recommendations of the Special Committee on Education, and actively worked to further entrench the principle of local control, reinforced by the establishment and resourcing of the regional boards of education. On the other hand, the institutionalization of adult education through the creation of the Arctic College and the turn toward literacy and labour-market training programs effectively put an end to the

⁵⁹ Nellie Cournoyea is the former Chair and CEO of the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation in the Northwest Territories. She was the first female Aboriginal Premier of the Northwest Territories and has held many ministerial positions in the Government of the Northwest Territories. She was instrumental in the negotiations for the Inuvialuit Land Claims Agreement and the creation of the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. For more information on the history of the ISR and Cournoyea’s work in education, see Cournoyea 2014.

community-controlled adult education, which had facilitated considerable local institutional development and civic engagement through the 1970s and 1980s.

A brief example illustrates what these changes meant in practical terms for communities. Prior to the regional boards and the College being set up, adult educators were linked to the local education councils to help support their work. This meant that the two parts of the education system, K-12 and adult education, were linked together at the community level. Under the new system, adult education would fall under College jurisdiction rather than under the regional boards of education, so these two elements of the system were separated. In practice, this meant that adult educators were no longer supporting the local education authorities.

Nunavut Sivuniksavut - An Important Exception

There is an important exception to the turn in adult education away from community development and self-determination toward labour-market training in the 1980s. Nunavut Sivuniksavut (NS), which is based in Ottawa, began its life as the TFN Training Program in 1985. The original purpose of the program was to train Inuit fieldworkers who could return to their communities across Nunavut to keep people informed about the land claims negotiation underway between Inuit and Canada. In 1987, the students suggested that the name of the program be changed to Nunavut Sivuniksavut, which means “Our Land, Our Future.” In the early years, the post-secondary program was affiliated with Confederation College in Thunder Bay, ON. By 1989, NS established an arms-length accreditation relationship with Algonquin College that remains in place today.

Nunavut Sivuniksavut began with just two instructors and a small cohort of students – many of whom went on to become leaders in their communities and nationally. Responding to student feedback and guidance, the program has evolved over time into a multi-year post-secondary experience, “dedicated to providing Inuit youth with unique cultural and academic learning experiences that will allow them to develop the knowledge, skills and positive attitudes needed to contribute to the building of Nunavut.” (Nunavut Sivuniksavut 2017) In 2015, 54 students were accepted into the program; 6 full-time staff, one full-time social worker, plus several, part-time lecturers and support workers, are employed to deliver a suite of courses that focus on Inuit cultural studies, Inuit social and political history, contemporary Inuit issues, Inuktitut language, and communications, as well as a course on the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. In the second year of the program, the students take specially designed courses through Carleton University and the University of Ottawa on community-based research methods, Nunavut public administration, and Canadian politics. In 2018, NS is set to introduce a third year to its program.

Although it is the case that for some students NS serves as a bridge between high school and further post-secondary studies, all students who attend the program demonstrate “a dramatic increase in pride in their cultural identity, confidence in themselves as individuals, and enthusiasm for contributing to the future of their territory or region.” (NS 2017) The program is widely recognized as a success story: retention rates are 80-85%; applicants increasingly outnumber the available spots; the vast majority of graduates return to their home community or region, bringing their knowledge, skills, and confidence with them; and NS graduates are consistently in high demand in Nunavut and across Canada.

The program has endured because it has managed to retain an unwavering commitment to its primary purpose, while at the same evolving in response to endogenous and exogenous changes over the 30+ years of its life. The program has survived many changes in government and political priorities, shifts in leadership in partner organizations, and moments of financial uncertainty. Through it all, Murray Angus and Morley Hanson, NS’s two long-time program coordinators, instructors, and champions, have worked tirelessly to ensure that students remained the program’s first priority; they have carefully selected only those instructors and practitioners who share NS’ values; and they have encouraged both students and staff to create an inclusive space for Inuit in Ottawa.

3.6 The Transition to Nunavut (1993-1999)

The six years leading up to the creation of Nunavut on April 1, 1999 were marked by both widespread optimism and excitement, and also by feelings of immense pressure around designing and creating a new territory in a short period of time. The signing of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement in May 1993 was the culmination of more than 20 years of tireless effort by Inuit leaders and their allies. The NLCA and the subsequent creation of Nunavut constituted not only a re-mapping of Canada but a chance for Inuit to regain control over choices and decisions about their own lives. Once negotiations with the federal government were concluded, the challenging work of building a territory began and difficult decisions in all policy areas had to be made, with far-reaching consequences. The momentum generated by the Special Committee on Education, and the subsequent creation of the regional boards carried over into the 1990s, buoyed by the potential that Nunavut held for the realization of a bilingual-bicultural education system. At the same time everyone recognized that if Inuit were going to benefit from the hundreds of new employment opportunities Nunavut would bring, significant resources for education and training programs were needed to address the skills gap in the Inuit labour force.

Once the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Act and the Nunavut Act were ratified by Parliament in June 1993, the federal government appointed the nine-member Nunavut Implementation Commission (NIC) led by Chief Commissioner, John Amagoalik.⁶⁰ The NIC was responsible for planning the new territorial government. The Commission

⁶⁰ For a more complete examination of the lead up to Nunavut, including the work of the NIC see: Hicks and White 2000; Hicks and White 2015; and Merritt et al 1994.

published two main reports, *Footprints in New Snow* (1995) and *Footprints 2* (1996) as well as a number of supplementary reports, which offered recommendations on all aspects of public government in Nunavut, both political and administrative. Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) was also created to replace the Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut, with Jose Kusugak as its first president. Its mandate was to coordinate and manage Inuit responsibilities set out in the Nunavut Agreement, and ensure the federal and territorial governments fulfill their obligations.

3.6.1 *Education and the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement*

Education does not feature prominently in the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. Indeed, social policy issues in general were largely absent from land claims negotiations. Many of the negotiators on the Inuit side have said that despite their efforts, the federal government simply refused to include these matters in the negotiations on the basis that they would be dealt with by the territorial government. (Quassa 2007; Bainbridge 2008) Despite this, there are three Articles (23, 32, and 37) that are particularly relevant for education and training. Table 3 summarizes these:

Table 3. Relevant Articles of the Nunavut Agreement for Education and Training

Article 23	“The objective of this Article is to increase Inuit participation in government employment in the Nunavut Settlement Area to a representative level. It is recognized that the achievement of this objective will require initiatives by Inuit and by Government.”
Article 32	“Without limiting any rights of Inuit or any obligations of Government, outside of the Agreement, Inuit have the right as set out in this Article to participate in the development of social and cultural policies, and in the design of social and cultural programs and services, including their method of delivery, within the Nunavut Settlement Area.”
Article 37	Identifies training provisions as an important component of “timely and effective implementation of the Agreement with active Inuit participation.” Establishes the Nunavut Implementation Training Committee.

Source: Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (1993)

In the long-term, it is Articles 23 and 32 that are the most significant. Article 23

of the NLCA stipulates that Inuit should be represented in employment in the Nunavut government to the same level that they are represented in the population of Nunavut (approximately 85%).⁶¹ While Article 23 refers specifically to government employment, this clause is a symbol of the broader aspirations for Nunavut. These aspirations, implicit in the Agreement, cannot be realized without significant changes in educational attainment and the education system. Meanwhile, Article 32 states that Inuit have the right to participate in the development and design of social and cultural policies, services, and programs. This establishes Inuit as partners with the public government, which, of course, has jurisdictional responsibility for most social policies and programs. As I will try to show in Chapter 6, these two Articles have been the source of considerable conflict among the parties to the Nunavut Agreement since 1999.⁶²

3.6.2 *The Peak of Local Control over Education*

The work of the regional boards built considerable momentum during the 1990s. The Boards oversaw the introduction of the upper-year high school grades into communities that did not already have them, bringing an official end to residential schooling in the Eastern Arctic; and they were instrumental in the development of an

⁶¹ According to a recent NTI report, 84% of the Nunavut population is Inuit, but Inuit hold only 51% of filled jobs in the territorial government – there has been very little change in these figures since 1999. (NTI 2017)

⁶² As a brief illustration of the centrality of Article 23 to the larger dreams for Nunavut inherent in the land claim, in 2005 it became the central feature in a high-profile lawsuit NTI filed against the federal government on behalf of NLCA beneficiaries. In 2015, a \$255 million dollar settlement was reached between NTI and the Government of Canada. NTI has committed to spending \$175 million of this on education and training related initiatives. (CBC 2015) I will return to this in Chapter 6 but I mention it here also to point out that even though for all intents and purposes, the federal government withdrew from the education field the 1970s when the GNWT transferred its seat to Yellowknife, it retains responsibilities with respect to education under the Nunavut Agreement.

innovative bicultural education system particularly in the Baffin region where the BDBE was actively working to create a suite of bilingual-bicultural classroom resources across the spectrum of grade levels and courses. The regional boards acted as critical liaisons between parents, communities, educators, Departmental staff, and decision-makers. For example, in the mid-1990s, the BDBE did a visioning workshop with parents, educators, students, communities, asking them essential questions about the purpose and goals of education. The overwhelming message was “we want the best of both worlds for our kids.” (McGregor 2010: 128)

In 1994, the three regional boards of education began to work collaboratively in preparation for Nunavut. For six years, the board chairs and board directors met several times a year to discuss and develop plans and priorities on matters relating to all aspects of the education system from policy and finances, human resources, curriculum, community-school relations, and administration. (McGregor 2012) Soon after this collaborative board work began, the Nunavut Implementation Commission published its two-volume report, *Footprints in New Snow*, which detailed the Commission’s recommendations for how to set up the new territorial government. The report questioned the need for three regional boards of education under the new Nunavut government, which left the regional board chairs and directors concerned about how local education authorities (now called District Education Authorities, or DEAs) would be supported without the regional boards in place.

In *Footprints*, the NIC raised concerns over what it saw as a lack of accountability within the board system, an over-complication of education-related decision-making, and a misdirection of limited resources that effectively took potential funds away from

communities. (NIC 1995; McGregor 2010) The NIC proposed an alternative that would see the regional boards dissolved into a single board of education for all of Nunavut. The Commission's recommendations for education reflected a general assumption and approach that whatever was needed to ensure effective representation of Inuit and Nunavummiut interests in the NWT days would no longer be required under Nunavut:

The key point is that education and health boards were established essentially in response to the early physical, social, and political distance of the GNWT headquarters from Nunavut, and the manner in which they developed over the years was very much a function of pre-Nunavut political realities...Nunavut will be a more homogenous society than the existing NWT. There will be a higher number of members in the Nunavut Legislative Assembly to represent the people of Nunavut than there are representatives from Nunavut in the current NWT Legislative Assembly in Yellowknife. (NIC 1995: 26-27)

As I will explain further in Chapter 6, ultimately, the first cohort of Nunavut MLAs chose to ignore the NIC's recommendation to amalgamate the regional boards of education, opting instead to dissolve them altogether, which resulted in the transfer of all programs and services to the Department of Education. The GN drew on two aspects of the NIC's report and the report of a consulting firm the GN commissioned in 1999 to justify its decision: board accountability, and cost-savings. A news release at the time stated, "the large number of regional boards across Nunavut promotes regionalism and lack of accountability" and asserted that the boards simply were no longer necessary under the new territorial government. The response to the GN's decision was mixed. As McGregor points out, even amongst the Baffin Divisional Board itself the decision was controversial. Some members (mostly from larger centres) saw the potential for a direct line to the Department as a positive change and opportunity to increase the power of already strong DEAs. For most DEAs, however, the boards played an important

advocacy and support role. (McGregor 2010:148; Joe Enook, personal interview, June 6, 2014)

The NIC's faith in Nunavut's political institutions, and the new Nunavut government's belief that regional representation was no longer needed ultimately led to the decision to reverse a twenty-year process to empower communities and schools that sought to infuse meaning into an institution that had been imposed in the 1950s and 1960s. The unfortunate irony of this short-sighted decision is not lost on Nunavummiut, and as I will discuss in more detail in Chapter 6, there have been some recent unsuccessful attempts by the GN to address this mistake.

3.6.3 Adult Education and Training for Nunavut

The years leading up to and just after the creation of Nunavut were characterized by a crop of dedicated programs aimed at increasing the number of Inuit employed by the new territorial government and the growing number of bodies created by and in response to the land claim. As Hicks and White (2015), "no one questioned the need to devote extensive financial and human resources to improving the education and skills levels of Nunavummiut, primarily but exclusively to ensure a qualified Inuit workforce for the GN. However, developing and implementing effective policies proved problematic in the 1990s and remain so today." (221)

A comprehensive overview and analysis of the policies and programs designed to train Nunavummiut for jobs in the public sector is beyond the scope of this project but here I offer a brief description of the main ones, based on Hicks and White's (2015)

account, and on publicly available sources.⁶³ It is worth noting that despite the significance of public service training for realizing the goals laid out in Article 23, very little analysis has been done about the efficacy of these programs or the experiences of those who participated in them. This is a gap in the literature that I plan to address in future work.

Training was identified as a high priority in both the Nunavut Political Accord and the land claim itself, but everyone involved in setting up the territory understood that while training for the public sector was absolutely needed, ultimately, significant attention needed to be paid to the whole education system if the long-term goals laid out in the vision for Nunavut were to be realized. The Nunavut Implementation Commission made explicit the relationship between training and the K-12 education system in *Footprints 2*. In the report, the NIC identified 11 projects that would see “enhancements in post-secondary education and advanced training for government employees, improved academic support and personal counseling at the college level, new senior management development programs, better funding for Nunavut Sivuniksavut...and stronger links between NS and Nunavut Arctic College.” (Hicks and White 2015: 222)

One of the key messages from the NIC reports was that given the central importance of education and training to the whole Nunavut project, cooperation among Nunavut’s partners (i.e. NTI, the territorial government⁶⁴, and the federal government) was essential. (NIC 1995) In 1996, just three years before Nunavut was to come into being, a joint Working Group on Human Resources and Training was set up with

⁶³ I am grateful to Frances Abele for sharing her knowledge and insights about this period with me; and for pointing me in the right direction to find source materials for this section.

⁶⁴ First the GNWT during transition, and then ultimately the Government of Nunavut, once established.

representatives from the Nunavut Implementation Commission, NTI, the Nunavut Training Implementation Committee, GNWT Department of Education, Culture, and Employment, and the Government of Canada. Bert Rose, then chair of the NIC chaired the Working Group. This group created the Nunavut Unified Human Rights Development Strategy (NUHRDS) – a framework to guide and coordinate training activities. NUHRDS is primarily focused on the mismatch between the skills available in the Inuit labour force and the demands of the employment opportunities (some 600 new public service and approximately 1400 private sector jobs) that were expected to come once Nunavut came into being. (NURHDS 1996) But the members also recognized that it was important to think long-term as well, which meant working towards increasing high school attendance and graduation rates and improving the K-12 education system.

As part of its obligations regarding implementation, the federal government earmarked nearly \$40 million dollars for education and training. NURHDS identified all the potential training partners who could work together to provide short and medium-term training to help staff the middle and upper management roles as well as some of the more technical positions in the new GN. Some of these initiatives included: an executive training program delivered by the Canadian Centre for Management Development (now the Canada School for Public Administration), a financial management program delivered by Nunavut Arctic College, and a number of diploma and certificate programs in legal studies, community lands administration, computer studies, among other areas. (Hicks and White 2015: 223)

Most of the Nunavut Arctic College courses offered during this period were aimed at training Nunavummiut for jobs in the public sector. (McLean 2017) The College

maintained its long-standing NTEP program - in existence in some form or another since 1968 – to continue the important work of training mainly Inuit educators to work in Nunavut’s schools. (For more information about NTEP see Cram 1985; McGregor & McGregor 2017; Walton & O’Leary 2015) Outside Nunavut, Nunavut Sivuniksavut, which had begun its life training young Inuit to share critical information about the land claim and land claim negotiations, now had a slightly different focus. (See the vignette above for a history of NS) As Hanson (2003) explains, the overarching goal of the Nunavut Sivuniksavut program once the land claim was settled and Nunavut was becoming a reality was to prepare Inuit youth to take on the responsibilities of implementing the Nunavut Agreement, including moving into roles within the new Government of Nunavut. And in 2001, the Government of Nunavut and Carleton University partnered to deliver the Certificate in Nunavut Public Service Studies (the Nunavut Certificate), a program designed to deliver university level courses in public administration to Government of Nunavut employees. The program included nine university-credit courses, each adapted for the Nunavut context. Courses were offered following a hybrid distance delivery method to employees of the Government of Nunavut public service in three Nunavut communities: Arviat, Cambridge Bay and Iqaluit. Generally, three courses were offered each year. The program also included pre-enrollment, not-for-credit, transition courses developed in 2007, to better prepare inexperienced post-secondary participants for success. The Nunavut Certificate ran for six years with a total of 127 participants before funding from the Government of Nunavut

was cancelled.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have tried to provide a balanced and clear overview of a complex series of events at the federal and territorial levels as they relate to education and northern development. These included dramatic and, in some cases, rapid shifts in the political and institutional context in which decisions about education were made. After decades of non (or at least indirect) intervention in the lives of Inuit in the Eastern Arctic, the Government of Canada began a large- scale project of social change aimed at transforming Inuit from what it saw as a nomadic, impoverished, unhealthy, and unorganized people into educated, settled, healthy citizens of Canada. This included the introduction of institutions like schools, health centres, local governments, and cooperatives into the newly created northern settlements.

Only a few years after the federal government began building schools in the Eastern Arctic, responsibility for education was transferred to the nascent Government of the Northwest Territories, a government that would spend the next twenty years engaged in negotiations with Indigenous leaders who were determined to regain control over their own affairs. Formal education played a central role in the colonization of Northern Canada, but it has also played a central role in the process of Inuit self-determination, as evidenced through 1970s calls for local control and the eventual institutionalization of local control through local and regional boards of education in the 1980s.

Whereas the Government of Canada's intervention in the Eastern Arctic was highly centralized - a veritable checklist of high-modernist behaviour and activities - for both political and practical reasons, the GNWT, which itself was engaged in the process

of state-building, adopted a more decentralized model of governance. As I will show in more detail in Chapter 5, this approach created conditions, if only briefly, at the local level in Igloolik for meaningful community building work to take place.

One way to interpret the large scale political and institutional changes and events presented in this chapter is to see them as the processes of colonization and decolonization as Inuit have gained increasing control over education and other matters culminating with the negotiation of the land claim and the creation of Nunavut Territory. This interpretation is not incorrect, but it is incomplete. There is, I argue, more to the story. As I explained in the introduction to this dissertation, my analysis moves between two scales. In the next two chapters, I turn to an analysis of what these higher-order events and decisions have meant to people in Igloolik.

Chapter 4: Igloolik to 1970

4.1 Introduction

Only a small number of the Northern communities that exist today are situated in places historically occupied by Inuit and other northern Indigenous peoples. The vast majority were created as a result of deliberate post-war state policies to induce Inuit to live in settlements where services such as housing, education and health care could be provided. The present-day community of Igloolik is located on an island of the same name off the northeast coast of Melville Peninsula in Nunavut. Igloolik is the geographic centre of the territory and has a reputation for being an important cultural centre, perhaps owing to the fact that its inhabitants were among the last to come into contact with Europeans and among the last people in the Qikiqtaaluk region to permanently settle in a community. (Qikiqtani Truth Commission 2013: 175) The area surrounding Igloolik Island has been a site of human habitation for more than four thousand years, and during these long years the area has served as a meeting place for traveling families. (Rowley 1996; Mathiasson 1928; Fossett 2001)

For most of Iglulingmiut history, small extended family groups lived in widely dispersed seasonal hunting camps – or *ilagit nunagivaktangit*⁶⁵ - around Northern Foxe Basin. Contact with Europeans came relatively late to Northern Foxe Basin, as it was especially difficult to reach by boat. Contact began first in sporadic, temporary, interactions with explorers, fur traders, and missionaries, then in more regular and

⁶⁵ “*Ilagit nunagivaktangit*” is the Inuktitut term for “places used regularly for hunting, harvesting and gathering.” The Qikiqtani Truth Commission identified this term as a more appropriate replacement for the widely used English term “camp” to describe the places that Inuit called home before 1975. According to the QTC Final Report, “implicit in this meaning is the concept of home before the settlement period.” (QIA 2013: 7)

predictable encounters with the RCMP, and finally in direct and sustained interaction with the Canadian welfare state. This chapter provides an historical account of this process up to the mid 1970's. It is based on academic and grey literature, archival records, and most importantly, on first-hand accounts of the people who lived through this period. Following the Qikiqtani Truth Commission's approach, I have organized this account according to three time periods: (1) *Taissumani Nunamiutautilluta*, which means "when we lived on the land;" (2) *Sangussaqtauliqtililluta*, or "the time when we started to be actively persuaded (or made) to detour (or switch modes);" (3) *Nunalinnguqtitauliqtililluta*, or "the time when we were actively (by outside force) formed into communities."

The English translations of the Inuktitut terms used to describe the different phases of colonization in the QTC report offer important insights worth highlighting here. They tell us that the externally driven changes Inuit were experiencing during this transformative process involved a re-organization of social and economic life from one connected to and with the land to one based in settlements. And they tell us that in making this journey a shift in "modes" was required. The word "detour" is, I think, also important because it seems to suggest a temporary deviation or that a return to the preferred or intended path or main road is possible or likely. The sense of agency in what is otherwise a description of change by external force expressed through these categories is noteworthy.

The role of formal schooling in this process in Northern Foxe Basin will be the main focus of the historical account provided here; however, it is impossible to separate formal schooling from the other aspects of externally driven social change, particularly in

the years before 1970. As I explained in the introductory chapter, formal schooling is intimately bound up with the development of permanent settlements in the Eastern Arctic.

The strand of argument I am making in this dissertation about the evolution of two planes of community life in Igloolik has its roots in the period under examination in this chapter. In the first part, I describe (as best as I can without adequate knowledge of Inuktitut) the various elements of pre-colonial Iglulingmiut society, including leadership and power structures and the role of education in society. As time went by and contact became more sustained and institutionalized – first through the establishment of HBC posts, RCMP detachments, and missions, and later through the building of schools, health centres, government offices, airports, and public housing – Iglulingmiut were forced to “switch modes” in order to engage with these imposed institutions and the people who were sent North to animate them in the early phases of their Arctic existence. What I also show towards the end of this chapter, though, is that the spectrum of institutions I described in Chapter 1 also begins to take shape during these years. That is, it is evident right from the beginning that Inuit in Igloolik almost immediately began to find “zones of overlap” between the two planes in at least two of the imposed institutions: the local settlement councils and the Co-op. Meanwhile, the position of the school as an island in the community is clear.

4.2 *Taissumani Nunamiutautilluta* – When We Lived on the Land

I suggest that the period when Iglulingmiut lived exclusively on the land can be divided into two segments – before and after contact with Qallunaat. In doing so, I also wish to acknowledge first that no single historical account could ever do justice to the

richness of the history of the peoples who have inhabited the region surrounding Igloolik. And second, that in presenting Iglulingmiut history as “pre” and “post” contact, I may be seen as perpetuating a tendency in the literature to position Indigenous peoples only in relation or opposition to Europeans, or that even after contact with Europeans that every aspect of Iglulingmiut history is coloured by colonization. This is not my intention. Each extended Iglulingmiut family grouping has their own oral history, grounded in their relationships to their ancestors and the particular places their ancestors traveled and lived; and that as someone who possesses neither intimate familiarity with this land, nor the primary language used to transmit knowledge and stories of the places and people who inhabited it, there are significant limits to what I can know. Important work has been done by Iglulingmiut to document their own history on their own terms. The Igloolik Oral History Project has made a significant contribution, as have the films produced by Kinguliit Productions (formerly Igloolik Isuma Productions).

The so-called “pre-contact period” spans thousands of years up to 1822 when two British explorers, Parry and Lyon, wintered in Northern Foxe Basin. Over the next 100 years, Inuit contact with Qallunaat and Qallunaat institutions gradually increased becoming more regular and more intense in terms of its impact on Iglulingmiut social and economic life. Historically, the peoples who lived in Northern Foxe Basin enjoyed relative stability with consistent access to adequate resources from the land and sea. Even in hard times, Amitturmiut (the name given to the inhabitants of the area surrounding what is now Igloolik and Hall Beach)⁶⁶ tended to fare better than their counterparts in

⁶⁶ I move between two terms used to describe the people who now call Igloolik home: Amitturmiut and Iglulingmiut. The QTC as well as other recent publications (e.g. MacDonald 2018) use the term

other regions. In his 1968 account of Igloolik history, Keith Crowe (1968) reported that, “the history of human settlement in northern Foxe Basin prior to about 1800 has one principal constant – a general long-term equilibrium between people and the animal resources that sustained them.” (65)

This equilibrium can be attributed largely to Igloolik’s geographic location. Northern Foxe Basin had consistently high stocks of marine mammals (seal and walrus), which offered not only food for both humans and dogs but also oil for *qullit* (seal oil lamps) and other useful materials, such as skins for clothing and bones for tools. In fact, evidence suggests that Igloolik was one of four major trading centres for the people of Melville Peninsula. (Fossett 2001: 129; Aporta 2009; Also see the Igloolik Oral History Project records)

Unlike neighbouring regions to the northeast and southwest, Northern Foxe Basin was difficult for Qallunaat to reach by boat, and thus the inhabitants of this region had only irregular and temporary encounters with Qallunaat (non-Inuit) until the early 20th century.⁶⁷ This did not mean, however, that Amitturmiut lived without imported material goods. Since they were living at a “crossroads in a network of long routes linking different parts of the Qikiqtaaluk region to places farther south and west”, Amitturmiut

Amitturmiut to refer to people from the Igloolik and Hall beach areas. The term Iglulingmiut was used by early anthropologists (e.g. Damas 1963) and has persisted into contemporary times. (e.g. Rasing 2017).

⁶⁷ Parry and Lyon wintered in Igloolik in 1822-1823, and there were other Europeans that made it to Igloolik as well such as Hall in 1867; however, there were virtually no whalers and even the HBC arrived much later than it did in other areas.

were able to trade with their neighbours to acquire desired goods and materials. (QTC 2013b: 179)

Following a seasonal round, Amitturmiut men spent the darkest winter months hunting seal and walrus, increasing their hunting activities, as the days gradually got longer. Two main sea-ice villages were built: one near Igloodik Island and one north of present-day Hall Beach. These villages served as gathering places for the hunters' families before everyone moved closer to the shoreline in early spring to continue hunting seal and walrus. Moving closer to shore made it possible for hunters to make trips inland onto Melville Peninsula to hunt caribou as the spring turned to summer, melting the sea ice. Seal and walrus formed the mainstay of the Amitturmiut diet, while caribou was essential for proper clothing for the coming year. Freeze up began in September and October and winter preparations, such as caching meat, sewing clothes, and repairing and building sleds and other hunting gear, were completed. Once again, people moved into their winter dwellings. This finely-honed annual cycle developed over centuries based on immense knowledge of weather and ice conditions, animal behaviour and migration patterns, astronomy, and environmental stewardship was integrated into

and passed down to the next generation through a system of education embedded in the practices of everyday life. (QTC 2013b: 179)⁶⁸

4.2.1 *Amitturmiut Social Relations, Education, and Leadership*

In addition to the complex and dynamic relationship between humans and nature, social relations among humans in the *ilagii nunagivaktangit* (camps) were rooted in intricate kinship networks, which established strict social customs and practices. Each Amittirmiuq was (and is) connected to an extensive network of kin with both privileges and obligations attached to each relationship in that network. Individual and collective identity was determined according to a set of social norms and customs associated with this system. According to Damas, who studied the Iglulingmiut kinship system in the 1960s, there were two main types of relationships among Iglulingmiut: those characterized primarily by emotional closeness, joking, and affection; and those characterized by obedience, avoidance, and respect. (Damas 1963: 377-388) Traditional naming practices as well as those governing the sharing and distribution of food and other goods among kin served to connect each person to one another and to reinforce his or her role in the group as a whole. (Otak and Pitsiulak-Stevens 2014; Alias 2008; McElroy 2006; Okpik 2005)

4.2.2 *Embedded Education*

In her comprehensive history of Inuit education and schools in the Eastern Arctic, McGregor highlights a number of features or qualities of Inuit education before schools

⁶⁸ I would also like to thank Levy Uttak, Louis Uttak, Julia Amarualik, Susan Avinga, Theo Ikkummaq, Michelline Ammaq, and Francis Piugattuk for the time they took to explain where their families traveled throughout the year.

were introduced. The first of these is that education was embedded in the extended family: “a foundational quality of Inuit education is the caring that existed between learner and teacher.” (McGregor 2010: 37) The education of each child was a communal responsibility and in addition to learning the practical skills needed to successfully carry out their future responsibilities as adult men and women in the family, “education was often conducted with the goal in mind of discovering the special interests and skills of the learner and determining where the learner would fit into the family and the small community around the family. (38)

Inuit education before schools is often described as “informal” but as McGregor, Sheila Watt-Cloutier, and others have emphasized this does not mean it was not rigorous. (McGregor 2010; Watt-Cloutier 2015; ITK 2011) Renee Fossett has referred to Inuit Elders as “uncertainty specialists.” (qtd in McGregor 2010: 39) Rachel Qitsualik (2013) explains that the *nalunaqtuq* (that which causes confusion) nature of the Land means, “it is not...that there is nothing one can learn about the Land but only that there is no end to what can be learned. Thus, Inuit are concerned as much with what they do *not* yet know, as what they know for fact.” (24) In this context, the stakes involved in the passing down of knowledge and skills from one generation to the next were incredibly high – life or death - for both teacher and learner.

Many Inuit Elders have vivid memories of the first time their fathers took them out hunting, or the first time they were given a sled dog puppy to care for in preparation for the time they would have their own team, or the number of times their mother made them re-sew a pair of mittens until they were just right. Parents had a vitally important

role to play in ensuring that their children received the proper education, and children were responsible for listening to their teachers and Elders:

If the sons and daughters didn't listen to their parents in those days, they would die young or have a hard time in later years. The ones who would listen to their parents would live longer and have a happier life and be respected by other people. (Bernard Iquugaqtuq qtd in McGregor 2010: 40)

The *National Strategy for Inuit Education* explains that in addition to sharing and helping one another, in the Inuit worldview, respect for an individual's intellectual capacity, or *isuma*, was an important feature of education:

This was seen in the way Inuit raised their children, allowing them to learn from their mistakes and trusting in their capacity to use their *isuma*, thought or intellect, and eventually become *isummaniq*, a mature productive member of the community. As such, most Inuit individuals have independence of thought and action, and personal responsibility for their actions. It could also be considered rude to ask questions of a person who is engaged in an activity. Inuit have been known to tell others to stop asking questions, and that it is better to learn by observing the activity. (ITK 2011: 72)

4.2.3 Leadership

A recurring theme in Inuit accounts of colonialism in the Eastern Arctic is the effect that state intervention, specifically formal schooling, had on leadership and power structures in Inuit society. In writings and reflections by Inuit, traditional leadership is often described as family or kinship-based, reflecting the social and economic organization of Inuit life before contact with Europeans and ultimately with the state. Arvaluk (2007) and Amagoalik (2007) have described traditional Inuit leadership as “natural leadership” and “collective leadership”, respectively.

The term *Isumataq* - meaning “the wise one” or “he who thinks” - was designated for the head of each small family group. The *isumataq* was typically the eldest brother considered to be the best hunter in the group - someone with especially good instincts and skill. The hunter occupying this role often made decisions about where the group would live and what tasks people would perform. Sometimes the term was used to describe a man who was considered to be a leader outside of his own family. It is important to highlight the nature of this position: an *isumataq*'s leadership position or power was not formally expressed but was rather understood and recognized by the group. (Birket-Smith 1960; van den Steenhoven 1962; Rasing 2017; Tapardjuk 2013; Quassa 2007) In other words, relations of power and influence were determined and expressed largely through kinship customs; and positions of leadership were earned.⁶⁹ As James Arvaluk and others have explained, individuals “couldn’t demand to be a camp or area boss. People recognized Elders and hunters as leaders. It wasn’t something you could self-declare.” (Arvaluk 2007: 18-20)

In a letter published in *Nunatsiaq News* in the lead up to the most recent territorial election, Mad Mom (the pen name of a regular contributor to *Letters to the Editor*) wrote:

In the old days, leaders were proclaimed by others. They were seen as strong, consistent, decisive people who could make decisions for the benefit of all. Leaders never called themselves that. Instead, they were

⁶⁹ Another distinctive role in Iglulingmiut society was that of shaman. Shamanism was a common practice but was largely eliminated after the introduction of Christianity. For more information about Iglulingmiut spiritual life before the introduction of Christianity, see Zacharias Kunuk's 2003 documentary film, *Angakkuiit: Shaman Stories* produced by Igloolik Isuma Productions, Inc. Also see Saladin d'Anglure 2001 and Laugrand & Oosten 2010.

humble, in the eyes of everyone else, who recognized their ability.
(Nunatsiaq News 10 October 2017)

Leadership, then, was earned through hard work and commitment to one's responsibilities within the extended family network. Leaders were chosen based on their experience, knowledge, and wisdom born of this hard work. They were acknowledged for their sense of fairness, their courage, and their compassion for others. Once established, leaders were looked to for guidance and direction in all aspects of life. It is worth noting, as Paul Quassa (2007) does in his description of traditional leadership, that in Inuit society the decision-makers and leaders were not necessarily Elders. In fact, most of the time leaders were experienced, able-bodied hunters.

Each camp had its own leader – the head of an extended family group – who would make decisions about where to hunt, how resources would be allocated, and would ensure that there was harmony and unity within the group. Rasing (2017), Briggs (1971), and the Igloodik Oral History Project have documented in great detail the ways in which traditional family life was carried out, and the ways in which social control and order were maintained in pre-settlement Inuit society.

It is clear from these accounts that leaders had considerable power but the environment in which Inuit lived necessitated a degree of inter-connectedness.

4.2.4 Early Contact

The early contact period in Northern Foxe Basin began in the early 19th century with a “seemingly chance encounter, but one which would alter forever the way in which the Amitturmiut related to themselves, to their universe, and to the world beyond.” (MacDonald 2018) This period was characterized first by irregular and temporary

interactions with outsiders, mostly explorers, traders, and missionaries turning to more regular and sustained interactions by the war years of the early and mid 20th century. Despite the increasing regularity and more intensive influence of Qallunaat in the region, the Amitturmiut remained on the land, living in a similar way to their ancestors until the 1950s. The retention of traditional life aligned well with what Damas (2002) has called the “policy of dispersal” at the time. Recall from Chapter 3 that in the pre-war years, the federal government maintained that it was preferable to have Inuit remain on the land, where they could participate in subsistence harvesting as they had for thousands of years, rather than to encourage permanent settlement, and thus dependence.

The first documented contact between Amitturmiut and Qallunaat was the 1821-1823 Royal Navy expedition led by Parry and Lyon. The expedition was forced to overwinter in Northern Foxe Basin twice, creating the opportunity for close contact with families in the region. Between 1822 and 1939, the Amitturmiut were visited four more times by explorers and expeditions hoping to “discover” lands, peoples, and the elusive Northwest Passage. Table 3 summarizes these expeditions. (See MacDonald 2018 and Rasing 2017 for more information about these expeditions) Each of these visits produced written accounts by the explorers themselves, which provide a window from an outsider’s perspective into Amitturmiut life during that 100-year period. The Igloolik Oral History Project contains a great deal of information about the Qallunaat visitors, recorded by Igloolik Elders based on stories they carried from their predecessors and their own first-hand observations. (MacDonald 2018)

Table 3. Expeditions to Northern Foxe Basin (1822-1930)

Year	Expedition
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1821-1823	William Parry and George Lyon, British Royal Naval Expedition HMS <i>Fury</i> and HMS <i>Hecla</i> in search of a Northwest Passage
1867-1868	Charles Francis Hall, American explorer in search of survivors from the lost Franklin expedition
1913	Alfred Tremblay, French-Canadian prospector and first Qallunaaq to travel by dog team from Arctic Bay to Igloolik
1922-1923	Fifth Thule Expedition led by Danish/Greenlandic explorer Knud Rasmussen and a multidisciplinary team of scientists and social scientists.
1936-1939	British Canadian Arctic Expedition led by T.H. Manning to undertake field work in geography, geology, ornithology, and archaeology. ⁷⁰

Source: MacDonald 2018.

4.2.5 Trade, Trapping, and New Technologies

As noted above, even though Amitturmiut were not in direct contact with Qallunaat until much later, they were able to obtain imported goods and materials through trade by making long journeys to Repulse Bay and Pond Inlet where encounters with whalers and missionaries were more frequent. New hunting technologies such as rifles and wooden boats (to replace *umiak*, or skin boats) were initially rare commodities but became more common after the turn of the century. For example, Amitturmiut first acquired rifles through trade in 1840 but many hunters continued to use bows until the 1930s. (Crowe 1968)⁷¹ Although there had always been a gendered division of labour in Inuit camps, the introduction of rifles separated tasks even further. Whereas hunting using traditional means had often required the participation of all family members, including women and children, hunting with rifles required only one person, most

⁷⁰ The archeologist on this expedition was Graham Rowley, who published a detailed memoir of his travels and work. Rowley later went on to work for the Government of Canada on northern matters, and as a professor at Carleton until his death. Graham Rowley, *Cold Comfort: My Love Affair with the Arctic* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007).

⁷¹ This was probably because rifles required ammunition, which was hard to come by until the 1930s when more HBC posts opened.

typically but not always a man. Also, hunting with rifles required that both gun and ammunition be purchased rather than manufactured from local resources as bows and arrows could be. Equipment could be purchased, through the trade of fox furs and sealskins from HBC trading posts or from other hunters. There was, therefore, an important relationship between the use of rifles and the burgeoning fur trade.

After the First World War, the Hudson's Bay Company expanded into Melville Peninsula and northern Baffin Island, establishing permanent trading posts at Repulse Bay (1919), and Pond Inlet (1921), and thus providing Amitturmiut with reliable access to manufactured consumer goods. At the same time, there was a dramatic reduction in regional caribou herds, which led to a decrease in skins available for clothing and food. This shortage may have been caused, in part, by a considerably large migration of people from the areas around Repulse Bay and Pond Inlet to Igloolik which may have led to over-harvesting⁷² as well as by the simultaneous commercial trade in caribou skins by the HBC and among other Northern Indigenous groups. (Rasing 1994; QTC 2013)

The severe shortage meant that many women, children, and Elders could not leave their dwellings for long periods of time because they lacked adequate clothing for winter travel and ultimately for living in winter camps at all. (Rasing 1994: 65) It also meant that Amitturmiut hunters were forced to move farther and farther east in search of caribou. (Crowe 1968) Longer hunting trips for male family members coupled with the forced sedentarization of families challenged the traditional camp lifestyle, in which kin

⁷² Some estimates report that the population of Foxe Basin doubled during this period. See, for example: QIA, QTC, 186.

traveled and worked together as a cohesive unit. Many Amitturmiut were forced to eat canned food and wear (inadequate) southern clothing. (Rasing 1994)

Increased trapping during this time served as an important agent of change in the Iglulingmiut economy. The fur trade represented the beginning of Iglulingmiut “integration into an externally based cash economy,” (Rasing 1994: 65) made possible by the expansion of the aforementioned HBC trading posts. Even though there was no HBC post in Igloodik until the 1940s, trappers made the long journey to Repulse Bay, Pond Inlet and/or Arctic Bay to trade their wares for hunting equipment and increasingly for consumer goods. (69)

Trapping altered the incentives motivating participation in some economic activities over others, which in turn had profound effects on the family and the seasonal Amitturmiut migration cycle. (QTC 2013: 185) Settlement periods were extended and hunting camps were built up principally along the coast at meat cache sites, which had previously been used only for travel or for certain times of year. Food scarcity, relatively uncommon over the previous 100 years in the region, increased as hunters chose to spend more of their time trapping. (Damas 2002: 20; Crowe 1968:72) Fur functioned as the currency of trade at the HBC posts in exchange for hunting equipment and consumer goods; the more trapping one did, the more one’s family had to rely on store-bought goods for subsistence and clothing.

When the fur trade went into sharp decline in the late 1950s, many Iglulingmiut found themselves with a much higher and increasingly cash-based cost of living. What is more, the social implications of this shift in priorities were great. The roles played by each family member were directly linked to the harvesting activities undertaken by the

unit as a whole. When these activities changed, the family unit did too; income in the form of cash, transfers and/or wages simply became a necessity.

The rifle was not alone in its impact on Amitturmiut social life. The introduction of first wooden and then motorized boats - in the 1920s and 1950s, respectively - happened in much the same way as rifles. Amitturmiut did not have access to much wood on account of their geographic location but were able to acquire it over time through trade and travel. Like rifles, whaleboats increased the potential yield hunters could hope to bring home to their families. These larger whaleboats also enhanced the mobility of families to follow seal and walrus if needed. (QTC 2013: 185)

Boats, however, were expensive and only a few hunters were able to afford them. Crowe and Anders report that even by the 1960s, for example, there were only twelve whaleboats distributed throughout all the camps in northern Foxe Basin. (Crowe 1968: 72; Anders 1965) Like rifles, boats changed the social dynamics of harvesting, this time among the group of male hunters. Traditional walrus hunting required groups of men to tie their kayaks together and hunt as a collective, using harpoons. Walrus hunting using boats (at first wooden whaleboats and then later motorized ones) typically involved a similar group of men, only now, the group was “under the leadership of one man who usually owned all or part of the boat.” (Crowe 1968: 72) Rasing found that “whaleboats...affected the nature of the co-operation of hunters. They created new networks of collaboration, since people now came to depend on individuals possessing such craft. This enhanced the status of the owner.” (Rasing 1994: 87) Prior to this, the role of *isumataq* was held by the best hunter in a camp - a position based on merit

recognized by the larger group. Power stemming from whaleboat ownership represented a change in social relations resulting from the introduction of the cash-based economy.

4.2.6 Igloolik as Outpost: Missionaries, Police, and the HBC

As Christianity spread throughout the Arctic, most Inuit communities became predominantly (or in some cases exclusively) Anglican or Catholic. Igloolik, by contrast, was deeply divided along denominational lines – perhaps the result of the near simultaneous introduction of Anglicanism and Catholicism at the same time as family groups were migrating in relatively large numbers to Northern Foxe Basin from surrounding areas.

The introduction of Christianity to Amitturmiut took place over a period of roughly thirty years beginning in the 1920s, when an Inuk named Umiq traveled from Pond Inlet to the Igloolik area to share a version of Anglicanism crossed with Inuit spiritual beliefs. In 1931, an Oblate priest named Fr. Herve Bazin established a small Roman Catholic mission at Avajja, one of the Coxe Islands to the west of Igloolik Island. Avajja was one of the main areas where Amitturmiut made their seasonal camps. Fr. Jean-Marie Trebaol, who had arrived on a small mission vessel carrying building supplies, soon joined Fr. Bazin and in 1937 a new Catholic mission was built - the first permanent Qallunaat establishment in Northern Foxe Basin. (QTC 2013: 186)

Despite the relatively rapid introduction of both Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism throughout the region, the hunting and migration patterns of Amitturmiut were not significantly affected. The existence of the permanent mission, and the subsequent establishment of an HBC post nearby in 1939 meant that Amitturmiut were in more regular contact with Qallunaat and Qallunaat institutions. Even though no formal

Anglican mission was established in Igloolik until 1959, deep divisions began to take root among Amitturmiut. These social divisions along religious lines would go on to have profound and enduring effects in Igloolik, influencing both where people chose to live in the community and with whom they chose to interact and form kinship ties. The power of the respective church leaders also endured for several decades with important effects over local development and governance. (Tapardjuk 2013; Quassa 2008; Arvaluk 2007; F. Piugattuk, personal interview, February 25, 2014; Qulaut 2014)

Around the same time as Christianity made its way to Northern Foxe Basin, an RCMP detachment was established at Pond Inlet (1923). Officers made their first annual patrol to Foxe Basin that same year. The federal government's preference for non-interference during this early period meant that the RCMP sometimes provided "relief" to families in need in the form of food or hunting equipment. Between 1930 and 1940, the population in the Igloolik area grew dramatically, which again put a strain on resources, forcing Amitturmiut to search out various forms of relief, including medical and other assistance from missionaries, police, and the HBC trading post. Some of Igloolik's Elders today remember coming to the settlement with their families to purchase goods from the HBC post using wood chips as currency. (Uttak 2014; Amarualik 2014) Louis Uttak, born in 1937, recalls keeping a one-dollar bill in his bible – it was no use to him as currency at the time, but he understood it to be valuable. (Uttak 2014)

During these years, some Inuit men began to work as assistants to RCMP officers and HBC managers, which meant more sustained interactions with Qallunaat and Qallunaat institutions. These arrangements, Rasing observes, represented the beginning of a shift towards dependence on outsiders. (Rasing 1994: 187-190) When asked whether

those who worked for the HBC seemed more affluent than other Inuit, Igloolik elder, Thomas Nutarariaq responded:

They didn't seem affluent at all. They had to listen to everything the Hudson's Bay manager said. In those days Inuit did everything the *qallunaat* told them to do; they did everything they were told. They actually had less than other Inuit because although they had *qallunaat* things they had to rely on other Inuit for country food and skins. (Partridge 2009: 108)

The generation of Iglulingmiut who are now the community's Elders were born during this period. They spent the better part of their youth and early adulthood on the land and remember vividly the hardships and the freedom of their lives before moving into Igloolik. They are the grandchildren of family leaders like Ittuksarjuat and Ataguttaaluk who Iglulingmiut regard as prominent historical figures.⁷³ This generation recalls coming into Igloolik with their families to pick up supplies from the HBC post once or twice a year, seeing Qallunaat for the first time, and the fear they often felt in the presence of outsiders. (Uttak 2014a; Avinga 2014; Uyarak 2014; V. Kunuk 2014; Qattalik 2014) For the most part, these now-Elders were young men and women – some newlyweds and new parents – during the transition that began in earnest after the end of World War II. This generation of Iglulingmiut would become the parents of the first cohorts of children to attend formal schooling. Everything that appears in this historical account from here on has happened in living memory.

⁷³ The two schools in Igloolik are named after Ataguttaaluk, the wife of Ittuksarjuat. See Appendix E for her story.

4.3 *Sangussaqtauliqilluta* – When We Started to be Actively Persuaded to Switch Modes

In the years following WWII, events and decisions made elsewhere had profound, dislocating effects on Amitturmiut social and economic life. As a result of Cold War tensions and fears, in 1954 the US Army constructed Distant Early Warning Line (DEW-Line) radar sites across the Arctic from Greenland to Alaska. (Lackenbauer & Shackleton 2012) A DEWline site, FOX-MAIN, was set up at Hall Beach, which created opportunities for Amitturmiut employment as well as regular access to medical care, and other resources previously unavailable to Inuit. Many Amitturmiut families chose to live at or near the site year-round, using scrap materials from the DEWLine site to build shacks.

As described in the previous chapter, the Government of Canada's involvement in the North during the post-war period evolved from a policy of "dispersal" and non-interference to one of settlement and social engineering. As part of the burgeoning Canadian welfare state, the government began to expand its social safety net for all citizens, including Inuit who, up to this point, had been more or less ignored. In less than ten years, a series of social transfers and programs were introduced, beginning in 1945 with Family Allowance, which was made available to all Canadian mothers with children under sixteen. Pensions for the elderly along with assistance for needy mothers and the disabled came next in 1948, followed by a public health initiative to eradicate

tuberculosis, an education program, and an Inuit housing program, which all came into effect before 1955.

Government transfers quickly became an important source of income for families who increasingly required cash to participate in land-based activities and to purchase food and other goods from the store. Transfers, especially Family Allowance, also became an effective weapon used by government and church officials to coerce Inuit parents to comply with a new set of societal rules and expectations.

4.3.1 Residential Schooling in the 1950s and 1960s

As in nearly every Indigenous society across Canada, Iglulingmiut social life was affected by residential schooling. Over the last fifteen years or so, more and more information has come out about the often deeply traumatic experiences Indigenous children endured at these schools. And while many former students have made the difficult decision to share their experiences publicly, there are thousands of others whose stories we will never know.

In Volume 2 of the TRC *Final Report: The Inuit and Northern Experience*, the Commission differentiates between the “large hostel” and “small hostel” model of residential schooling. Large hostels were 100+-bed facilities associated with large elementary or elementary-secondary schools and run by either religious or government officials, while small hostels typically had between eight and twelve beds, were associated with smaller elementary schools, and were run by Inuit or First Nations couples.

The large hostel system was in full operation across the northern territories by 1961, in spite of the fact that just six years earlier Jean Lesage, Minister of DNANR, had

clearly expressed his view that boarding schools were not appropriate for Northern Canada. (TRC 2015) The TRC final report describes the large hostels as replicating the problems that had characterized the residential school system in the south:

They were large, regimented institutions, run by missionaries whose primary concern was winning and keeping religious converts. They employed a curriculum that was culturally and geographically inappropriate. While a number of schools developed admirable reputations, most students did not do well academically. Sexual abuse was a serious problem in a number of these institutions. The abuse was coupled with a failure on the part of the government and the residence administrators to properly investigate and prosecute it. Institutional interests were placed before those of the children. (TRC Vol. 2 2015: 101)

In total there were nine large hostels in the Northwest Territories and Yukon. Before 1970 when a large hostel residence was built in Iqaluit (then Frobisher Bay), only two of these were in the eastern Arctic: Turquetil Hall in Chesterfield Inlet, which opened in 1955 and Churchill Vocational Centre (CVC) in Churchill, Manitoba.

For Iglulingmiut children it was largely religious affiliation that determined whether they came into contact with either the large or small hostel system between 1955 and 1969. Both Turquetil Hall in Chesterfield Inlet and the small hostel in Igloodik were closed by 1970. What follows is a brief description of Turquetil Hall accompanied by a discussion of the experiences of Iglulingmiut former students and parents who have chosen to share their stories about that time in their lives. I will then turn to a discussion

of the federal day school and the small hostel associated with it in the context of the creation of Igloolik as a permanent community.

Table 4. Large Hostels in the Territorial North (up to 1970)

Yukon	Western Northwest Territories	Eastern Arctic
Coudert Hall, Whitehorse Yukon Hall, Whitehorse	Akaitcho Hall, Yellowknife Fleming Hall, Fort MacPherson Breynat Hall, Fort Smith Deh Cho Hall, Fort Simpson Stringer Hall, Inuvik Grollier Hall, Inuvik	Turquetil Hall, Chesterfield Inlet Churchill Vocational Centre, Churchill

Source: TRC 2015 Vol 2

4.3.2 *Sir Joseph Bernier Federal Day School and Turquetil Hall*

In 1955 the Oblate missionaries opened Turquetil Hall to serve as a large hostel associated with the federal day school in Chesterfield Inlet.⁷⁴ The school, Sir Joseph Bernier (1951), was run by the Grey Nuns or the Sisters of Charity. Both religious and lay teachers worked in the school, but the missionaries ran the hostel. Once the hostel was built, it was possible to bring students in from other parts of the region. The first students from the Igloolik area were taken from their families to attend residential school in 1955. Only Roman Catholic children attended the school in Chesterfield Inlet. The priests at other missions in the Eastern Arctic played an important role in ensuring that the children arrived in Chesterfield. Not only did the priest counsel parents to “agree” to send their children to school but many former students remember sleeping and eating at the RC Mission while they waited for their transportation from Igloolik to Chesterfield at the end of the summer, or while they waited for their parents to come to pick them up in

⁷⁴ See Appendix D for a map of Nunavut.

the spring. Sometimes, the priest served as a conduit for communication between parents, their children, and the school.

Turquetil Hall closed in 1969 following the transfer of responsibility for education from the federal government to the new Government of the Northwest Territories. This meant that there were, in effect, two “waves” of students who attended school in Chesterfield Inlet: those who began early enough that they completed all their schooling there, and those who started out at Chesterfield and moved to Igloolik when the Chesterfield hostel closed. It remains a source of confusion and resentment, among some, that they were forced to return to school in Chesterfield even after the federal day school opened in Igloolik in 1961. The TRC passage quoted above hints at one likely explanation: that the Church was eager to continue the students’ religious instruction and it felt that remaining in the Igloolik area and attending the Igloolik federal day school would not provide the same environment. By all accounts, Father Fournier, who was the Catholic priest in Igloolik at this time, was immensely powerful and what he instructed his followers to do would have been carried out without question. (Quassa 2008; Tapardjuk 2013; Rasing 2017; F. Piugattuk, personal interview, February 25, 2014; QTC 2013a; QTC 2013b)

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada concluded that the residential school system in Canada was a system of state-sponsored cultural genocide. From the courageous and thoughtful testimonies of dozens of former students to the TRC and the QTC and from the reflections of former students in memoirs, speeches, and interviews, most students remember their time at school with mixed feelings. We have learned from these testimonies and reflections that new students and their parents had

little to no knowledge of where the children were going or what to expect; that the first day and weeks after arriving were especially jarring, as the children were often separated from their family members on arrival, and then stripped of their own clothing, made to cut their hair, and thrust into an English-only environment; that all experienced painful loneliness and homesickness for months and even years, and perhaps most devastating, that at the very young age of six or seven, they had to hide their emotions and felt unloved. We know, also, from these testimonies that many students suffered horrific physical, sexual, psychological, and emotional abuse while in the “care” of the Church officials who ran the school. Sometimes the perpetrators were the priests, nuns, and school staff members; other times they were fellow students. (TRC Survivors Speak 2015: 112)

From the testimonies of former Joseph Bernier students, we have also learned that many have positive memories of their school experiences, enjoyed learning, and are proud of their educational achievements. These same students often acknowledge that what they learned in school did not reflect their lived experiences, or their environment, that they missed their families terribly, and that their teachers often treated students poorly. These students express solidarity with and deep empathy for their fellow students whose own experiences have left life-long scars, both physical and emotional. In short, there is no singular residential school experience. In what follows, I have tried to capture the experiences of former residential school students from Igloolik, recognizing that I did not speak with every single former student from Igloolik, and that each person shared with me only what they wanted to on that day or days when we spoke. I chose not to ask any direct questions about abuse and took my direction from the people I was speaking

with about how much or how little they wished to talk about any aspect of their experiences. Only a small number of the people I spoke with raised the issue of abuse explicitly and in those cases, the abuse was acknowledged but no details were offered, and I did not ask any follow up questions.

4.3.3 *Experiences at Joseph Bernier and Turquetil Hall*

All the former students I spoke with remember the pain, confusion, and loneliness they felt in leaving their parents and families behind.⁷⁵ Many were just five or six years old when they were herded onto a boat or plane to live away from home for the next nine months of the year. A few recalled the special new items of clothing their parents had prepared for them –caribou skin parkas and pants, kamiit (sealskin boots), and in one case a store-bought outfit. These precious items, lovingly bestowed on their recipients by anxious parents trying to send their children to the unknown as prepared as possible, were taken away immediately on arrival never to be seen again.

I remember, like, we...my father brought us here [to Igloolik] and one morning I wake up [and] he's nowhere. I think he didn't want to watch me going so he's lost. And my oldest brother was working at the co-op when it was just opening so he bought me a little western outfit with fringes...He got me these little outfits and I was so proud of them. I remember going down to where there was a plane waiting. Down to the beach, we were waiting on the beach. I have no memory of getting on the boat or on the plane. I don't know. If we left from here on the plane to Chester or if we want to Hall Beach and were getting on a plane there, I don't know....But that was the only time I wore [that outfit]. When I got to Chesterfield, they're gone. (M. Ammaq, personal interview, March 10, 2014)

The plane ride to school was more memorable for others:

We were packed like sardines, sitting on the floor. We would be sitting side by side. Sometimes there were too many of us, or something, and we

⁷⁵ In addition to the final reports of the TRC (2015) and QTC (2013), also see: Brady & Kelly (2017) for more recollections of residential school students from Igloolik, especially Chapter 2.

moved around the plane to distribute the weight. (B. Kappianaq, personal interview, June 2, 2014)

It was an exciting thing! What I remember for the first time was...just out past the Island, sometime in August the weather was so nice. Looking out the window, I could see a toy sailboat that I really liked from the top looking down. I wished to have that sailboat. I thought it was only a toy, eh? It never occurred to me that things look small from high places. It was a real boat but to me it was only a toy that I really wanted to keep, to play with in the water. I don't think I was afraid to get on the plane. (J. Ataguttaaluk, personal interview, March 6, 2014)

Bart-hannah Kappianaq recalls what it was like to arrive at the school for the first time:

...I remember we had to wash our hair...you know with a very stinky substance. It was green. Because you were living in a camp, you had fleas. You never had a shower because there's no shower, you know. Probably stink to people who are not Native, you know, but we were only kids, we don't know.

[We went] from our parents to the white nuns...In one night we had to become like a white kid. Wash your hands, brush your teeth, comb your hair. If you want to go to the washroom, you have to ask the nun. You have to have maybe three toilet tissues, things like that. You're not allowed to play in the water, you can't do too much, you know. You can't be like a kid – like a native kid – anymore. You have to act their way. They didn't know how the natives lived, and we didn't know how the white people lived. We were just kids.

When students began their first year of school (usually between five and eight years of age), they did one year of beginner English before entering Grade 1. The use of Inuktitut was strongly discouraged at the school, and many people report being humiliated or punished for speaking Inuktitut in school. Michelline Ammaq recalls the tactic her Grade 1 teacher used with her class:

When we were in Grade 1, we had a not too good teacher. If we accidentally spoke in Inuktitut, she would give us a baby nipple because we were talking in Inuktitut. But it wasn't bad...in other words, maybe if she didn't do that we wouldn't have picked up English as fast. I don't know. But we always tried to remember not to speak Inuktitut because we didn't want

the nipple....But we always had to be careful. [We were] Babies, had to watch what we're going to say.

First language loss is one of the most profound impacts of residential school for Indigenous peoples across Canada. For most students from Igloodik, attending residential school at Chesterfield Inlet did not result in the loss of Inuktitut, and most former students remain bilingual; however, with so many dialects represented in the student population at the school in Chesterfield Inlet, the students began to pick up words and phrases from one another. Students recall that this raised some eyebrows and, in some cases, caused some communication challenges with their families when they returned home for the summers. (Kappianaq, personal interview, 2014; Uttak, personal interviews, 2014a; 2014b; Ammaq, personal interview, 2014)

Once the students completed their first year of Beginner English, students received a conventional elementary school education, with classes in mathematics, English, social studies, and geography.⁷⁶

I have never been good at mathematics so that was my least favourite subject. And I loved reading and writing, and I did a lot of that. And a little bit of art work, colour stenciling and all that... We learned about the history of the Indians of Ontario, Bedouins of Sahara Dessert and all that. But I don't remember learning about the Inuit culture. They might have touched on it a little bit – maybe they didn't – but I don't remember that. I only remember being taught about the aboriginals from southern Canada and the Bedouins and the Africans and all that. (A. Uttak, personal interview, May 29, 2014)

With English as a second language, we had problem. When we first walked into school, we were trying so hard, we were having problems. And there used to be some students who were really stuck; not that they wanted to be stubborn, but they were stuck, and they didn't understand, and you would get beat up with yard sticks and what not. That was some

⁷⁶ At this time, students in the Northwest Territories were taught according to the curriculum of the province “below” the region in which the school was located. In the case of Joseph Bernier, they were using the Ontario curriculum.

part that southern people didn't understand that we as Inuit living in an old system and just moving into a new system, which we didn't have any idea what it was, we couldn't speak English, you know. That was the thing but to me as I went along there were a lot of things that I was learning which were new to me, but they kept me going all along.... I like to learn! But what I miss is that I never went to a school like here in Igloolik, never ever. The only place that I went to was away from home. Never been sitting here, and I think it's very different here, you know, first thing in the morning coming out of your home, going to school, seeing your mum and dad everyday but it was different for us. (J. Ataguttaaluk, personal interview, March 6, 2014)

Many former students make a distinction between their time in school and their time in the hostel. For some students, school was exciting and enjoyable, while the hostel was a scary, lonely, or even boring place. For other students, the school day meant boredom, humiliation, or outbursts of violence from their teachers or fellow students. Life in the school and hostel was highly regimented. Weekdays began with prayers and chores, followed by breakfast, then a full day of classes at the school, followed by more organized activities until bedtime. Some of the former students I spoke with were able to recall, many decades later, their daily routines in very specific detail. For some the strict routine was simply monotonous; for others they associate it with a constant threat of punishment.

We were controlled. We can't miss any school; we have to go to bed around 9 o'clock and get up at 7am and have breakfast. Sundays we had to pray. We had to get up early and have breakfast. 9:00 we had to go to school, and the school wasn't too far, it was pretty good. But we were controlled...very well. [It was] very very strict. You can't play, you can't get your clothes wet or you get the strap. Sometimes you don't learn, you know, you make another mistake and get another belt. Things like that, you know. Because you're a kid, you're not thinking. (B. Kappianaq, personal interview, June 2, 2014)

With so many students from the Igloolik area attending the school, most students had family members there but, as was the case in all the residential schools across

Canada, boys and girls were segregated from one another – forbidden from interacting.

This meant that most children were separated from their siblings, cousins, and other extended family members – their connections to home.

...being in the residential area, it was strict, very strict. Run by the Grey Nuns, the sisters. Our building was three stories high. The main floor was the warehouse part, the second floor was the boys, and the third one was the girls. And we were not allowed to see the girls. We were supposed to be on our own dorm. I loved my aunt because we spent a lot of time together when we were home. After three days [of being at school for the first time], I couldn't see her so I looked around. I kept trying to figure out where are the girls, and I see them going up [the stairs], and without thinking - it's free country, that's what I thought: it's a free place – so I went upstairs and there was my aunt, and one of the supervisors came up to me, "You're not supposed to be here, what are doing here?" "I want to see my aunt," "you're not supposed to see her!". They brought me down and put me to bed, which was new to me! You know that's how tough it was...yeah. (J. Ataguttaaluk, personal interview, March 6, 2014)

...The only sibling who was old enough to go was my younger sister who is two years younger...And also I had an uncle going there for many years, and also an aunt, and cousins.... We were segregated by floor. And the only time we saw them was when we went to the dining room. When we went to eat, they also went to eat, of course. But we were segregated in the dining room as well. Girls on one side and boys on the other, and there was a large aisle. (A.Uttak, personal interview, May 29, 2014)

While all former residential school students acknowledge the negative effects that residential school had on some aspects of their own lives and the lives of their families, many also express pride in their academic achievements.

When you say residential schools. For me, there were two things. To me, going to school itself was one of the better ones. Way better than what is happening in the present school system but on the other side, the residential part where we stayed, where we slept, that was the worst part. Nobody should have ever expected parents [to send their children away] ...but the schooling itself, for me, is something that I'm kind of proud of. But the only thing that I [regret] when I first went to school was as soon as I walked into school, they kind of opened the window, threw your Inuktitut – your language – out that window and closed it because we had to learn English. But that's the only part. Once we started school, I

enjoyed it. It was something that we were learning. You know?" (J. Ataguttaaluk, personal interview, March 6, 2014)

For some, any good that may have come from residential schools is simply irreconcilable with cultural genocide and the personal and collective pain it has caused. Others see their residential school education in somewhat utilitarian terms, accepting that the education they received prepared them to take on leadership positions in their communities and in the Inuit rights movement which would eventually lead to the creation of Nunavut. (e.g. Quassa 2008; Tapardjuk 2013; Arvaluk 2007)

4.3.4 “No One Ever Talks to the Parents”

For good reason, the TRC focused primarily on gathering testimonies of former residential school students and staff.⁷⁷ During one of my trips to Igloolik, I was visiting Zacharias Kunuk at the Isuma offices telling him about my research and he said – “no one ever talks to the parents about what it was like for them. You should talk to my mother.” So, I did. What follows is based on the insights of the Elders, reflecting on this period of their lives as young parents, and also on those of the former students themselves when I asked them if they ever talked to their parents about how it was when they were away at school.

One of the striking features of the phenomenon of residential school experience – for all those affected – was how both parties, children and parents, hid their suffering from one another as best they could. For many former students, it was only when they became parents or even grandparents themselves that they felt they could understand

⁷⁷ The Qikiqtani Truth Commission did speak with parents. Some of the quotes that appear in this section are from the QTC files, as well as from interviews I did.

what their parents might have been feeling. Many former students have explained that they held onto feelings of deep resentment towards their parents for allowing them to be taken away by strangers. (See, for example, Ittusardjuat 2015; QTC 2013b) Some of the people I spoke with told me that they never talked to their parents about their experiences – good or bad – but later wished they had.

As an illustration of the long-term suffering that the separation caused to both parents and children, I have reproduced at some length one of my conversations with Michelline Ammaq about her memories of her father leaving their family camp at the end of the summer in order to take her older siblings back to Igloolik or Hall Beach so that they could be taken to Chesterfield Inlet for the school year.

When your parents would come in to meet you [in the Spring], you would spend the summer with them?

Yes, we would always spend it at Igloolik Point or the east end of Igloolik. They had a cabin there where they would spend their winters, and we'd be there and then go to Igloolik Point for walrus hunting, and be there until school. Once I went to Chesterfield we never went back up beyond the Strait. We used to live beyond the Strait up there. Once we went to Chesterfield, I don't know why but my parents never bothered to go back up. We spent summer on the Island. One time we spent it at Hall beach. Too bad they're gone. I should have asked them why we never went back up.

Maybe because it took too long?

We used to do it every spring. We would go pick up my older siblings and go back up. Then my father would bring them back. My mother and I would be left behind, and he would take them here by boat. I don't know. Maybe I only remember two summers but it seems forever. It used to be so dreary, such a dreary day, when they would leave for Chesterfield. I don't know if it was really dreary. My mother's face would be wet. Just standing on the beach. They would leave in the morning. I think she stayed outside all day long. I used to hate rain. Big time. Because I thought the wet from her face was from the rain and we spent all day out in the rain. But thinking about it now, maybe she was crying all day. I would be so

cold. When it turned dark, we would go in and go to sleep. I think I remember two summers like that.

It must have been so difficult for parents.

I thought they didn't care but just recently when the Bishop apologized that's when I started thinking back. I blocked it. Big time. It started coming back. There's no way my father would have left on a dreary day.⁷⁸

One year I didn't want to go back to Chesterfield. They left us behind and they went to a camp between Hall Beach and Igloodik, and so I think they were trying to be far away from us. But apparently the plane wasn't going to land here, we had to go to Hall Beach. We had to pass through the camp so I am crying my eyes out. I'm yelling I don't want to go. My mother's bribing me. She even gave me a whole dollar bill. And that was something like 100 back then. There and then, [I thought] she doesn't care. To her death, I always thought she doesn't care about me - from that moment. It was awful.

Louis Uttak, whose children attended residential school in Chesterfield Inlet, explained how difficult it was for them as parents to let go of their children, and what was at stake if they chose to resist. Uttak also identifies what many parents of this generation

⁷⁸ I am not absolutely certain which Bishop Michelline is referring to, and I did not confirm with her, regrettably, but I assume she means the Bishop of the Arctic Diocese. Even though the Catholic Church has never issued a formal apology for its part in the residential school system, in 1991 the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate (the dominant order in the Central and Eastern Arctic) did apologize to former students. Formal apologies have been issued by other churches, including the Anglican (1993), Presbyterian (1991), and United (1998) churches. On March 28, 2018, Pope Francis issued a statement saying that he would not apologize for the role the Roman Catholic Church played in the residential school system in Canada. A papal apology was one of the 94 calls to action made by the TRC in 2015.

observed – that a much greater distance than just a physical one began to develop between parent and child as a result of residential school.⁷⁹

...When the government was setting up shop here, the old HBC manager, who had been around a long time, they called him Uisakallak⁸⁰ [Wide-Eyed Person], lamented that the lifestyle of the Inuit was going to be destroyed, and it was true. When the government started building the first houses, and building the old school, that was when life started changing. Before that we were self-sufficient so that was the beginning of the change there. It was hurtful when the government set up shop, but it was worse when they had to take away our children to residential school. They would take them in the Fall and we wouldn't see them until May. And so it hurt...

They would acquire the services of the RCMP and they would tell them if you don't send your kids to school, you won't receive any family allowance. Family allowance was the only income then, to buy things at the store – formula, etc. and other necessities. And so that they will continue receiving their allowances, while their children were taken away on the plane. We as parents would cry also, the children would cry. But it didn't matter to the people who were... [taking them]. When our children would leave, we would be like a broken family. It was bad. It even hurts to talk about it. That was when we started losing connection with our children. The more times they went away, the further away they were.

It even hurts to talk about. It's past... but that was when our lives started changing. Even though they were getting smarter, they were getting farther away from us. And they wouldn't intimate as to why they were the way they were.... We were told that they were going so that they could

⁷⁹ It is important to remember that the quotations from Elders reproduced here are all based on transcriptions of the conversations I had with each Elder, made possible through Francis Piugattuk's interpretation *during* the interview. In some cases, I have changed some of the words from the verbatim transcripts for clarity. For example, sometimes Francis would translate to me in the third person rather than using the first person or first-person plural. For example: he would say "they" instead of "we". In these cases, I have changed the phrasing to "we" to make it clear that the speaker is talking about themselves or a group of people they were part of. All these interviews were submitted to the Igloolik Oral History project for the purposes of contributing to their archive in the community but also so that transcripts of the Inuktitut and direct English translations of the original Inuktitut could be completed. I made many unsuccessful attempts at having these interviews translated myself, but the dialect used by Elders in Igloolik is very specific and two highly skilled translators I approached were unable to complete the work.

⁸⁰ I believe this is William (Bill) Calder. Calder was a long-serving HBC manager in Igloolik.

...speak English and have good employment, so we went along with it. They would be taken away from us when they were about 6 years old.

The fear and intimidation that Inuit felt in the presence of non-Inuit newcomers is well-documented. In *The People's Land*, Hugh Brody explains the term that Inuit in the North Qikiqtaaluk were using in the 1970s to describe how Qallunaat made Inuit feel. Brody defines *ilira* as a feeling of “nervous awe that comes from being at an irreversible disadvantage, a situation in which one cannot modify or control the actions of another; it can also describe unpredictability...” (Brody 1975: 178) Brody argues that this feeling goes to the heart of the colonial relationship. Qitsualik has a different take on the term. She argues that the emotion described by the word “ilira” is:

...not quite fear, and yet may cause traditional Inuit to seem as though they are yielding to authority. Ilira is an emotion that only features in interpersonal conflicts, when there is the potential for argumentation – occurring only when opinions collide, and only in the one who “backs down” from confrontation. And this is where Inuit culture becomes important, for since traditional Inuit find conflict loathsome, an Inuk may come to feel “ilirasuktuq” – a state in which they are distinctly unsatisfied (perhaps even angry), and yet will give in simply for the sake of dissipating conflict. Again, Inuit culture becomes a key factor here, for one who is ilirasuktuq does not give in from a sense of duty, or a fear of punishment. Interestingly the reaction stems from the fundamental principle of Inuit wisdom most estranged from this age. Pragmatism. (Qitsualik 1998)

The feelings expressed by the Elders I spoke with in Igloolik are reflected in both descriptions of *ilira* given by Brody and Qitsualik, and the ones that have been documented all over Nunavut. (TRC 2015; QTC 2013; Brody 1975; Tapardjuk 2013;

Quassa 2008; Arvaluk 2007; Ittinuar 2008; Okpik 2005; Watt-Cloutier 2015; Walton & O'Leary 2015)

It is clear from their statements – a selection of which appear below – that people felt they had no choice but to do what they were told.

Back then there was no way you could say no. The white man was intimidating; they were scary. They had a lot of clout. It's not like that anymore. (A. Ulayaruluk, personal interview, February 27, 2014)

Back then we were scared of the white men; what they said we had to follow. Back then they were telling my father that the children had to be in school, and that we will be in better housing units where we will be in one place; where struggling for survival is not so much a way of life anymore. Live in ease, comfort, moving into the community. This is what they told my father...I knew there was an administrator here but there was no way that we were going to approach him and talk to him. White people were scary then. Even our dogs didn't like the white man. I remember a white man standing near the dogs and the dogs nearly went after the white man. It was only when my father stopped them that they stopped. Maybe it was because they smelled different...

...My father moved here. We really couldn't say no. They told us to move here because we would be in a warm heated unit and because of the school. My father was in disagreement for a while so we didn't move for a while but my uncles and other families had already moved here so my father moved here and we followed suit. Then I got a wife here so I pretty much stayed here....I had four kids after I moved here. The oldest one started school so the younger ones also went. I like that young people are now educated because you're able to work and communicate. I myself am

not educated so I like those that are able to speak English and do work.
(D. Qattalik, personal interview, February 28, 2014)

In my conversations with Iglulingmiut parents and former residential and federal day school students, I asked if they remembered who came to tell them that children had to attend school. For residential school students, it was often the priest:

Do you remember someone coming to your parents and telling them you had to go to school.

Yeah, it was the priest, the Roman Catholic priest. Only Roman Catholic people who followed that Church went to Chesterfield. There were other people who were Anglicans who were not allowed. Because we had two religions... That's what was decided. My dad and mum were scared of southerners saying we had to go to school. They were not Inuit, they were Qallunaat, so they said yes, go ahead. You know, I know one time, about the third or fourth year I didn't want to go, but I cried, I didn't want to go. It could have been second or third year, you know, but my mum said, you have to go. My dad says, he doesn't have to go, but it's the priest who's the boss. That was the thing. He was afraid to tell the priest 'he doesn't have to go'. They were the authority, the southern people. The Qallunaat were the authority. They were the people who told us, you have to do this, you have to do that. That's how it was then.

There was no explanation of any kind. Anything that the southern people brought up. And we never know, what does it mean? Because they were the authoritative people coming from South who knew better than us. Telling us to do this, do that, without thinking, they chose to do it. They know more than us. It turns out it was probably never like that because we feel we were so [much] smaller than those guys. (J. Ataguttaaluk, personal interview, March 6, 2014)

Despite the fear and coercion tactics, parents did make efforts to resist. Some former students I spoke with recall that their parents managed to keep their children with the family for an extra year or two in the early years simply by not bringing them into Igloodik or Hall Beach, so they could be transported to Chesterfield Inlet for school.

There is evidence that the concerns of parents were known to, and formally

acknowledged by federal representatives working in the settlements. For example, in 1966, the RCMP constable stationed at Igloolik, W.I. Donahue, wrote in his annual report to headquarters that Inuit parents in Igloolik were very concerned about education. He reported that while parents “agreed that education was necessary”, they were worried about the state of flux their children seemed to be in when they returned from school - no longer able to support themselves on the land and with few job prospects in the new settlement. Donahue proposed a possible solution: “to give the parents the opportunity to teach their children during their formative years how to live like Eskimos before they are sent to school.” (Donahue 1966)

In 2008, Louis Uttak told the Qikiqtani Truth Commission:

I hate myself for agreeing to send my children out to Chesterfield Inlet. I am sorry I was not smart at that time, smart enough to know what I had to do. It was good for a while; our children started learning another culture. We tried to be parents to them, but they were growing up so they changed too. The parenting part then was broken and we didn't know how to fix it. But the two cultures, the Qallunaat and the Inuit culture, are so different from each other, so they were using this culture and we couldn't quite be in contact with them anymore. (QTC 2013b: 189)

4.3.5 *The Igloolik Federal Day School and Hostel*

Formal schooling came to the settlement of Igloolik in the form of a federal day school, which opened its doors in 1961. While many of the Roman Catholic children from the area had been attending residential school at Chesterfield Inlet for some years by this time, the introduction of a local school and the associated hostel meant that all Iglulingmiut families would now be compelled to send their children to school. The multi-room school in Igloolik was located among the small but growing number of buildings near the beach, each one representing a different external agency or institution – the HBC post, Area Administrator's quarters, and the Anglican Church. In its early

days three teachers, including principal, Miss Pat George, staffed the school. By this time, some Amitturmiut families were living on at least a semi-permanent basis in and around the settlement, making the possibility of interaction between Qallunaat and Inuit more regular but no less jarring.

George Qulaut, a young boy at the time, remembers the sudden influx of Qallunaat in the late 1950s as government intervention intensified:

Then we heard in 1958, we heard the Feds were coming in; they were going to build a school, a power plant, a garage and two residential buildings for the teachers, and one Area Administrator's office the following year. First they were going build a very large building that would house 50+ men, white men, who were labourers, contractors; and they built that building first and it became [the] GP Hut. There were a lot of white people, and the school was built very very quickly [as well as] the three residential buildings, the garage and the power plant. The power plant used to be situated in around where the fire hall is. The old garage is still standing and the three residential buildings are still standing. The first Area Administrator's office is now down on the beach. It used to be the youth centre.

I remember my father taking me to the GP Hut. There was a totally different smell, a totally different environment, and people speaking a strange language. One of them gave me a bar of some kind; it had gold lettering and white covering and gold foil inside it. I didn't know what it was but it smelled good, and the person kept imitating to me to open it. It was too nice to break; it smelled so good. So I opened it, and inside I didn't know what it was. I followed his motions...break the piece, put it in my mouth. It was a chocolate bar. It was Jersey Milk. (George Qulaut, personal interview, February 26, 2014)

The construction of the school and the other buildings that George mentions meant that some Inuit families who were already living in the settlement were forced to move their dwellings. Leah Ivvalu, whose mother was working as a housekeeper for Bill Calder (the HBC Manager at the time) remembers being displaced to make way for development. In fact, Leah's childhood home was located where the federal day school

was eventually built. The old school building would later become the Hamlet government offices.

As I was growing up, I remember living in a sod house. You know that area where the Hamlet used to be? That's where we used to be because it's the best place in the community. The soil was nice and clean and it's higher than any other ground – it used to be before they put gravel.

As I was growing up on this side of town, and there was that little river in between. The Catholic people used to be on the other side. There were only two of us in the community – the Haulli's and us. I remember living in a qarmaq. One day my mother got TB and left for [the] sanitorium. After that the government wanted her to have a house or something I'm not sure - but there was a warehouse – a wooden warehouse – it was a long wooden warehouse where they cut it in half. The other half was the Haulli's house and one half was ours. That's when they started having wooden houses because of that warehouse that they made for us. And our stove was a barrel – a big barrel that you open on the side put wood in it. We used that as a heating for the house.

...There were only two buildings here – the Northern [i.e. HBC, then] manager's house and the Catholic house. There was that tiny little store, and a little warehouse. A little warehouse – when they gave us our house – it was because they [the HBC] got a new one. The middle one – it's still there. When they built that, they gave us the old warehouse they had.

As I was growing up – nobody went to school here at all until 1960. I was 11 years old when I first went to school. They started building government houses – the first three are the ones on the beach. The first government building is the drop-in centre now.

After the warehouse, they gave us – when they built that northern managers staff house that exists right above the Northern store – when they gave us the old house they had, there was that house that has upstairs – they gave Bill Calder the new house. The front area has upstairs and downstairs.

They also cut that in half and gave it to the new northern manager – Mark Evaloardjuk – and I got a picture of us with my little sister Liz wearing red, and at the end there's our old house. In [the] colour photo of us back then from the archives. I took it and scanned it.

That was new to me – a beautiful house with flooring. They cut it in half and dragged it down to the beach. After a while when they built the government houses. We were in the way I think. They pulled that house.

They took us away from our spots like we were garbage – far away from everything. After they built the school, those government houses, they started building houses. They gave us a matchbox⁸¹ after... (Leah Ivvalu, personal interview, June 3, 2014)

4.3.6 “Hang your parka at the door”: Memories of the Igloolik Federal Day School

The former federal day school students I spoke with in Igloolik remember their time at the school as disorienting, especially at first when they were not familiar with English. The content of the curriculum at this time was completely divorced from the environment in which it was being taught. Most Inuit from this generation remember a children’s book series called “Fun with Dick and Jane” that the school used as a teaching resource. The world of Dick and Jane, typical middle-class suburban white children, was wholly unfamiliar and strange to children whose own family and social lives looked nothing like those of the characters in the books.⁸²

George Qulaut’s first memories of school capture some of the changes that were taking place in the community at the time and also what going to school meant for him in those first years:

Once it was built, I remember three teachers coming in; two male teachers - one with a wife - a female teacher who was the first principal and her name was Pat George and I remember her very very well, and she was my first teacher ever. And she spoke with a very English accent. The first day of school was an eye-opener for a lot of us. By then my father had built a small hut for the family of five to dwell in. We had a stove, and he built a small building where the RC mission is now. We lived there and a friend

⁸¹ Here Leah is referring to a style of wooden houses made of pre-fabricated materials that were shipped to northern communities in the 1960s as part of the federal housing programme. These were the first generation of federally provided housing units. They could be made into different sizes and configurations with various amenities including: indoor water basins, heaters, and stoves. See the Qikiqtani Truth Commission Thematic Reports chapter on housing for more information about federal involvement in Inuit housing during this period. (QTC 2013b)

⁸² There is some evidence that government and church officials at this time were aware of the disconnect between what was being taught in the schools, and what would have been familiar to students.

of my father's, Mark Evaloardjuk's house was next door, which used to be the HBC manager's house (they had built a new house by then).

During that time, very few of us were actually from Igloolik Island and the two hostels were built the following year. And that's when a lot of the students, a lot of the young people were from outside camps, near Hall Beach, Manitoq, various camps. I remember that very well. The reason why we went to school, for me, was not to be educated.

The first day of school in the morning we would have hot chocolate and brown biscuits and that attracted a lot of us, and also it was very warm. Our house in the morning, regardless of whether it was cold, or blizzard, or what not, a lot of us we would wait just before 9 o'clock, before the bell rings at 8:58 – as quickly as possible get out of bed and put on clothes, my boots and pants would be frozen solid. I would force myself to put my pants and kamiit on. My toes would hit the heel of the kamik the sole or the bottom of the kamiit would be sticking up 90 degrees, and that is where it would stay and I would be running like that to the school just so I would thaw out, and that's the only reason I really wanted to go to school, to be in a warm place and eat something very unusual.

Lunch we would have macaroni, which was very very rare. The people living at the hostel had it made; they were living like kings and queens whereas we couldn't do that. That was in 1961. That was my first introduction to racism and the first time in my life I saw racism among the white people. They had authority, the most powerful people, they had everything.

Some of the hunters had to ask permission to go hunting from the Area Administrator. The Area Administrator would be telling people what to do, and if you do not take your kids to school you're not going to have this and that, and so on. So this came in and once we learned a bit of English and [were able to] understand anything to do with "Fun with Dick and Jane", we learned about math, starting to speak a bit of English. Around 1959, the first Anglican Minister came in and that's when for the first time in my life, I saw hatred amongst Inuit because of their religion. In 1961, I counted 54 Catholics and 55 Anglicans, not including the white people.

As mentioned, religious affiliation largely determined whether a child would attend residential school or not. Leah Ivvalu was born in 1950 but since her mother was Anglican, she was not sent away to Chesterfield Inlet and thus did not attend school until 1961. She was a unilingual Inuktitut speaker but had learned to read some Inuktitut from

her sister-in-law using the bible, which was a common way to learn how to read and write in these years.

When they first opened the school, I was 11 years old I didn't know how to read. I knew a little bit of my alphabet in Inuktitut because my sister in law taught me how from the bible. My sister in law taught me how to read Inuktitut because I was very interested in reading. She taught me how to read downwards rather than across with the Inuktitut alphabet.

*I had never seen an English word before in my life, and I was 11 when I first went to school. Our teacher was from England, and the first time when she spelled my name in English- wow that was wonderful to see! Theophile Kangok learned how to speak English from a priest. When we were playing football a lot – a lot - on the beach, he used to line us up [and say] “If I say, what’s your name, you tell me who you are.” [*pointing] “What’s your name?” I learned that from him. When our teacher started asking our names, I understood what she was saying – only that [*laughing]. When she first wrote my name “Leah”, written in English, it was something new to me. Wonderful!*

Since I grew up in Igloolik not out on the land like everyone else, the teachers probably thought I knew how to speak and read English, but I didn't. I was scared, the first time when the teacher asked me (when everyone else was leaving to go out for recess) these first teachers told me to be left behind. I didn't go with the rest. They said, read - Fun with Dick and Jane book. They showed me. They were asking me if I could read because they were pointing at the words, but I had no idea what they were saying.

4.3.7 *Life in the Igloolik Hostel*

While I was in Igloolik, the TRC had recently held hearings in the community, and I was conscious of the impact that the hearings had in each community, and all the different emotions that were brought up as a result of the hearings. I did not want to add to the difficulty, particularly so soon. Most of the former federal day school students I spoke with had not lived in the Igloolik hostels but rather had lived with their families while they attended school. As such, my interviews did not reveal much about life in the Igloolik hostels. What appears here is drawn mostly from archival materials, the TRC and

QTC reports, and some observations from community members who lived in the community when the hostels were in operation.

Originally a 100-bed hostel was planned for Igloolik, to serve as a regional base in the North Qikiqtaaluk; however, this never came to pass. Instead, a small hostel opened in 1962, consisting of two 8-bed buildings – one for girls and one for boys. As was common practice, two Inuit couples (one from Hall Beach area and one from Baffin Island, towards Pond Inlet) looked after the student-residents during the hostel’s lifespan from 1962 to 1969, when it closed. Hostel parents were chosen by the school principal and were given a handbook and some training about what was expected of them before the children arrived. The TRC reports that the number of students living at the Igloolik hostel rose quickly, and that it was among many small hostels in the Eastern Arctic that became overcrowded. In 1964, 27 students lived in the Igloolik hostels, and the following year the school turned students away due to lack of space at the hostels. Parents, who sometimes stayed in the hostels when they came to visit their children in the settlement were banned from visiting. (TRC Vol 2 2015: 159)

Some families who were already living in a particular settlement hosted the children of other families who were still living in outpost camps. In Igloolik, Leah Ivvalu recalls many students living in her mother’s matchbox house in the 1960s:

We used to have a lot of students staying at our house because there was no hostel. Even when the hostel was built, some kids still stayed at our house. A lot of people stayed with us because we were in the community. When people were coming in for supplies, they would stay with us....

[One student] she stayed longer than anyone else at our house. She stayed until the time I had to go to the hospital in Toronto – that was in 1966. So quite a few years she stayed with us. She got attached. She was like a

sister to me. My mother was like her mother. She didn't want to move into the hostel.

According to Ann Emmett, principal in Igloolik from 1963-1965, the hostel buildings were poorly constructed and were in terrible shape while they were in use by the school. In the fall of 1965, she reported that the hostels in were like, “slum dwellings.... The roofs had leaked badly, encrusting here and there the ceilings and some of the walls with a white, salt-like deposit.” (TRC Vol 2 2015: 152) Emmett also reported that the man of one of the married couples working at the hostel was “mentally-ill with a tendency for violence.” (155) The TRC reports that, in theory, life in the small hostels should have been more positive than in the large-hostel residential schools, like Chesterfield Inlet. In the small hostels, the children lived with Inuit hostel parents; were free to speak Inuktitut; often ate a diet that included a mixture of country foods and store-bought foods; and were free to engage in activities in the community; however the TRC reports that many former students living in the small hostels in the Eastern Arctic felt unwelcome or alien in the settlement, and recall being bullied and in some cases abused by fellow students, teachers, hostel parents, and community members. (TRC Vol 2 2015: 160-161) Even for those children whose memories do not include specific occurrences like these, all the children in the small hostels were separated from their families for long periods of time, and no doubt experienced feelings of fear, loneliness and loss on account of this separation. Despite a few years of overcrowded conditions, the number of students living in the hostel declined significantly such that in February 1969, the principal

reported that only six children were living in the hostel. The hostel closed at the end of the school year.⁸³

There is a small cohort of Iglulingmiut who began their schooling in the federal day school system in the late 1960s and then quite quickly became students of the territorial school system when responsibility for education transferred from the Government of Canada to the Government of the Northwest Territories in 1970. By virtue of their age, many of these students had older siblings who had attended residential school at Chesterfield Inlet. This meant that within families, the educational experience was very different, both for the children and for the parents as the education system evolved in the Eastern Arctic. Francis Piugattuk, born in 1963, is the youngest child in his family. Several of Francis' older siblings were taken away to residential school at Chesterfield Inlet in the 1950s and 1960s.⁸⁴ Francis' parents remained on the land as long as they could, making the difficult decision to move into Igloolik in the late summer of 1968 so that Francis then five years old, could begin his schooling at the federal day school there:

... We just came in from camp there, we had lived permanently in an outpost camp – well it wasn't an outpost camp it was our home – and then everybody else pretty much had moved into Igloolik so out of the family group that were living in the camp, my parents were one of the last to come into town. And we settled here in 1968. I was the youngest of my siblings and I was starting school. So, we came into the community. We had visited here prior – I was a child then – so I knew Igloolik but then I remember coming to live here for the first time and starting school that

⁸³ This would not be end of the hostel's life, however. Mark Evaloarjuk soon bought the buildings and converted them into a "transient centre" (i.e. temporary lodgings) for visitors to the community. The Tujurmivik Hotel remains in the family in Igloolik to this day.

⁸⁴ One of his sisters is Michelline Ammaq who I also spoke with in Igloolik in 2014 and 2015 about her memories of, and thoughts on, education and schooling.

same year, so it was ...coming to live in the community and going to school came hand in hand.

...my older siblings had been going to school. They had gone to residential school at Joseph Bernier down in Chesterfield...everybody else except for us younger ones (my youngest sister is three years my senior). We're the only ones that did not go to the Chesterfield school, but we were schooled here. Yes, I was not very particularly concerned but I think my sister had already been living in the community with our grandparents because she had to be in school [before I did]. And I think my parents just basically came in when it was my turn to go to school because I was turning 5, so I would like to say that we came to the community because there was a school here.

And what do I remember about school? If it had not been for Elisapee Awa who was a Classroom Assistant, I would have been totally lost because back then, we were basically encouraged not to speak our language so I remember trying to learn these foreign words, and symbols, these, "A, B, Cs", and here I was still going to school in my skin pants. That's how fresh I was coming in from camp, there. (F. Piugattuk, personal interview, February 27, 2014)

Although Francis points out in the above passage that he was encouraged not to speak Inuktitut at school, he also explained that the English-only rule at school seemed less drastic for him and his classmates than it had been for his older siblings who had attended residential school:

It wasn't a big thing that I wasn't allowed to speak Inuktitut in school because we spoke Inuktitut everywhere except in school. And we had local people come in and teach us syllabics. And because Inuktitut was so prevalent outside the classroom...school wasn't the only place we learned Inuktitut. Being taught syllabics was just part of the curriculum. It was just something we were doing. [We learned] syllabics at Church, too, through prayer books. So even before going to school, some of us knew how to write our names in syllabics.

So that thing about not being able to speak Inuktitut in school wasn't as drastic for us as it was for our older siblings who went to residential school; who lived in a residential school setting and [were] not able to speak their language at school or in their residential home. In that way,

they have been more affected. We, the younger generation, it was just for the day that we couldn't speak it.

4.3.8 *What the Day School Meant for Parents*

It may seem self-evident from the deep pain that parents and children felt when they were separated during the residential school years that a local school would be, without question, a preferable option. But when I asked some of today's Elders who were parents of both residential school students and day school students if they felt differently about the two schools, their responses revealed that both models brought their own challenges and difficulties. On the one hand, having a federal day school in Igloolik meant that parents could be closer and thus more connected to their children even as they were spending most of the day with their Qallunaat teachers.

On the other hand, whereas when their children were away, parents could continue living as they had before, now they were forced to calibrate their activities to the school's schedule – both daily and yearly, disrupting their economic activities considerably.

[when they were in school in Igloolik] It was bad. I'll give you spring seal hunting, for example. The spring would be here, and it would be time to go hunt seal but the children would be in school so we would have to stay here until they were out so it was hard...Maybe it was better – we were closer connected...when they went to Joseph Bernier, the only communication we had was only a phone call at Christmas. Writing letters back then was hard. There was no telephone back then. We talked over the radio. You had to say 'over'. We were not fully comprehending what was

going on when our children were being to [residential] school. (L. Uttak, personal interview, February 27, 2014)

For parents who were still living on the land, bringing their children into the school and hostel in Igloolik was not just emotionally difficult but also carried great risk as Vivi Kunuk explained:

The way it was, was that the government intimidated us. They told us that if our kids weren't in school, we wouldn't get family allowance. We were living in camps back then on Baffin Island. My husband had a small boat. He set out and paddled to bring his children here to go to school. If anything happened on the way here, we would be at the mercy of nature. That's how much we struggled to comply with what they wanted us to do... They didn't tell us what they were going to do but we would come to the community to resupply, and the government officials told us that our money would be taken away from us. So, it was going to be fall again so we had to come back here again so our children could go to school. No explanation given. [Sheena asks who told them, RCMP, HBC, Priest] It's so long ago, I forgot who was involved. But it got increasingly harder. We didn't have proper equipment to transport them, so we eventually moved here because the children had to be in school. I don't recall who told us, whether they were working together. (V. Kunuk, personal interview, March 3, 2014)

Some parents, however, remember the local school as an improvement because it meant not only that their children could live with them but also that they knew where they were each day, and with whom they were spending their time. Like many parents of this generation, Julia Amarualik was a parent of both residential school and federal day school children. I asked her whether she felt differently about the two schools, as a parent:

My older son was going to school at 6 years of age. He wasn't really able to talk yet and I was trying not to be worried because his [older] sister was going to be with him and he would have support at school, but it was only later on that [I learned] even though they were siblings they were

kept separate. That hurt to know later on because I really thought that his sister would be there to look after him. He was only 6 years old....

...[The federal day school] felt closer, because they were right here. If there were concerns about my children I could go in and talk to the teachers, or if we wanted to talk to the teachers, we could. It was better than sending them away...it felt like I was more involved with my children's education. If there were issues at the school, I could be a part of it. I could talk to my children. I felt like I was involved. Before that we didn't know what they were going through. When they were here at least we were able to participate. When they were going to Chesterfield, we would not see them for months at a time. It was like losing a child. When we were told they were coming home, it was so elating. But they kept changing every time they would come back... They were more distanced from us. (J. Amarualik, personal interview, March 5, 2014)

Meanwhile, the experiences of the former students I spoke with suggest that, even though they were able to live with their parents and attend school at the same time, their school lives were largely separate from their families' lives. They remember their parents – primarily their mothers – waking them up for school, or even sometimes walking them to school, but few have memories of discussions about what they were learning. In that way, the separation between school life and family life was not much different than for the children who attended residential school.

No, I never explained what I was learning in school. I didn't explain anything to them. Just accepted that this was for my own benefit and for their benefit as well. I didn't need to explain what I was taught in school. I don't think they asked. (A. Uttak, personal interview, May 29, 2014)

For the most part, the parents of this generation were unilingual Inuktitut speakers so communication with southern teachers would have been challenging. Fairly quickly, though, the federal day schools began to employ Inuit classroom assistants who taught the children Inuktitut. These classroom assistants also acted as liaisons between parents and teachers. (D. Qattalik 2014; Leah Ivvalu 2014; J. Amarualik 2014) Still, contact between parents and the school was infrequent. The parents of the early cohorts I spoke

with told me that they understood that their children had to be in school, so they could learn English and get jobs, but that they were mostly unaware of what their children were learning on a day-to-day basis. Susan Avinga expressed some regret about this when we spoke in June 2014:

...all these changes [in our lives] were adding up too fast and ...as parents we had just given our children to the school without [resistance] ... We just [gave] them over completely. That was probably what we should not have done. We should have tried to be part of the learning, part of the children's growing up. Up to now, the children have been run by other people, other than their parents. (S. Avinga, personal interview, June 3, 2014)

Susan Avinga's comments reflect a widely held feeling or perception of parental exclusion that has endured over time in spite of increased opportunities for parental involvement in the school, institutionalized in the 1970s in the form of local education councils. Before the introduction of formal schooling when the education of young people took place within the extended family, passing down knowledge and skills to one's children was a primary role of parents. When the schools were introduced, parents felt that their roles were usurped by the teachers – that they were forced to give their children over to be raised by the teachers, as Susan alludes to in the above passage. Many of the Elders I spoke with also talked about how they were no longer allowed to raise their children; that the government officials – teachers and social workers - were now in charge of the children.

In one conversation, I asked Vivi Kunuk whether she remembered speaking with other parents about concerns over the school or the challenges people were facing living

in the settlement. She responded that she could not recall any specific conversations but that:

The perception was that when we were living in the camp the children were mine but when we moved here, it was like I couldn't scold them anymore. Whereas before we could simply reprimand our children, after we moved here we couldn't slap them anymore because they'd be taken away from the authorities. We couldn't even scold them to keep them in line for fear of them being taken away by social services, so the kids were free to do as they please. After we moved here, we had no control over our children anymore because it was the teachers that were controlling them now. After we moved here, we were not raising our children anymore because it was the school's responsibility now.

4.4 Nunalinnguqtitauliqtilluta - When Were Actively Formed into Communities

During this period, the *raison d'être* of settlements changed from “service centres” to vehicles of “conscious social change.” (QTC 2013: 97) Between 1964 and 1969 the vast majority of Iglulingmiut moved to either Igloolik or neighbouring Hall Beach and were living either in a government supplied housing unit, or in makeshift accommodations. The speed at which the transition from seasonal camps to permanent settlements took place is notable. In 1965, 43.5% of the population of Northern Foxe Basin still lived in camps (albeit, much less widely dispersed than before). By 1969, a mere 5% remained “on the land”. (Rasing 2017: 165)

With the expanding suite of government programs together with Igloolik's growing population came the need for local administrators on a new scale. By the mid 1960s, Igloolik had an Area Administrator, a social welfare agent, a new RCMP detachment, a fully staffed federal day school, and a nursing station in addition to an HBC post, two Churches, and a local Cooperative. The Eskimo Rental Housing Program established in 1965 caused a dramatic increase in the number of houses being built. For

example, between 1962-1964 only eight houses were built in the settlement (most for Qallunaat occupation). Between 1965-1967 more than 60 units matchbox houses were constructed. Susan Avinga, a young parent at the time, remembers what it was like moving into a rental house:

I was very happy to live in houses at the time. Traditional houses were very hard to manage. You always had to work on them. Like right now [June] we would start living in tents, and it's not that warm yet. Moving into a housing unit was like a gift that was very relaxing – the most relaxing place we could be. It's warm. It's only \$2.00 a month so it was good. I was really happy. In the beginning the houses were free and then we had to pay \$2.00/month.

Any material improvements in people's lives that resulted from moving into settlements came at a high price, however. The rapid in-migration brought new pressures on Amitturmiut social life. Recall that up to this point, Amitturmiut had lived more or less peacefully in extended family groupings of 20-30 members for generations. By 1969, they were living in close quarters among increasingly large numbers of strangers, both Inuit and Qallunaat. The volume of people, coupled with the arrival of permanent Qallunaat residents, and the disruptive effects of state-intervention made for tense and confusing times. (QTC 2013: 192-193; Rasing 2017)

Susan Avinga recalls a particularly troubling experience she had in her early days in the community when residents were called to attend a public meeting with government officials about "Project Naming." Susan's memory of this meeting – still painful all these years later - illustrates the power dynamics of that period in the settlements.

We were told to go to a meeting. They were holding a public meeting. We were obedient at that time. If we were told to do something, we would do it. At the meeting, we were told we should have last names. Some of us were saying no we didn't want to have a last name because that was not our tradition... I don't know if this person who was holding the meeting was RCMP or a social worker or what he was, but he said, because he

was outnumbered, he said 'Inuit don't have anything. Close your eyes and see what you own. See if you are using your own clothing that you made.' So, I closed my eyes and all that I could see was everything that didn't belong to me – only the soles of my feet were what I had made. Even the top of my kamiit were made of material [store-bought] but the sole was made of seal – the only thing that belonged to me, to nature. I opened my eyes and without even looking around, I felt so bad I just left and didn't come back.⁸⁵

Susan's description of that meeting paints a vivid picture of the feelings of dislocation and dispossession that many people undoubtedly shared during those first years in the settlement and the looming threat of dependency on outsiders that Manuel (2017)'s definition of colonialism so clearly captures.

In this context, a leadership vacuum emerged among Inuit living in the settlement. It was no longer clear what the power structures were and what was expected of people. Paul Quassa recalls, "there was no sense of real leadership in the community because there were people from different camps that had come in...My uncle was the leader of our clan, I guess you can call it. Each family had their own leader but when we came into communities, that disappeared." (Quassa 2008: 46) This created a great deal of confusion and discomfort.

The feelings of *ilira* described above were very powerful but so too was the sense of injustice that Iglulingmiut, particularly the younger generation, felt in seeing their parents and grandparents' confidence and authority diminished. (Qitsualik 2013; Tapardjuk 2013; Quassa 2008; Arvaluk 2007) Quite quickly, Iglulingmiut of different generations began to respond to the asymmetrical power relationship they observed and experienced in the settlement between Inuit and non-Inuit by getting involved in two of

⁸⁵ Recall Scott's observations in *Seeing Like A State* (1998) regarding the imposition of surnames as part of high modernist state-led social engineering projects.

the imported institutions in the 1960s: the local settlement council and its affiliate associations, and the so-called “Eskimo Co-operative”.

The Local Settlement Council

As part of its overall plan to civilize and democratize Inuit, the Government of Canada introduced and encouraged the establishment of local advisory councils and housing associations to the increasing number of permanent settlements in the Eastern Arctic. These councils and committees were part of a political education strategy for northern Indigenous peoples, the purpose of which was to teach Inuit adults about the democratic process and to train a cohort of Inuit political leaders. (Henderson 2007; Crowe 1968; QTC 2013a) In 1965 then-Minister of Northern Affairs, Arthur Laing, appointed the Carrothers Commission (1965) to advise on political development of the Northwest Territories. Local government and citizenship featured prominently throughout the Commission’s report. As Dickerson points out, “members of that Commission saw the development of local governments in the NWT as a vital step in the political development of the region.” (Dickerson 1992: 84) Carrothers reported that local governments were “an integral part of developing a sense of citizenship in a democracy.” (qtd in Dickerson 1992: 85) The Carrothers report explains:

We consider that a continuing and intensified program for the development of local government, in which *all residents* can be offered the opportunity of a meaningful role which they can understand, is crucial to the economic, social and political development of the north. In a sparsely populated country where the population is polarized into many small communities...*decentralization of government is of first importance*. Local problems handled locally run the best chance of being solved expeditiously and appropriately. In terms of education, too, local government...has an important role to play in the north at this time...Experience in public affairs at the local level provides a means to a

greater interest in broader public issues and offices at the territorial and federal levels. (Carrothers 1966: 189-190, *emphasis added*)

Cameron (2009: 200) refers to the local settlement councils as “practice governments rather than venues for meaningful representation or self-determination.”⁸⁶ Although these community councils were primarily advisory at first, the introduction of a community development fund by the Territorial Council in the mid 1960s enhanced the decision-making capacity of these nascent local governments. (Henderson 2007: 77; Carrothers 1966: 192) This fund helped to differentiate community councils from other committees and bodies at the local level. As a result of this program, the by-then elected community councils took over increasing responsibility for “hard services”. (Dacks 1990: 106) While many Inuit political leaders in the 1970s rejected local councils as a tool for supporting the Inuit rights movement in favour of creating their own institutions (like the regional and national Inuit associations), they modeled their associations on many of the democratic principles and practices of the local governments. Certainly, as creatures of the territorial government, local settlement councils, particularly in this early period, were unlikely to be sites of self-determination on a large scale in terms of the Inuit rights movement but, as I show in the following chapter, this did not mean that could not or did not serve as avenues of for the expression of local leadership, agency, and identity.

In Igloolik, the local settlement council was established in 1962. The Area Administrator served as the settlement manager in Igloolik for the first decade of the council’s existence. In 1971, the administrator was slated to leave the community and the Council asked that he not be replaced. This was an important development because it

⁸⁶ The notion of the “readiness” of Indigenous peoples for self-government is a long-standing one in Canadian discourse. See Peter Kulchyski (2005) on this; also see Tony Penikett (2012)

meant that the community council was now free to engage directly with the other government institutions at the local level without interference by a government-appointed. (QTC 2013a: 44) The Igloolik council was recognized as a leader among its counterparts. Josiah Kadlutsiak recalls:

...I remember people being sent up here from Rankin, Baker Lake, and Arviat to see how a community was run. To observe and learn from us. Maybe we were one of the first communities to be up and running.

I think we were one of the first; even from Pond Inlet people were coming down to inquire as to how the community was running. I heard to the effect that it would be very helpful for me to move to Pond to teach them how to run a settlement council. (J. Kadlutsiak, personal interview, February 28, 2014)

Within five years of the government appointed Area Administrator leaving the community, Igloolik achieved Hamlet status in 1976. In the next chapter, I discuss the active role that the Council took in matters related to education, under the leadership of Josiah Kadlutsiak.

The Igloolik Eskimo Co-op

As Louis Tapardjuk (2013) and others have explained, Inuit made use of Co-operatives as a means through which to regain control over their own affairs in the emerging settlements. In the late 1950s, federal northern policy supported the idea of establishing cooperatives in Arctic communities as a means for Inuit to “regain their self-sufficiency.” (Mitchell 1996: 164) The Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources was prepared to provide financial (through the Eskimo Loan Fund) and some initial human resources support but the objective was for Inuit to own and manage the co-

ops themselves. Mitchell (1996) calls the opening of the George River Cooperative, a “momentous occasion in Inuit history.” (164)

Beginning in 1959, the federal government deployed civil servants to communities across the Arctic to set up cooperatives in the emerging settlements. The first Eskimo Cooperative, as they were then called, opened in George River (now Kangiqsualujjuaq) in Northern Quebec (now, Nunavik) in April of 1959. The government used the Area Economic Surveys it commissioned to help determine which cooperative model and activities to encourage in a particular region. This meant that some of the co-operatives were focused on producing and selling arts and crafts, while others were based on commercial fisheries or logging. Eventually, the co-operatives took on a wide range of activities, including but not limited to the operation of fish plants, retail stores, tourism camps, restaurants, hotels, print shops, industrialized garment production, and municipal services. (Mitchell 1996: 165-166)

Although the Arctic Co-operative movement was for all intents and purposes a federal initiative, Inuit quickly saw ways to use the co-operative model for their own purposes. Tapardjuk (2013) explains that the co-operative movement offered a way for Inuit to exercise ownership and power over their own affairs and created new leadership positions in the community that were separate from the state. John Amagoalik believes that the cooperative movement was a driving force behind Inuit political development. (Amagoalik 2005: 60). In his memoir of the Inuit rights movement and eventual creation of Nunavut, Amagoalik explains: “The co-op movement allowed Inuit to get together. It

provided a forum for people to talk to one another about what was happening in their communities. (160)

The Igloolik Eskimo Co-operative was established in 1963. It was the first non-government organization created by Iglulingmiut in the settlement. Catholic Missionaries often played a significant role in the co-operative movement in the North, and this was the case in Igloolik. Father Fournier was highly critical of government intervention in the lives of Inuit. He was deeply concerned about the potential loss of the Inuit way of life, and he saw the Co-op as a way to wrest some control in the community away from the state. The religious divide in the settlement was already well established and the two church heads – Father Fournier and Reverend Noah Nasook – were locked in a power struggle that affected all aspects of community life. All but one of the men involved in setting up the Co-op in Igloolik were members of the Catholic Church. The only Anglican on the co-op board, at first, was Mark Evaloardjuk. According to Tapardjuk, Evaloarjuk’s involvement in the Co-op helped to minimize the religious divide, somewhat. (Tapardjuk 2013)

Tapardjuk (2013) argues that co-operatives were (and are) an ideal governance and development model for Inuit because “co-operative principles are very much in tune with Inuit traditional principles: collectivism, working together, and sharing a common goal. So it was really just a matter of small adjustments to meet the modern-day requirements to function in a society that has rules to follow, such as incorporating and getting your license and so forth.” (95). He explains further that:

Cooperation is an institution of its own. Along with capitalism, there is socialism and now there is something called cooperativism, in which one adopts some of the values of capitalism. I always maintained that Inuit were the best communists in the world because they truly lived

communalism and their mentality is based on socialism. They need to cooperate with each other. (97)

In Igloolik, the co-op board provided a space for the heads of Iglulingmiut families to meet and make plans for the development of the community, outside of the decision-making structures imposed by the state. Respected Iglulingmiut leaders, such as Pacome Qulaut, Noah Piugaaattuuq and his sons, Michael Kopak, Paul Kunuk, and members of the Otak family were among the first members of the co-op, and their influence over co-op business was significant. According to Tapardjuk:

Decision-making at the Co-op in the 1960s was disorganized by Western standards; it depended very much on kinship. “Nobody would raise his arm until the clan leader raised his. If that leader was opposed to that resolution, he would make the first move by raising his arm against it, and then all of his clan would do the same. It had nothing to do with the issue; it had everything to do with the leader. (Tapardjuk 2013: 95)

The younger generation, many of whom were current or former residential school students, participated in the Co-op too, often acting as interpreters at meetings, or working for the organization.⁸⁷ The Co-op offered formal and informal training opportunities to members of the community, and it remains one of the main locally based employers in Igloolik today.

Louis Tapardjuk sees the co-ops still as the only way to regain dignity, to get control back from outsiders, and to become resourceful and self-sustaining. He laments the lost opportunities that co-ops could have brought for Inuit had their full potential been understood: “The Co-op was part of the community development process. Inuit gained so

⁸⁷ Tapardjuk specifically mentions: Nick Arnatsiaq, Michel Akittiq, and Joe Atagutaluk. Theo Ikkummaq and his elder brother Emile Immaroitok were also involved with the co-op. Emile who had had English training in southern Canada in preparation for the Hall Beach DEWline site, was called from Hall Beach to Igloolik to take a management role. Theo worked in the store.

much power because of the co-op. If only they had known what to do with it.” (Tapardjuk 2013: 107)

4.4.1 Leadership in Transition

The introduction of settlement councils, their affiliated committees, and the coops created a “public” life in the settlement of Igloolik. Having an English-language education became a significant asset for participation in this new realm. A handful of unilingual Inuit secured positions of authority (namely those with long-standing ties to the churches, the HBC, and the RCMP) in this new system but by and large it was a group of mostly men with some knowledge of English and some previous experience with Qallunaat who took up positions of power in the “semi-artificial” society created through the policies and programs of a high modernist welfare state.

This shift interrupted traditional leadership structures but did not destroy them entirely. In their reflections on this period, many Inuit of this generation describe themselves as “living in two worlds” – a phrase that is still commonplace today. The two planes I referenced earlier, each with their own desired characteristics and institutional expectations, begin to emerge in the new Inuit settlements.

Some individuals who formerly held leadership positions in their family groups suddenly found themselves in a different role in the settlement; a lifetime of knowledge and experience on the land rendered unimportant or irrelevant in a dramatically short period of time. In a presentation at the 2014 Inuit Studies conference, Louis Tapardjuk asked listeners to imagine the loss of dignity that some men experienced in this transition: “a leader, who is well-respected, goes into the community and during the course of

colonization, these leaders become dog catchers. They weren't asked or consulted."

(Tapardjuk 2014)

On the other hand, through participating in these institutions Iglulingmiut could directly engage with Qallunaat and with the state as *actors*, rather than as recipients of the various offerings of the welfare state. Josiah Kadlutsiak, who was the first chair of the Igloodik settlement council explained:

It was only when they set up these committees that was when that we could answer back to the white man. And then starting there, the community committees progressed, and eventually the hamlet council was set up, so it has progressed since. (J. Kadlutsiak, personal interview, February 28, 2014)

As Iglulingmiut were beginning to take up positions in the imported institutions, a generation of Inuit students were returning from residential school. Armed with knowledge of Qallunaat society, including "elections, government, and institutions," they also began to take on positions of responsibility in the ever-growing number local committees and boards. (Quassa 2007: 37; Tapardjuk 2013; Watt-Cloutier 2015; George Qulaut 2014) This younger generation of community leaders spoke English and, having spent much of their formative years in Qallunaat institutions were not afraid of Qallunaat as many of their parents and grandparents had been.

Many were frustrated - some traumatized - by their experiences in school, and by the injustices they saw in their communities upon their return. Zebedee Nungak, Nunavik Inuit leader and former residential school student explained that during this period the residential school generation was coming of age and they were "giving intellectual presence to something that always existed, which was 'we don't want to be governed by

people who don't know our culture, language, and our land'." (Nungak qtd in Amagoalik 2007: 155)

4.5 Conclusion

Anthropologists working in the Eastern Arctic during the early settlement period have described Inuit as “a people under tutelage”, that is, a people subject to a mixture of unsolicited protection and control by the state. (Honigmann & Honigmann 1964; Crowe 1968). Igloolik-born Inuit leader, James Arvaluk, described this period as a time when a “semi-artificial society” was created. (Arvaluk 2007: 141) These two insights are helpful in understanding what happened in Igloolik. As Arvaluk has captured so well, the high-modernist federal northern “development” policies of the pre-1970 period created “semi-artificial” societies in the new settlements peppered across the Arctic – attempts at the imitation or reproduction of small communities akin to those anywhere else in Canada, with little consideration of whether those institutions would hold any meaning for Inuit. As the number of externally imposed institutions increased, two planes of social life emerged – one still firmly connected to the way of life Inuit had known for centuries, and the other familiar and legible to the state. While some of the institutions in the public plane, such as the Co-op and the settlement council, seem to have allowed for the continued (at least partial) expression of Inuit leadership and decision-making practices, formal education was different. Inuit were deliberately excluded from decision-making about education. The Government of Canada believed it was extending the full-suite of services and institutions to people who would benefit from them but who would require training to “catch up”. As a “people under tutelage” training for Canadian citizenship for adults in the 1950s and 1960s took the form of ad-hoc home economics courses and

experiential learning through local councils and committees, as I explained in Chapter 3. For children, of course, this training took the form of residential and federal day schools, the purpose of which were to create Canadian citizens who would possess the skills and knowledge to benefit from the “improvements” provided by the state. By design, the ideas, characteristics, values, and behaviours that were deemed important by Inuit, had no place in the formal education system.

Chapter 5: Igloolik during the GNWT Years (1970-1999)

5.1 Introduction

At the territorial and national levels, the 1970s and 1980s were dominated by the political and administrative development of the Government of the Northwest Territories, and the burgeoning Indigenous rights movement. For Inuit, specifically, there was a proliferation of opportunities for political engagement and organization, which included working to develop a vision for an Inuit territory - one that would make it possible to regain control over their lives and livelihoods. Meanwhile, by the early 1970s, most Inuit families had moved into settlements. In Igloolik, Iglulingmiut were engaged in the important work of trying to make meaning out of circumstances and institutions they did not choose, or as James Arvaluk (2007) put it, they were trying to figure out “how to integrate people into a workable community.”

In his memoir, Louis Tapardjuk writes that in the 1970s:

Inuit were systematically oppressed by both the white minority and the federal government. They were treated like second-class citizens. Very few Inuit ran their own businesses or were given benefits or opportunities. The Qallunaat government and businesses were looking out for each other. At the same time, the language was deteriorating rapidly. Inuit were becoming more and more ashamed of themselves; they would rather be Qallunaaq than see themselves as having the ability to retain their language and to change things according to their culture. (Tapardjuk 2013: 123)

While the dislocating effects of state intervention in Inuit lives that Tapardjuk is highlighting cannot be ignored or minimized, nor should we ignore the important community building work that took place in the 1970s and 1980s in Igloolik. In contrast to Tapardjuk’s assessment, George Qulaut remembers the early 1980s as a time of local empowerment and innovation: Inuit held leadership positions in most of the local

organizations, Inuktitut was strong - spoken even by Qallunaat, and the community was thriving. (G. Qulaut, personal communication, May 2014) Hugh Lloyd, who worked in Igloolik as an adult educator at this time explained that, “communities [then,] were like city-states - very self-reliant and independent... [People in Igloolik] had a strong sense of their own Iglulingmiut society moving off the land into the community and despite all the problems, they were still in charge and they had a tremendous sense of initiative and a sense of power. (H. Lloyd, personal interview, November 6, 2013)

Ultimately, this period of locally driven community development was relatively short-lived. Just as Iglulingmiut were starting to see encouraging results from a decade of community-building work, they were confronted with the ever-increasing expectations and shifting priorities of an expanding territorial bureaucracy and advancements in telecommunications that made this administration by distance easier and more affordable. At the same time, the activities and demands of the Inuit rights movement meant that many of Igloolik’s emerging leaders spent months and even years away from home fighting for the rights of their families and fellow Inuit in Yellowknife, Ottawa and on the world stage.

By examining these dynamics in the context of education and community-school relations between 1970 and 1999, I argue in this chapter that the community-building work underway in Igloolik in the first half of this period offered the greatest potential for a convergence of the two societal planes that emerged as a result of colonization, and thus the potential to develop meaningful institutions at the local level. But for reasons beyond

the control of Iglulingmiut, this opportunity seems to have been lost, or at least was interrupted.

5.2 Power and Leadership Dynamics in Igloolik in the 1970s

As noted in the introduction, by 1970 most families had moved into Igloolik and were living in small pre-fabricated houses, shipped North by the Government of Canada under the federal Eskimo housing program. The settlement, like most settlements in the Eastern Arctic at this time, consisted of a government building⁸⁸, an RCMP detachment, an HBC store, a Co-op, a school, a nursing station, the Anglican and Catholic missions, and a handful of out-buildings used for storage and mechanical purposes. Residential electricity was a novelty, and while the Qallunaat residents had their ice (for water) and waste delivered and collected, most Inuit had to collect their own ice and dispose of their household waste independently, a reality that did not sit well with some: in 1972, a young Paul Quassa wrote an article in the local newspaper questioning why Inuit did not have the same rights in the community as Qallunaat, using ice delivery as the example. (Quassa 1972) Tapardjuk (2013) recalls that Father Fournier, who Tapardjuk refers to as, “more or less a dictator”, was furious with Quassa for questioning the order of things. (101)

All historical accounts of Igloolik’s early years as a settlement comment on the religious divide that emerged in the community, and the deeply entrenched power of the two church leaders, the Roman Catholic Priest Father Fournier and the Anglican Minister, Reverend Noah Nasook. (e.g. Quassa 2008; Tapardjuk 2013; Rasing 2017; QTC 2013) As I explained in Chapter 4, Father Fournier was vocal about his concerns

⁸⁸ First the Area Administrator’s office, and eventually, a Hamlet government office.

regarding the imposition of the state in Inuit lives, stressing that life in the settlement would lead to the deterioration of the Inuit society. Recall from Chapter 4 that guided by his fears about government intervention, Fournier was instrumental in setting up the Igloolik Eskimo Co-operative in the 1960s. By 1973, Fournier was so disenchanted with the settlement that he tried to establish a religious outpost community at Ikpik Bay with a small number of devout followers.⁸⁹ Fournier had, of course, played a role in sending children from the Igloolik area to residential school at Chesterfield Inlet. Even once the federal day school opened in Igloolik in 1961, Fournier actively encouraged Inuit parents to continue sending their children to Chesterfield so that they could receive a “proper Catholic education” rather than a secular one facilitated by government educators. That so many children from Catholic families continued to attend Chesterfield after the day school opened in Igloolik is, in part, a testament to how powerful Fournier was in these years.⁹⁰

For his part, Reverend Nasook was seemingly more open to working with Qallunaat and engaging with the set of outside institutions that now shaped life in the settlement. Nasook himself had taken some English training in Frobisher Bay, and his wife was among the first students to take English classes through the Igloolik adult learning centre in 1971. (Lidster 1975) Nasook’s son, Josiah Kadlutsiak became the first chair of the local settlement council in the late 1960s and, as I will describe below, was a

⁸⁹ The religious community at Ikpik Bay did not last long. Eventually Fournier’s followers returned to the community. Father Fournier also returned to Igloolik.

⁹⁰ Several people I spoke with in Igloolik in 2014 and 2015 mentioned this as well, wondering why they were sent away when there was a school in Igloolik. It remains a source of confusion and pain among many that they must reconcile their faith with the actions and activities of the church and its agents. As one person said to me, “the churches have a lot to answer for in Igloolik.”

vocal advocate for Inuit control over education. One of Nasook's other sons was Mark Evaloardjuk who worked with the Hudson's Bay Company in the 1960s, and then, in 1970 transformed the former Igloolik school hostel into a hotel.⁹¹ In 1975, Evaloardjuk began serving the first of two terms as MLA in the NWT Legislative Assembly.⁹²

The power of Igloolik's two religious leaders began to decline as the 1970s turned into the 1980s. As George Qulaut explains:

In 1970, was the introduction of young people not speaking Inuktitut fluently and not well in English. [There was] a big tug-of-war within them of being independent or helping others. Huge confusion going on. [Elder Caleb Apak] came to me because I was one of the youngest settlement councillors at the age of 18. I had another colleague she stayed on for a year, and she was the same age as I am, and she was a settlement councillor. She and I attacked the most powerful people in this community because we had been educated in Chesterfield the way it should be done.

The two most powerful were the priest and the minister. What they said was done. I didn't like the way they did things with the settlement council. I don't know which one spoke up, if it was either me or her, but we said, "this is not my Church." This is we. This is the Inuit. This is the Qallunaat, the white people. This is the community – nothing to do with the spiritual world. It's actually happening here. Don't tell us what to do we have to speak out in order to fix it. Let the Inuit councillors speak out. Let them voice themselves. You've been talking too much. It's about time you listen to your people. And that's when it started. We changed the movement of the community not only by listening to the powerful people but speaking out. (G. Qulaut, personal interview, February 26, 2014)

What George is describing in the above passage is the well-documented phenomenon of the generational shift underway during this period, in which young Inuit who went through the residential and federal day school systems returned to their

⁹¹ The Tujurmivik Hotel; Elijah Evaloardjuk, Mark Evaloardjuk's son, took over the family business in the 1990s. Sadly, Elijah passed away in February 2018. The hotel, one of Igloolik's few independent Inuit-owned businesses, remains in the family today.

⁹² Evaloardjuk served a second term from 1995 to 1999. In 1981 he was appointed to be a Member of the Order of Canada for his work in the Arctic cooperative movement.

communities speaking English, equipped with the skills and knowledge to take over positions of influence in the settlements previously held by Qallunnaat. And, most importantly, motivated by their experiences – both positive and negative – to disrupt the asymmetrical power dynamics they saw forming in their communities and in their homeland. (See for example: Quassa 2008, Arvaluk 2007, Tapardjuk 2013, Watt-Cloutier 2015 for personal accounts and Brody 1975, Rasing 2017 for scholarly analyses of this process in the North Qikiqtaaluk.)

Much has been made of these generational changes, and for good reason but it seems important to note how careful Iglulingmiut have been (and remain) to include members of different generations on local decision-making bodies, from the 1960s until present day. Undoubtedly, it was mainly young people (although not all of them former residential school students⁹³) who were actively engaged with the non-Inuit institutions that comprise the so-called “public plane” but this does not necessarily mean that they took over entirely the positions of power within the community.

5.2.1 The Residential School Students Return to Igloolik

The first cohort of Inuit who attended residential school in Chesterfield Inlet were in their teens and early 20s by the late 1960s, early 1970s. While many students did return home after they finished their schooling, a portion never returned to Igloolik, choosing instead to start a new life elsewhere, often in the western Arctic or in southern Canada. A number of these former students began and finished their schooling in

⁹³ Josiah Kadlutsiak and Lucien Ukaliannuk, for example, were in their 20s and early 30s in the late 1960s and 1970s when they became politically active in Igloolik. They were part of the generation who had young children in school.

Chesterfield Inlet before their families settled permanently in the community – Igloolik was not their home. To my knowledge there has been no systematic analysis on the proportion or characteristics of former residential school students who chose to either leave their communities or the North entirely after finishing school, but the conversations I had with people in Igloolik suggests that this was relatively common. Many Iglulingmiut have older siblings who, for all intents and purposes, never returned to live with or among their families in the settlement.⁹⁴

Those who did return were in a unique position in the community. For the most part, they were part of a generation of Iglulingmiut who had been born outside the boundaries of the emerging settlement. Immersed within their respective extended families, they had spent their early years developing the skills, values, and characteristics needed to become healthy, knowledgeable, productive members of society as generations of their ancestors had before them. Then as a result of their schooling, they had been exposed to a new set of ideas, values, and behaviours. Whether returning from Chesterfield or CVC, George Qulaut explains the role(s) that many former students took on when they returned:

We became educators to non-educated community members, especially in meetings. We became interpreters. We became Jacks-of-all-trade, physically, mentally, and spiritually as well. We learned to do things with our hands, to interpret, to write. We were the people who had actually gone through the system. If we hadn't gone through the system, I don't know where we would be, to be honest with you. Between 1970-1980 was the highlight of my life. The biggest highlight of my lifetime and the reason is because we were able to voice our own opinion and speak out. We said

⁹⁴ Hugh Lloyd also commented on a phenomenon he observed during his time in Igloolik of young educated women in the 1970s and 80s leaving Igloolik. Certainly, further research and analysis of the gendered impact of residential schooling is needed.

no to TV⁹⁵, we encouraged our Elders to say no to TV because it will change the way we think, the way we speak, and furthermore there's no Inuktitut programming...What do we want to be? What do we want?

The final reports of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) and the Qikitani Truth Commission (QTC) found that for many young people, returning to live with their families was challenging, particularly for those who were separated from a very young age and spent a decade or more away. The TRC and QTC point to language loss, changing tastes and preferences, and a general loss of cultural knowledge and skills as factors contributing to the distance that parents and children experienced after residential school. Certainly, there are community members in Igloolik who have memories of this – recall, for example, Louis Uttak's 2008 testimony to the QTC, quoted on page 108 in Chapter 4, in which he recalls great difficulty connecting with his children when they returned from school.

For some former students, their experiences were catastrophic; while for others, they were driven by their experiences – good and bad - to reclaim what they had lost and to make change in their communities. Through my conversations with former residential and federal day school students from Igloolik and elsewhere in the North Qikiqtaaluk, I have learned that many responded to their “deprogramming”⁹⁶ educational experiences in the church and state-run school system by actively engaging in activities and conversations with Elders, parents, and siblings that would help them to reclaim the

⁹⁵ Igloolik famously voted against the introduction of television to the community (twice! In 1975 and 1979) because the Elders and others in the community recognized that it would have a profound and irreversible impact on social life and language use. It was not until the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation began to generate Inuit language and cultural content in 1981 that Igloolik relented and allowed television into the community.

⁹⁶ This is the word that Sheila Watt-Cloutier uses to explain what happened to Inuit children at residential school. (Watt-Cloutier 2000: 115)

language, knowledge, and experiences they lost or missed out on while they were in school. Joe Ataguttaaluk, for example, attended residential school in Chesterfield Inlet between 1956 and 1966 from age 8. He was about 18 years old when he returned to Igloolik, having completed his entire education up to Grade 10 away from home. In 1966, he decided to take a job at the Igloolik Co-op rather than go on to Grade 11. He described what it was like to finally be home:

[When I returned] it was very different. For the first time in my life, I'm at home. Something different- not living in residence, you get to see more things. It was exciting! You get to see more people; you get to see people. Back then, we used to visit each other, visit our friends; go for tea, for coffee, whatever. Get together. In Chesterfield, we were the same ones all the time, eh – in one place.

[Being back was] Freedom. Something I tried new was to make a dog team, and I made it. Freedom! To get out. Except you had to go to work, that was it. But weekends, you're on your own!

Theo Ikummaq attended school in Chesterfield Inlet from 1962-1969, when the hostel there closed down. He continued his schooling in Igloolik for two years (up to Grade 8) but found that the material was not as challenging as it had been at Chesterfield. He remembers feeling bored, especially in math. While he had been away in Chesterfield, his parents had passed away. Theo remembers spending summers with members of his extended family and his siblings.

My parents died when I was in residential school, but my brother was here. We had an extensive family as well who took me in and brought me on the land during the summers. Like Francis, for example, his parents took me for one summer. Like his father and mother are [my] cousins – they took me in. All my cousins were doing the same. My father had taken them in, so therefore keeping up with tradition – if you look at tradition it's not just the father teaching his children, it's the uncles and aunts and everyone else contributing and I was born into that. When I didn't have parents, either Francis' family, or John Arnatsiaq, or Mike Kunuk's family took me in. They taught me and treated me like their own. To the

point where I think the fathers taught me more than they taught their [own] sons. (T. Ikummaq, personal interview, June 4, 2014)

Theo's older brother, Emile Immaroitok, took a special interest in Theo's education. At this time, some of Theo's former classmates were:

...Going off to Ottawa, Winnipeg or Montreal to further their schooling. I went to my brother and said I want to go to school too. He said, "No you're not."... He said he was going to start an outpost camp for me . So he did. For me! In order to get me back. The outpost camp life was quite different than the ones we had [before], in that he included Elders to be part of the camps. And the Elders were teaching me – one on caribous, one on seals, another one on walrus. There was one guy who dealt with shamanism right from day one – all aspects of shamanism. Why? I don't have a clue. I don't want to be one. [It was] a very rich education; way more than the average Inuk...[We] started in 1972; I would have been 17. I had my own dog team starting there. I started camping by myself at 13. I can't say that for the youngsters today.

In 1972, Emile Immaroitok established an outpost camp society, with the support of the adult education centre. For close to eight years – about the same amount of time he had spent at residential school- Theo received the land-based education he missed while he was away. With his brother's family and others, Theo lived in the outpost camp, learning how to raise and manage a dog team, how to hunt, and relearning the language he needed to develop a deep knowledge of his homeland. After completing this part of his education, Theo left Igloolik to pursue post-secondary studies in teaching, interpretation/translation, and renewable resources management, through the Arctic College.⁹⁷ During my conversation with Theo, I had asked him what he remembered

⁹⁷ Theo, like Francis Piugattuk and many others, has extensive post-secondary training in a variety of areas. One of the consequences of the Nunavut Arctic College community-learning centre model (which offers programming on a rotating basis between communities) is that people tend to take whatever courses are on offer as the programs cycle through the community. Many Inuit have at least introductory training in a variety of subject areas. Unfortunately, these skills do not always align with opportunities for employment in the community. And, importantly, they have not often aligned with the interests and passions of the students.

about the day he traveled to residential school for the first time. In his response he explains what he meant when he said that his brother set up the outpost camp to “get me back.”

Do you remember the day you traveled to school?

Oh yes, never forget that one. My mother made me all new clothing to make sure that I was warm over the winter but then if you look at the big square building we got into, that was the residence. You stepped into that residence and you're undressing as you're going in there. They're trying to make you leave the Inuk in you as you walk further into the building. They were always trying – always for the seven years I was there... They almost succeeded. They almost succeeded with me, and with a lot of them.

The reason they didn't succeed with me is because an outpost camp was created when I came back – for about 7 or 8 years – to get me back. I mean it was an effort to get at least one student back, which was me and my nephew. Two of us were taken back to camp and we had to relearn everything – including the language. We had left that behind.

The residential school was a sort of assimilation to get us away from our culture and be part of the Canadian culture back then. So, they almost succeeded. It was almost 100% success but a few of us were summoned back to camp with some of our relatives. We got our Inuk-ness back. My brother Emile Immaroitok was the one leading that.

In his memoir, Tapardjuk (2013) explains:

We [that is, my generation] were caught in the middle. That is why there are so many problems with the former residential school students, including myself. But rather than feeling sorry for myself, I decided to look into my own culture. I started researching my own culture after my Chesterfield Inlet experience. That is why I took such an interest in the Igloodik Oral History Project. I needed to learn what I had missed out on. (43)

And he was not alone. The young people who first worked with the Oral History Project in the 1980s were all part of this cohort. They had all been sent away for school and returned to the community with a strong desire to reconnect with their land, culture, and language. The Oral History Project was born out of the community-building work

underway in the 1970s that I describe below; it was, and is, an extension of this process of reclaiming these central aspects of individual and collective identity, belonging, and community membership.

For his part, Lucasi Ivvalu⁹⁸ explained that he and many of his peers returned to the community “full of piss and vinegar” – full of energy and a desire to fight against the injustices they were seeing in their communities. Ivvalu returned to Igloolik after completing Grade 10 at CVC, in order to be with his aging father. Lucasi had studied carpentry at CVC and worked as part of the crew that built the new school in Igloolik between 1968-1970. In contrast to Tapardjuk’s description of his generation being “caught in the middle”, Lucasi described himself as a “50:50 person”:

...there aren't too many people like myself, who are 50:50 people. Why do I say that? Because I went to school in the modern Qallunaat world and learned 50% of what a Qallunnaq would have taught me if I'd gone to grade 13 and more. Another 50% in Inuit, because I used to be weekend hunter. I had my own dog team at the time. I know how to do hunting, skin caribou, polar bear. You name it, I can do it. So 50 English and 50 Inuktitut; and there aren't a whole lot of us that can do that.... We can still create 50:50 Eskimos in today's world, you know...I would not have minded being 100% Eskimo, but it was not possible at my time, so I had to do the second-best thing – 50:50. And I like it. I like it. (Lucasi Ivvalu, personal interview, March 31, 2015)

When I asked Lucasi why he thought so many people from his generation became leaders, he explained:

Well Igloolik (not the actual place but the camps around here) is known [to be a place] where there are some real big leaders: Piugattaug, Uyarak, you know. They were great hunters; they were survivors. They were the people with the brains. They could look after what they had. They could survive for many many 1000s of years. Now I don't have to do that anymore. I don't have to be like my older brother. I can do what he cannot do. I can work in an office if I put my mind to it - in the Qallunaat way

⁹⁸ Sadly, Lucasi Ivvalu passed away in 2015. During his lifetime, Lucasi held a number of leadership positions in municipal politics and regional and national Inuit politics.

because I cannot do in the Inuit way here in this office, you know. I think that's why so many of us became leaders, we started...I really started to accelerate in the 1970s...I went to the very first leadership workshop they ever held in Pang in 1971. Two weeks, I took that, and never looked back. I started involving myself more and more – Baffin Regional Inuit Association, Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut...

Rather than going out hunting and trying to catch food, we started going to school and getting things done on paper – in writing...In order to make things happen, [we knew] we had to do something. Of course, at the time, ITC started talking about Inuit involvement. They were really pushing for younger folks like us out of school, fluent in English and both cultures...we had to do something because what I saw the government doing to my parents and myself was not acceptable in the long run; maybe acceptable like that for a few years but not for a life time, so I had to be responsible because I'm an Inuk, I'm a man. [I understood that I would] marry one day and have children – I have to be responsible; I have to know how. [My] age group saw the opportunity to become men without being real good hunters like our parents. We can become real good lawyers, too, good doctors, become somebody. A lot of us decided, because of lack of education, that we would enter politics...and we did. Most of us.

Lucasi's words capture the process that many educated young Inuit during this period were engaged in – the process of determining their own sense of purpose and working out the ways in which they could contribute in a changing society. They recognized the injustices that their parents were experiencing, and they saw that they could use their skills and knowledge to try to address those injustices.

5.3 Schooling and Community-School Relations in the 1970s-80s

The return of the residential school students to Igloolik coincided with the arrival of cohort of southern educators, both in the school and in the nascent adult education centre, who were committed to supporting Inuit leadership and community-focused development. Sheila Watt-Cloutier (2015: 21) describes community-school relations during this period in her home community of Kujjuaq as a “cultural exchange”, “a two-

way street”; the teachers were Anglophones, she explains, but they were very much part of the community. This seems to hold true for Igloolik as well.

In 1968, a new school building was under construction. It opened in 1970 once the territorial government took over control over education in the Eastern Arctic. While they waited for the new school to be built, students attended school in a set of small classroom size buildings, akin to the portables used in southern schools. Once it was built, the new school had the full range of facilities and features of most any public school in Canada: a full-sized gym (including a stage), kitchen, workshop, library, and a science lab. The school has been renovated to over the years to expand the number of classrooms needed to accommodate an ever-growing school-aged population. Between 1970 and 1979, the school went from eight teachers and 187 students in Grades 1-6, to 13 teachers and 290 students ranging from Kindergarten to Grade 9. Over the course of the 1980s, the school gradually began to offer higher grades, in line with GNWT policy following the Special Committee on Education’s recommendations. In 1997, after many years of struggling to accommodate K-12 schooling in one building, a new school was built in Igloolik, splitting into elementary and high school.

Bryan Robinson came to Igloolik in 1968 just before education was transferred over to the GNWT. His first years as a teacher in the settlement were as an employee of the federal government. A recent graduate from teachers’ college, Robinson was keen to teach in the North. During his first year in Igloolik, he was one of 5 teachers in the community. He taught Grade 2 to a group of 22 students spanning ages 7-17. At the time, growth in the student population meant that additional space was required beyond the original federal day school building. The new school building was not yet built so Bryan

taught his class in the old GP Hut – the same building in which George Qulaut had tasted his first Jersey Milk chocolate bar less than 10 years earlier. Robinson recalls:

It was exciting. It was fun. My kids were wonderful kids. Most of them had been born on the land, especially the older ones for sure. I had one Qallunaaq in my class – his father was DPW [Department of Public Works]. He ran the powerhouse and so on. I lived in a house that was right in front of John and Carolyn’s house. It was one of the first suspended basements built in the North.⁹⁹ It had sat on the beach waiting for shipping for a while, so it wasn’t in the best shape, but it was a beautiful house. It had Danish Modern furniture in it. It was crazy to come into a place like that and see Danish Modern, you know?

I shared a house with another teacher Keith Wilkinson. We shared for a year and then he brought his wife up- they married during the summer – and then Andrea, she came up and the 3 of us lived [there together] ... I think they stayed a year then. (B. Robinson, personal interview, July 31, 2014)

The school program in these years began at age six and involved a “beginners” class before children began Grade One, which served as an introduction to English. Jeela Allurut, who began school in 1969 remembers this as “Grade Zero.” (J. Allurut, personal interview, June 2, 2014) In Igloolik at this time, “Grade Zero” was taught by a teacher and a teaching assistant. After this preliminary year, students moved through Grades One to Six, after which they had to leave the community or take courses by distance. Soon after the transfer to territorial control, Kindergarten was introduced:

[School] didn’t start in Kindergarten, it started with “beginners’ class”. The kids started that at age 6 and the idea of that was that they would go into school and the first year would be a sort of introduction to English. English teacher – Elizabeth Awa, who you probably know – as teaching

⁹⁹ John and Carolyn MacDonald lived, worked, and raised their family in Igloolik from the mid 1980s to 2010. John MacDonald was coordinator of the Igloolik Research Centre in Igloolik, Nunavut, between 1985 and 2007, and was instrumental in the Igloolik Oral History Project. Carolyn spent her early career teaching in Arctic Quebec. In Igloolik, she worked in the schools and helped to establish the Igloolik Aboriginal Head Start program (see the end of this chapter for more information) in 1994. The MacDonalds remained in Igloolik until 2009. They lived in a house with a suspended basement - a relatively common model of two-story housing units in Northern communities in which the living space (kitchen, bedrooms, living room) are on the second floor.

assistant...But Jack Waye, the principal at the time, thought well, they are using a year, basically, so he campaigned for Kindergarten and to do away with the 6-year-old program. Up to Grade 6 and anyone who wanted to go beyond that had to go “out” to CVC or wherever they could get... or they could do distance programs but without computers, it was much more difficult. (B. Robinson, personal interview, July 31, 2014)

A couple of years after Robinson began working in Igloolik, he sought out a spot at the so-called Eskimo Language School, an eight-week language program run by Mick Mallon,¹⁰⁰ geared to non-Inuit working in the Eastern Arctic. The federal government launched an Inuktitut language program at Churchill Vocational Centre soon after, and Robinson was asked to teach in the program, along with Jose Kusugak, a young Inuk educator from Rankin Inlet.¹⁰¹

While Robinson was away, a number of important changes took place at the school in Igloolik. Recall from Chapter 3, that the report from the 1972 *Survey on Education* had made clear that parents across the NWT, especially Indigenous parents, wanted more control over their children’s education. Although the call for increased local control would not become formalized in the NWT until the 1977 *Education Ordinance*, some communities went ahead to develop their own initiatives at the local level. Igloolik was one of these communities. Then-Principal Jack Waye was a proponent of local control and parental engagement in education. He helped to set up a group of educators and parents in the community to discuss education and to make connections between the

¹⁰⁰ Mick Mallon is a linguist and one of Canada’s top scholars of Inuktitut. Mallon is married to Alexina Kublu (former Languages Commissioner of Nunavut), Francis Piugtattuk and Michelline Ammaq’s sister. Kublu is an educator and former Nunavut Languages Commissioner. To learn more about Mallon, see: <http://www.cbc.ca/radio/thesundayedition/the-sunday-edition-november-26-2017-1.4417692/how-a-rascally-irish-immigrant-became-one-of-canada-s-top-scholars-of-inuktitut-1.4417724>

¹⁰¹ Jose Kusugak, born in Repulse Bay, Nunavut was a leader in the Inuit rights movement, former ITK and NTI President, and a lifelong educator and advocate for bilingual education. The Amaujaq National Centre for Inuit Education is named after Kusugak, who passed away in 2011 at the age of 61. To learn more about Kusugak see: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/inuit-leader-jose-kusugak-dies-1.1028807>

community and the school. It was this group that made the decision to change the name of the school from Igloolik Federal Day School to Ataguttaaluk School, in honour of one of Igloolik's most prominent and well-respected historical figures. (See Appendix E for the story of Ataguttaaluk)

Waye's approach dovetailed with calls by local leaders in the community, such as Josiah Kadlutsiak and Lucien Ukaliannuk,¹⁰² for Inuit leadership in matters related to education. After a few years teaching Inuktitut in Churchill, Bryan Robinson returned to Igloolik and took over as Principal when Jack Waye moved on to Pond Inlet. By his own assessment, Robinson was inexperienced but the momentum that was already building in the community with respect to local control over education, coupled with Robinson's commitment to Inuktitut language education meant that the school looked quite different by 1975 than it did 10 years earlier. During his years at school, Robinson and a team of dedicated, newly minted Inuit educators worked to develop a local program, grounded in Inuktitut and Inuit knowledge. Robinson explained:

...that's what I focused on mainly when I was principal. There was another school doing it too unbeknownst to me at the time – Rankin Inlet. Eventually, Liz, Rene and Lazarie Otak came back and we had enough teachers' assistants that we could use more Inuktitut in the classroom, so we started developing programs to do that from K-3 eventually.

...it was difficult to get that into the school. [There was] a lot of opposition from some other teachers. Especially, an old HBC guy who became a teacher and his wife – they just thought I was wrong: “you don't teach that” – the more English the better. I didn't agree with that. There were some not very pleasant times during that period. Around the 1973-

¹⁰² Lucien Ukaliannuk was born in 1940. He worked in community politics and served as President of the Baffin Regional Inuit Association in the 1970s. Ukaliannuk's main life work was preserving and recording Inuit traditional knowledge of societal values and Inuit laws. He was involved in 1982 in ensuring aboriginal rights were enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. When Nunavut's Akitsiraq Law School program was founded, Ukaliannuk served as Elder-in-Residence. He died in 2007 at the age of 67. For more about him see: CBC 2007 <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/igloolik-elder-praised-for-preserving-inuit-justice-law-1.693572>

75ish. But it became part of the school program – that was it. As long as we could do it.

At the end of the 3 years... I decided I didn't want to be Principal anymore – [I] wanted to be working with the kids so I developed a program for ESL. People like Liz, Rene, and Lazarie, and Elisapi (Awa), they were in classrooms and I would see what they were doing in their class in the way of science, etc. and I tried to take parts of what they had taught in Inuktitut and I would try – as the English language instructor, I was called – I had a small room and I took small groups of kids into my classroom from the Inuktitut classrooms and tried to use what they had learned to develop English – and I thought it was very successful.

George Qulaut explains how his generation was able to influence the school system combining their grounding in their Inuit identity with what they learned in school, as they took on leadership roles in the community:

[It] came about [by] combining your identity to also become more independent, and it worked. That's what education had done for me. Not only me but a lot of my colleagues who had gone through that system. They're able to identify which is which. Between 1970-1980 in the school system, we wanted to change the system. We wanted them [the students] to do ulu making, storytelling, legend-telling, sled-making, igloo-building. The ladies or whoever's interested be able to make kamiks, caribou clothing, all that traditional knowledge. Have to put that in there. And we fought for it, and we did it. (G. Qulaut, personal interview, February 26, 2014)

Igloolik soon became a recognized leader in terms of cultural inclusion and language education in the region, due to the collaborative efforts of the team of educators working in the school and community.

It is clear that Robinson and many of the other educators working in Igloolik in the 1970s took seriously the principle of local control. In a 1973 thank you letter following a visit to the community, GNWT Director of Education Norm Macpherson notes that Robinson had told him that he would resign his position as Principal if the Igloolik Education Advisory Committee no longer had confidence in him. (Midnight Sun

1973) Furthermore, according to the minutes from a March 1974 Igloolik Education Committee meeting reveals that at a recent school staff meeting “each teacher agreed if it was the desire of the Education Committee that a teacher resign, that they would abide by the Committee’s suggestion. The teachers came to this agreement because they feel strongly that the community should have a say as to who the teachers of their children should be.” (Midnight Sun 1974b: n.p.) Importantly, the minutes also reveal that the Igloolik Education Committee accepted the teachers’ proposal but noted that they would “rather help teachers stay than leave.” (Midnight Sun 1974b: n.p.) This exchange indicates mutual respect and a sense of collective purpose between the school and the local education authority. It also demonstrates that the local education authority at the time was thinking about the long-term health of the school-community relationship.

This period in the mid 1970s in Igloolik was, in essence, a period of transition both in terms of pedagogy and governance. Despite the pedagogical innovations and community-oriented values held by local educators, administrators, and the local education committee, concerns around low or inconsistent attendance (especially in Spring), lack of parental engagement or understanding of the purpose of education, and a

general negative perception of the school by the larger community were still top of mind for educators, local leaders, and concerned citizens.

In March 1974, Josiah Kadlutsiak wrote an article in the *Midnight Sun* in which he highlights some of the concerns people in the community had about the school. I have reproduced the article in full here:¹⁰³

There has been a lot of discussion lately on the education in Igloolik. People talk of being dissatisfied about it. Because we are concerned about our children's education, we have to discuss this problem. We know children can't pick and choose the kind of education they want – it needs to be a solid education they get. There is rumour of the children just running around and playing at the school, if this is the case it has to be straightened out. It has to come to the attention of the parents that their children do not seem to be learning how to read and write, do mathematics, or how to speak English. These subjects seem the most important to be learned in the first years of school.

This should be discussed by the Education Committee with the parents of school-age children to find out what exact problems they have. I can say that we no longer receive reports on the progress or at even what grade our children are in whereas we used to get this information. We also were told if our kids were late or if there were any problems, now we don't hear anything on those things.

Without a doubt we know we would like our children to have a better understanding in speaking and writing the English language than we, as grown-ups, do. Not this way, not just doing what they want. Education is there to develop children's intelligence.

We will also try to help our children at home.

If the Education Committee cannot solve this problem perhaps the Community Council can. Even if I will no longer be chairman of the

¹⁰³ I have reproduced the letters in full for two reasons: first and foremost because they offer great insight into the thinking of two prominent people in the community at the time but also because access to the newspaper in which these letters were published is extremely limited. To the best of my knowledge, the only paper copies that exist are in a dusty unmarked box on top of a shelf in the library in Igloolik. I have scanned copies of a portion of the contents of that box, which I have offered to share with Igloolik research centre.

council, and if the Education Committee won't straighten this problem out, I would like to see the Community Council handle it.

Let's not say there can be no answer, no use, but try and work out a solution for this situation. (Kadlutsiak 1974b: np)

A former education committee member, Francois P. Quasa, also wrote an article in the *Midnight Sun* in March 1974 on the topic of education. He writes:

I belong to the group who don't know very much about education. I would like to say a few words in regards to education. Although I am no longer on the committee, I would like to continue help in any way that I can at the school. There have been many comments on dissatisfaction towards the school. My wife and I were on a trip to Churchill Manitoba and while we were there we saw many Eskimo children going to school. These children learned many things but nothing of the Eskimo Culture. At that time, we attended a meeting with the teachers. They (teachers) mentioned that they would like to see some Eskimo being taught.

Maybe children quit before the year is over because they would like to go to camp in the spring. This [Igloodik] isn't the only place where 'culture inclusion' is taught. There are other settlements who teach in Eskimo language. But it seems as though some of them are way behind in cultural things. It seems like they are much faster learning in English than in Eskimo. Even though they don't know too much English they shouldn't just forget about their own language. Here are some of the reasons why they should know their own culture:

There are Anglican Ministers and Catholic Priests who speak and teach about God in Eskimo. That is one of the reasons why they have to understand their own language and be able to write. Perhaps it would be good if our children spoke English part of the day, but not to forget their own language. Speaking Eskimo at school, to me, is important. It's not right to hear about God, and not understand it. The children understand the Eskimo language to a certain extent but never the whole thing. They'll never learn it all if not taught Eskimo in school.

We know that our kids speak with us in our house but then they don't know the whole vocabulary in Eskimo. Even some of the teenagers don't know or understand some of our language. We know what even some of the young people understand some of our language and when we tell them this and that they ask, "what does that mean or what's that?" We tell them this, but they don't understand what it means because they talk how they

want to talk. Even some of them when being spoken to in Eskimo answer back in English.

Myself of course I'm an old-fashioned Eskimo and I'm not very happy about this situation. People I work with speak English all the time. When they do I get shy and try to talk with them in English even though I don't understand them too well.

These kids who have their own language are hard to talk to and its hard to communicate with them. That's about all for now. Now you understand how I think and my views on this. I would like you people to think about how you want the school to be run. (Quasa 1974: np)

These two articles capture well some of the main issues that people in Igloolik were discussing at this time, namely the question of how much English and how much Inuktitut should be taught in the school, the related question of what the purpose of education is in society, and the roles of the parents and the teachers, respectively in determining what happens in the education system. Kadlutsiak's piece also raises the important issue around communication between the school and parents. These are all questions and concerns that persist today. In particular, I wish to draw attention to Kadlutsiak's closing statements in which he emphasizes the role of parents and the community leadership to address these problems in/with the school. Implicit in his comments are the sense of power and ownership over the community and the institutions operating there that Hugh Lloyd would later observe when he arrived in the community a few years later. Kadlutsiak's confidence and strong sense of the community's agency in dealing with community matters seems to contrast with the observation by some that Inuit by this time had internalized feelings of inferiority. (Curley 1976; Taparjuk 2013; Rasing 2017)

Bryan Robinson published a response to Kadlutsiak's article in the *Midnight Sun*, in which he tries to explain what the school is trying to do, and what they see as the

purpose of education. Like Kadlutsiak and Quasa, Robinson also points to the importance of family and community involvement in education, and he describes an educational experience that both responds and contributes to community life:

What should children learn and how do they learn best? These are two very important questions we at the school are always trying to find better answers for. We believe, of course, that each child should have the opportunity to acquire the basic skills – reading, writing, and arithmetic. We also believe that they should learn to read and write in their own language before learning another, as was explained in the last paper (March 22).

But learning to read and write and do arithmetic is not all a child should learn at school. Here is a list of other things we believe to be important:

1. responsibility to oneself, family and community
2. the ability to make sound decisions
3. respect for other people
4. respect for one's culture

In a community such as Igloolik, which is changing so fast and there is the possibility for loss of cultural identity and self-respect, the above four points are as important as reading, writing, and arithmetic, if not more so.

We have been told by the Education Committee, and we believe in what they said, that children who are frightened do not learn and that a child can't be forced to learn. What we are trying to do at the school is to make it a place that is friendly and happy for children and also a place that will encourage a child to learn.

However, the school cannot do it alone. The home must also be a friendly and happy place for children and encourage him in his learning endeavors [sic]. A home that is full of sadness, like a school that is frightening and oppressive, will interfere with a child's natural desire to learn. (Robinson 1974: np)

That this open discussion between the Principal and the Chair of the community Council is made publicly available through the local newspaper is no small thing, and I think, speaks to the understanding both of these men in positions of power had about the importance of this particular issue, and the value of bringing community members into

discussions and debates about their own community. This scenario contrasts sharply with the lack of interaction between the school and the Hamlet government on education matters in contemporary (i.e. post 1999) Igloolik.

Moreover, that attendance, parental involvement, language, and a lack of trust in the school were among main education-related problems in the 1970s is not surprising given the experiences of most Iglulingmiut with the education system to this point coupled with the fact that most people were still finding their feet in the community, and that most families were still actively engaged in harvesting and land-based activities, which often meant long stretches away from the community, particularly in the spring. What is most important to understand here is that the difficult work of sorting out *how* to make the school system meaningful – whatever that meant *in and for* Igloolik, was top of mind among community leaders who were working to connect and integrate the development of the school with the larger community building process underway at the time. The fruit of this early labour on the part of community leaders and Elders, as well as leaders in the education system began to show itself in the early 1980s and through the 1990s, both in Igloolik and at the regional level.

5.4 The Role of Adult Education in Community-Building

Adult education played a critical role in the community-building process of the 1970s and early 1980s. In 1975, Echo Lidster (then NWT Supervisor of Adult Education) published a report on “community adult education” in the NWT that explains the vision for and purpose of adult education in the territory at the time and provides an overview of initiatives undertaken in communities across the NWT. The report lists the objectives of the Department of Education’s Continuing and Special Education division, the first of

which is “to develop programs which will meet the needs *expressed by citizens of the community.*” (Lidster 1975: 5 *emphasis added*) The objectives also highlight the importance of community responsibility for the program, and the role of adult educators in assisting inter- and intra-departmental coordination and cooperation. It is clear from the report that Lidster, if not other territorial officials, had a broad definition of what constituted community adult education, and that in addition to helping students “obtain information, gain experience, develop skills, and participate in decision-making processes on matters affecting their lives”, any activities undertaken under the banner of community adult education should help individuals and communities “identify values in Inuit and southern Canadian culture that are compatible and worth retaining.” (Lidster 1975: 1-2) In other words, community adult education, and the role it played in establishing intermediary social institutions in the community, served as a way to help adults infuse their own ideas and responses to the changes they were experiencing, and to find meaning in the set of imposed institutions that shaped their lives in the settlement.

Recall from Chapter 3 the GNWT contracted Frontier College to develop and implement adult education programming in some NWT communities, including several in the North Qikiqtaaluk. Typically, Frontier College adult educators were young, progressive, and community development-minded. Many had worked in international development before going North, and had experience working in cross-cultural contexts. Between 1971 and 1978 (when the GNWT cancelled its arrangement with Frontier College), seven adult educators worked in Igloolik: Fred and Donna Hunt (1971-72); Mike and Ellie Denker (1972-75); Peter and Barbara Hoffman (1976); and Hugh Lloyd

(1977).¹⁰⁴ Although most did not stay in the community for longer than a few years, they shared a common sense of their role and purpose in the community and thus each was able to build on the work of the previous educators. Coupled with strong collaborations with Iglulingmiut leads of different generations, the activities and initiatives undertaken under the banner of “adult education” contributed significantly to the sense of local empowerment that George explained had emerged by the early 1980s.

Prior to Fred and Donna Hunt’s arrival in early 1971, the school principal, Jack Waye solicited input from community members about what programs they wanted. Most of the older people said they wanted to learn oral English so that they could better communicate with Qallunaat and not have to rely on their children to communicate. (Lidster 1975: 22) When the Hunts arrived, they hired Joe Krimmerdjuar and Simon Awa to teach English in the evenings and the Hunts taught Basic Training and Skills Development classes during the day.¹⁰⁵ Courses were offered in the old G.P. Hut, which students helped to renovate to make it workable for classes. Participation in the courses offered through adult learning centre was high that first year: 35 students (aged 21-58) attended the five times weekly English classes while 25 students (aged 16-28) attended the daytime employment training courses. Short courses were also taught on money management, civics, income tax, unemployment insurance, and public health. Reverend Nasook taught Inuktitut classes out of the Centre as well. The Centre quickly became an important community space. A community library was set up, as well as a community

¹⁰⁴ Hugh Lloyd came to Igloolik as an employee of Frontier College but soon transitioned into a role with the GNWT when the territorial government cancelled the Frontier College contract. The events around this change are explained in this chapter. Lloyd remained as an adult educator in Igloolik until 1987.

¹⁰⁵ Jack Waye, Fred and Donna Hunt, Simon Awa, and Simon Awa would all go on to work together in Pond Inlet. They continued their integrated approach to education and community development there.

newsletter. The nightly English classes, attended mainly by older people in the community, became a social activity as well as an educational one. Unlike most of the other non-residential buildings in the community at the time, the Adult Learning Centre was a place for everyone.

Even though there was obvious support for the Centre and its staff in Igloolik, it was not clear whether the Frontier College contract would be renewed after the first year. This prompted Iglulingmiut to write a letter to NWT MP Bud Orange expressing their support for the Hunts and their desire to see the adult learning centre continue its work. (Orange 1971) Their call was answered, and funding was renewed. According to Lidster's report, NWT Commissioner Stuart Hodgson traveled to Igloolik in late November 1971 to find students with "Igloolik Adult Education Centre" crests sewn on their parkas. (Lidster 1975: 22) Hodgson reassured the adult education students in Igloolik that the centre would remain open.

At the end of 1972, the Hunts moved on to Pond Inlet and were replaced by Mike and Ellie Denker who had previously worked for Frontier College for several years in Frobisher Bay. The reputation of Frontier College was already strong in Igloolik, and with several initiatives already underway, the Denkers were able to continue the Centre's work without much interruption. The Denkers summarized how they saw their role in the community in this way:

Seeing the needs of a community, and having a community articulate a need are two very different things. Presenting a solution to a need, in effect, deprives the community of the real need to exercise its ability to find its own responses.

We like the model of animator in Igloolik, to be a resource, to stimulate thought and imagination by the introduction of new ideas and processes,

and to encourage the communication of factual information: our role is not one that be hung up at night like a parka. (Denkers qtd in Lidster 1974: 26)

Together, the Hunts and the Denkers supported community members to establish or grow a significant number of local organizations and societies, including the Inummarit Association (the society that would go on to create the Oral History Project) and Igloodik Cultural Centre, the local library, the Igloodik Hunters and Trappers Organization, Emile Immaroitok's outpost camp society, a radio society, and a community newspaper called *The Midnight Sun*. *The Midnight Sun* was particularly influential for community-building: in his autobiography, Paul Quassa wrote, "That's when we became active in our community, when people started attending Frontier College. We started to write newsletters to communicate with the community." (Quassa 2008: 37) By 1978, there were no less than 18 community organizations operating in Igloodik. (*Inuit Today* Vol 5. Issue 7 1978) Although I was not able to recover a comprehensive list of the 18, Table 5 provides a list of the government and community organizations established in Igloodik between 1960 and 1999. It is interesting to note the shift that takes place between the 1960s and 1970s from almost exclusively outside

institutions coming in during the 1960s, to primarily locally driven or locally focused organizations emerging through the 1970s and early 1980s.

Table 5. Government and Community Institutions and Organizations Established between 1960 and 1999

Year	Government or Community Organization
1960	Igloolik Federal Day School
1961	Federal Housing Program begins
1963	Igloolik Eskimo Co-operative
	Nursing Station opens
1964	RCMP Detachment
1968	Ataguttaaluk School built (opened in 1970)
1971	Adult Education Centre (Frontier College/GNWT)
	Tujurmivik Hotel
1972	Inummariit Society Igloolik Cultural Centre
	Midnight Sun (community newspaper)
1973	Hunters and Trappers Organization
	Igloolik Alcohol Education Committee
1974	Igloolik Scientific Research Laboratory
	Igloolik Radio Society
1975	Arnait Katujjiqatigiit (Igloolik sewing centre) Hamlet of Igloolik
1977	Health Centre built
1986	Igloolik Oral History Project
1990	Isuma Productions Incorporated
1995	Igloolik Early Intervention Project (now Illiniariuqsarvik Igloolik Head Start)
1997	Ataguttaaluk High School built
1998	ArtCirq

The adult educators were also involved in supporting the budding local education authorities and helped to support the efforts of Iglulingmiut as Igloolik went through the incorporation process to become a Hamlet. Connections between the different elements of the local state began to develop organically through the 1970s, particularly between

the school and the adult education centre, and by extension to the local bodies supported by the Centre. These intra-community connections between and among local organizations emphasized the role of local leaders and fostered a sense of collective agency and purpose. For George Qulaut, a particularly memorable event in Igloolik exemplifies the atmosphere in Igloolik at this time:

...[In the late 1970s] we asked every single civil servant to take a course in Inuktitut so they would understand not us but the environment, the animals away from the community. So we had teachers who were actually speaking Inuktitut, and we had RCMP trying hard to speak Inuktitut, even the nurses took special courses. That was the highlight; that was the best moment we ever had. I remember very clearly in 1978¹⁰⁶, when ITC (ITC then) – and the President was Jose Kusugak – and John Amagoalik came in, and also, I think it was Jack Anawak also came in ...they were shocked to see at this public meeting at the gym, everyone spoke Inuktitut, even the white people spoke Inuktitut. They were shocked. There was no English spoken at all, and that's the first time they had seen a public meeting with no English at all. It was a big eye opener for them. That is Nunavut. Nunavut should be like that, and through the education system we have learned a lot about that; and how best to mingle them together.

5.5 Education divided: Igloolik in the 1980s and 1990s

The 1980s were an important decade for education in the NWT. The work of the Special Committee on Education confirmed that the citizens of the GNWT had serious concerns about the education system, particularly around the issues of local control and the place of Indigenous languages and culture in the system. As I noted at the outset of this chapter, the community-building process that characterized the 1970s and early 1980s was interrupted by a maturing territorial bureaucracy. On the one hand, this process helped to create the conditions for the now-celebrated regional boards of

¹⁰⁶ I think this may have actually been in 1979 when ITC came to Igloolik for what would become a pivotal moment in the Inuit rights movement. It was at this 1979 meeting that ITC's declaration of vision for an Inuit territory was composed.

education that institutionalized the principle of local control and empowered Inuit decision-making in education; while on the other hand, it re-oriented adult education away from a way to engage adults in community development toward promoting English literacy and labour force attachment.

In 1981 the Special Committee on Education (SCOE) travelled to all 43 communities in the Northwest Territories. In October of that year, three Committee members (Tagak Curley, Dennis Patterson, and Bruce McLaughlin) and three staff (Jack Loughton, Jack Deines, and Ron Neufeld) held a public meeting in Igloolik. According to the SCOE's public hearings report, 70 people attended the meeting, including representatives from the local education society, teaching staff and adult education. The main issues raised by community members during these hearings in Igloolik included:

- Disappointment with the content of the 1977 Education Ordinance and the process through which it was created, which seemed to exclude Inuit.
- The need for larger school facilities to accommodate a growing student population.
- The need for a northern curriculum, including an Inuktitut curriculum.
- Grade extensions in smaller communities to reduce number of drop-outs.
- Proper and equitable recognition of Inuit instructors.
- Greater training opportunities for Inuit educators, including community-based teacher training programs.
- Consistent budget cuts to Adult Education problematic given the need for continuing education. (NWT Legislative Assembly 1981b: 382-385)

The school staff also submitted a brief to the SCOE which comments on the overall direction of education in the territory, the school program and teacher training. In the brief they call for:

...a reaffirmation of Inuktitut as the language of instruction, not only in the first three years but where the community desires it, to a much higher level...Schools should be a place where the community can learn about its cultures, learn about others. Within this, schools should develop strong cultural programs with more effort put into helping teachers teach.

Through this, adopting traditional methods of teaching to the school. The school should build a feeling of respect for the community, family, and self. This must be one of the goals of Education. (NWT Legislative Assembly 1981b: 387)

This demonstrates that the school staff (Inuit and non) felt accountable to the community first and the GNWT second; and that there was a strong sense of community-building and trying to prepare students to cultivate a meaningful life in communities.

McGregor (2010) concludes that “the most significant outcome of *Learning, Tradition and Change* was that local involvement in, and responsibility for, education came to be enshrined as the basis of the future school system.” (119) In their final report, the Special Committee explained that:

[We believe] that the agreement between the people of the community and the school system regarding the aims and objectives of education is the crucial variable in the ‘success’ of the school in the NWT. Where this agreement exists, the school will be able to provide students with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Also, parental support encourages both student participation and teacher initiative. (NWT Legislative Assembly 1982: 10)

The Special Committee recommended that the administrative structure of the education system in the NWT be changed to accommodate regional differences across its vast geographic space. In response to the recommendations in the SCOE’s final report, *Learning: Tradition and Change*, the GNWT introduced a new governance structure to support an education system that was based on the principle of local control. Under the new legislation, the 1983 Ordinance to Amend the Education Ordinance, the local education societies of the 1970s became District Education Authorities (DEAs), and provisions were made for 10 divisional boards of education across the territories. In the

context of the multi-cultural NWT, a regional governance model made good sense, and reflected what was already happening in Indigenous politics across the NWT.¹⁰⁷

5.5.1 Igloolik and the Baffin Divisional Board of Education

Recall from Chapter 3 that the Baffin Divisional Board of Education (BDBE) was established in 1985. The BDBE was the first divisional board created outside of Yellowknife. The 15-member board had one representative from each Baffin community, a chairperson, and an executive committee that met six times per year. John Illupalik (Igloolik) and Joe Enook (Pond Inlet) were the first Chairs and were instrumental in creating the vision and culture of the Board. Joe Ataguttaaluk (Igloolik), who had been a keen supporter of Inuit cultural and linguistic continuity through his work with the Igloolik Inummariit Society, was also heavily involved in the work of the Board, becoming Chair in 1993.¹⁰⁸ Liz Apak (now Fowler) worked at the school in Igloolik, and then went on to work at the BDBE Centre for Teaching and Learning Inuktitut language materials in the 1980s and 1990s.¹⁰⁹

The leadership of Iglulingmiut in education at the regional level both reflected and contributed to the excellent work taking place in Igloolik's school with respect to bilingual education through the 1980s and early 1990s. Igloolik was recognized as an example of how to implement bilingual education. The vision for education that

¹⁰⁷ For example, Inuit in the Baffin region had already formed the Baffin Regional Council (BRC) and the Baffin Regional Education Committee (BREC) in the 1970s. BBRC was made up of representatives from each of the Baffin settlement councils, and BREC was a sub-committee set up by BRC to focus specifically on education matters. See Chapter 3 for more information.

¹⁰⁸ John Illupalik was the first Chair of the BDBE. Unfortunately, it was not possible to interview John during my trips to Igloolik.

¹⁰⁹ Liz Fowler would go on to become a co-lead in developing the joint NWT-NU residential schools curriculum. You can read more about this curriculum in Northern Public Affairs' 2014 special issue on Inuit education.

Ataguttaaluk staff, the Igloolik local education authority, and the community leadership had been imaging and working towards since the early 1970s seemed to be coming to life, supported by the independent BDBE and its staff. This was empowering, and it drove the development of more curriculum materials and fostered a sense of collective purpose around education. This work was made possible, in part, by the governance model entrenched by the 1982 *Ordinance to Amend the Education Ordinance*, which decentralized decision-making and centralized administration. Quite simply, smart, passionate people saw that they could make a meaningful difference working with the BDBE. The BDBE attracted people whose intellectual energy was focused on connecting education to the bigger issues of the day around Inuit rights. This would change, as I explained in Chapter 3, when Nunavut was created.

5.5.2 *Changes to Adult Education in the 1980s*

Hugh Lloyd came to Igloolik in 1977 to replace the Hoffmans, who had ended their contract with Frontier College one year early. Northern communications being what they were in the late 1970s, Lloyd's arrival in Igloolik was a surprise. Although it was purely coincidental, the GNWT had the opportunity to use the broken Frontier College contract to make the adult educators position a Department of Education one instead. Before his arrival in Igloolik, Lloyd had spent the previous two years working on the development of an Inuit Management Training Program – an initiative between ITC and Frontier College to train Inuit to take on leadership positions within the growing number of organizations in the Eastern Arctic in both government and non-government sectors. Together with his co-contractor Mark Stiles, Lloyd traveled extensively throughout the Eastern Arctic, speaking with residents about the training needs and priorities of the

people and organizations in the communities. This experience gave Lloyd a deep understanding of what was happening in each of the communities with respect to adult education, training, and community development, and he brought this knowledge with him to Igloolik.

One of the first things Lloyd remembers about his time in Igloolik is attending a meeting with community members about the potential impacts of a change from Frontier College to the GNWT:

People in Igloolik were connected to Frontier, not the GNWT with all the benefits they were seeing. Right from the beginning they [Frontier College educators] saw their role not as limited to teaching literacy and numeracy; they integrated well with members of the community, got after hours things going. People had a vision of the adult education centre being much more than English and Math. That, for me, was a very important indicator of what to continue doing [when I arrived] ... You became a logical centre for any kind of question for coping with this new world. [The people in the community knew] that a GNWT change would remove a lot of that stuff and they would lose control.

A lot of the 1970s bureaucrats didn't think Inuit were very smart or capable. Community educators thought the opposite. A neo-colonial mindset grew up in the bureaucracy. It's taken all sorts of things to overcome that and in some cases it hasn't been overcome...The government in the late '70s, early '80s was trying to get full home management training and literacy skills into the adult population. I think they were genuinely trying to improve citizenship, people's ability to live in communities. (H. Lloyd, personal interview, November 6, 2013)

In the end, the GNWT did take control over the adult educator program in Igloolik. Lloyd chose to remain in Igloolik as an employee of the GNWT – a position he held for eight years. During these years, Lloyd, his colleagues, and his students lived

through the transition I described above – the shift from community development to a more standardized system of adult education with a labour market focus.

In the early days of Lloyd’s time as adult educator, resources were still scarce – there was territorial money for staff positions, and a small budget for materials but not for travel or professional development. The adult education centre and the school shared resources, and on occasion, Lloyd remembers using the fax machines at the federal science lab and the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation office when it opened.

Communication with regional and departmental offices was still rare – long-distance phone calls were not in the budget, so “they basically left us alone.” (H. Lloyd, personal interview, November 6, 2013) Soon, though, former Frontier College adult educator, Mark Cleveland became regional supervisor of adult education, and he began to create a bureaucracy around adult education, including annual visits to the adult learning centres, regular evaluations, yearly conferences for educators, and some professional development activities, including language training.

Cleveland’s efforts brought increased territorial funding and resources for adult education and training, which were welcomed but these changes were also met with resistance by some of the adult educators in the region, many of whom had a history with Frontier College, too. In October 1977, a meeting was held in Arctic Bay, at which an association of adult educators was created. The group held regular conference calls among adult educators in the Baffin, and members of the association would go on to make a formal submission to the Special Committee on Education about the importance of community-focused adult education, called *Beyond Survival*. (H. Lloyd, personal interview, November 6, 2013) This process of institutionalizing/bureaucratizing also

meant that now there were greater expectations in terms of reporting and communicating with headquarters. The connections between representatives from the various elements of the local state that had developed over the previous decade, and which had contributed to a collective sense of purpose in the community were overshadowed as administrative processes and requirements between departmental/regional headquarters and local agents took priority. In short, the needs of the expanding bureaucracy took priority over the particular goals and needs communities and citizens at the local level.

In their role as animators, through the 1970s and early 1980s community adult educators had been linked to the local education councils and helped to support their work. However, in the remodeling of education governance that took place following the Special Committee's work, Adult Education was not placed under the jurisdiction of the regional boards, but rather went to the new Arctic College. These two elements – adult and K-12 education - of the system were separated. This was controversial in no small part because it meant that the adult educators were no longer supporting the local education authorities.¹¹⁰ The loss of adult educator support coupled with the altered status of local education authorities under the regional model reinforced the loss of power held by communities by the mid-1980s.

5.5.3 Ataguttaaluk School in the 1990s

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the grade offerings in Igloolik were extended until students could complete all their schooling in the community. The existing Ataguttaaluk School, which had been built in the early 1970 for a much smaller

¹¹⁰ I would like to thank Cathy McGregor for sharing her knowledge of this period with me.

population, was too small to accommodate Grades K-12. Plans for a new school building were made. The original intent was for the new building to become an elementary school but it was slated to be built on the outer perimeter of town, a fair distance from most of the houses at that time. As construction got underway, concerns were raised in the community about young children having to walk that far to school, especially during the darker winter months.¹¹¹ Since the new school was intended to be an elementary school, it does not have a workshop, a science lab, or space for the kind of resource centre or library that you might expect to find in a high school. Once the new school opened in 1997, the K-7 students remained in the original school, and the Grades 8-12 classes moved over to the new building instead. It was a considerable compromise. In practice, it has meant that the teachers and students in the high school have had to make-do with a building and facilities that were not designed for the purpose they now serve.

I only spoke with a small number of Iglulingmiut who attended school in Igloolik in the 1990's but two themes emerged in these discussions. First, whereas the experiences of students who attended school in previous decades seemed to be shaped more by the separation from their parents and the stark difference between home life and school life, the younger generations' memories seem to be more focused on the peer-to-peer social experience of school, particularly bullying and peer pressure, both of which, I was told, contributed to school-leaving. Frank Tapardjuk, the son of two former residential school

¹¹¹ Keep in mind that nearly everyone goes home from work or school over the lunch hour in Igloolik everyday. The new school (now the High School)'s location would have made it difficult for very young children to make it home and back within one hour.

students who was working as an adult educator in Igloolik at the time of our conversation told me:

Originally, I didn't like school a lot. Too many people and a lot of bullies around and trying to be favourites, a top student, or trying to see who would be struggling and start picking on them and – typical children behaviour. I was bullied on, I was a bully too, and, yeah, that's what I remember about school...The school and the subject matter was okay for me. It was the social part that was more of a problem. (F. Tapardjuk, personal interview, May 23, 2014).

The second theme also centred around social issues in the community, and the impacts that overcrowding, food security, high rates of teenage pregnancies, and family troubles were beginning to have on attendance and graduation rates. In theory, the availability of K-12 in the smaller communities should have increased the number of students attending upper high school years and graduating but it does not seem to have had that effect. (see for example: Government of the Northwest Territories 1992a; 1992b)¹¹² Peter Ivalu, former DEA member and former mayor of Igloolik, was among the first students who could attend high school in the community, but he told me:

There was just no drive. Every other older student had dropped out. Some of them even had jobs. School wasn't all that attractive to go to because no one was graduating. Everyone was dropping out. It was the thing to do... (P. Ivalu, personal interview, May 30, 2014)

Peter recalls that his parents, neither of whom attended residential school, were marginally supportive of his education:

My mum, I guess she wanted me to go school. She'd wake me up almost every morning – “time for school”. But it wasn't like I ever discussed graduation or completing my school with them – they

¹¹² In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the GNWT was concerned about the number of “early school leavers”. It surveyed nearly 200 youth to try to determine the causes and risk factors associated with early school leaving.

didn't know. They never went to school, so I don't think they really had a sense of what school gets us.

Ivalu eventually finished high school and went on to take the TFN training program (now Nunavut Sivuniksavut), and briefly attended Trent University. Although he enjoyed his time at NS in Ottawa, he remembers that his return to his family in Igloolik was difficult:

My old man really hated it. He accused me of becoming a white man. He wanted me to learn the traditional ways – hunt walrus and prepare it traditionally. He was a hunter. Trapped a lot of stuff. He wanted me to learn all those things.

But I went the way of the education system and lost out – on both ends. I didn't get the education I wanted; lost out learning the traditional customs and practices. So, going down this no man's land road. I'm not learning anything in this new way of life and I have no idea what the old way of life was...

Like many of his generation, Peter took advantage of the suite of programs offered through the Arctic College in the lead up to the creation of Nunavut in 1999. Peter took a management studies program that led to a decade of work with the Government of Nunavut in Iqaluit.

5.5.4 Community-building in the 1990s

While Inuit were fighting constitutional battles in Ottawa through their land claims negotiations with the federal government, Iglulingmiut were engaged in a number of significant locally developed projects, all of which were motivated in part by a desire to document, preserve, and nurture Iglulingmiut language, culture, and knowledge for future generations. These Igloolik-based initiatives complemented the progressive work of regional institutions, like the Baffin Divisional Board of Education, which remained

active despite uncertainty around how education governance might change under the new Government of Nunavut when it came into being in 1999.

The locally developed initiatives established in the late 1980s and 1990s included: the Igloolik Oral History Project (1986), Isuma Productions Incorporated (1990), Nunavut Independent Television (1991), Igloolik Head Start (1995). Each of these innovative initiatives was created in response to challenges or opportunities Iglulingmiut observed in their community. Like the projects and organizations supported by the adult education centre in the 1970s, these intermediary institutions have created opportunities for the expression of local ideas and local identity; and, importantly, they have cultivated a sense of individual and collective purpose in the community as sources of inter- or multi-generational collaboration, linguistic and cultural continuity, and Iglulingmiut-defined education and training.

Recall from Chapter 2 that the Igloolik Oral History Project (OHP) was founded in 1986 by the Inumariit Society to document as much accumulated local knowledge as possible through a series of oral history interviews with Igloolik Elders. Over 25 years, 600 interviews were recorded with community Elders. The staff of the Igloolik Research Centre (IRC)—then a federal agency, and later an arm of Nunavut Arctic College—coordinated the project on behalf of the Elders. IRC staff assisted with fundraising and financial management; they conducted, transcribed, and translated interviews along with the Elders and visiting researchers whose interviews have been included in the Project over the years. Staff also provided organization and archiving services to ensure that the collection of interviews would be easily accessible to community members, educators, researchers, and others who were interested in learning from the Elders. Knowledge from

the OHP has been used in the local schools and is regularly shared on the community radio.

I have argued elsewhere, that the OHP is an extension of the reclaiming process undertaken by many former residential school students on their return to the community. Between 1986 and the late 1990s, the OHP employed a small corps of Igloolik residents, most of whom were residential school students who have gone on to become well-known leaders in Nunavut.¹¹³ (Kennedy Dalseg 2018) Recall Louis Tapardjuk's reflections on this role in the OHP, quoted earlier in this chapter:

We [that is, my generation] were caught in the middle...But rather than feeling sorry for myself, I decided to look into my own culture. I started researching my own culture after my Chesterfield Inlet experience. That is why I took such an interest in the Igloolik Oral History Project. I needed to learn what I had missed out on. (Tapardjuk 2013: 43)

Just a few years after the OHP was founded, now-world-renowned filmmaker Zacharias Kunuk and his partners Norm Cohn, Paul Apak Angilirq, and Paul Qulitalik founded Igloolik Isuma Productions, Inc. (Isuma) in 1990. Canada's first Inuit independent production company, Isuma (which means, "to think" in Inuktitut) was dedicated "to produce independent community-based media – films, TV and now Internet - to preserve and enhance Inuit culture and language; to create jobs and economic development in Igloolik and Nunavut; and to tell authentic Inuit stories to Inuit and non-Inuit audiences worldwide." (Isuma 2009) Over the years, Isuma has provided employment to dozens of Iglulingmiut, and has contributed both financially, and in-kind, to other artistic and community ventures in Igloolik and in the North. (Isuma, n.d.)

A year later in 1991 Kunuk and his partners founded Nunavut Independent

Television Network (formerly called Tarriaksuk Video Centre). Also based in Igloolik, NITV was Canada's first artist-run media centre located in a remote Inuit community. Its mandate is to encourage and support the creation of artistic, community-based media productions that serve the objectives of self-representation and cultural/linguistic preservation by adapting Inuit oral traditions to modern media technologies. Among its many projects, in the early 2000s, NITV produced a “local news and culture” television show in Igloolik called *Nunatinni (At Our Place)*. *Nunatinni* provided a forum for Iglulingmiut to discuss matters of local and territorial concern. Like the *Midnight Sun*, these historical and current affairs programs were instrumental in cultivating a locally-defined sense of public life in the community. They offered Iglulingmiut space to express their ideas and their identity. Many years later in 2012, long after the TV series ended, NITV’s co-founders along with a handful of collaborators created a radio series called *Nipivut Nunatinni* (meaning, *Our Voice at Home*). The radio series was one facet of a larger project called Digital Indigenous Democracy, which responded to community concerns that the environmental review of the \$6 billion Baffinland iron mine did not allow for sufficient and effective Inuit participation in development decision-making. DID was a multi-layered initiative that combined so-called “modern” technology (the internet, community radio, local TV and social media) to amplify Inuit traditional decision-making skills. It was premised on centuries of experience through which Inuit learned that deciding together, called *angjqtigiingniq* [ahng-ee-kha-te-GING-nik] in Inuktitut – a complex set of diplomatic skills for respectful listening to differing opinions until arriving at one unified decision everyone can support – was the smartest, safest way to go forward in a dangerous environment. (Cohn & Kunuk 2012; Abele & Kennedy

Dalseg 2015)

All three of these initiatives are examples of the kinds of institutions that provide citizens with the opportunity to innovate, create, share and produce knowledge, and respond directly to issues they see in their daily lives. Unlike so many of the institutions that operate in Igloolik, the lines of power in these organizations do not run out of the community. In this way, they resemble the more insulated community-building initiatives of the 1970s, with one very important difference: whereas in the 1970s and 1980s, the state actively sponsored intermediary institutional development, by the 1990s, intermediary institutions like those described in this section, whose work helps to foster and fill the gap between the two planes - between citizens and the state - were no longer sponsored by the government. One exception to this was the Illiniariuqsarvik Igloolik Head Start programme, established in 1995.

5.5.5 Early Childhood Education and Community-building in the 1990s

Illiniariuqsarvik Igloolik Head Start (colloquially “Head Start”) was established in 1995 under the name the Igloolik Early Intervention Project in response to growing concerns in the community about school attendance and low graduation rates. A study completed just a few years prior found that roughly 80% of NWT youth were not completing high school. (Allen & MacDonald 1999: 6) Child development specialists and educators at the time were drawing increasing attention to the importance of “the early years” in children’s performance in school and their readiness for Kindergarten by age five. Early childhood education was not common in the Northwest Territories, particularly in the East. Although the occasional ad hoc program aimed at pre-school

aged children had been offered in Igloolik when funding was available, none had sought to bring all available resources together under one roof.

In 1995-1996 the federal government issued a call for proposals across the North under its Community Actions Fund program which was aimed primarily at supporting early intervention projects in health. With support from the community, including from the Hamlet and the health centre, a small group of educators submitted a successful proposal to Health Canada for Igloolik's own early intervention project. (Allen & MacDonald 1999; IEIP 2009a) After a two-year pilot period, in 1998, the Igloolik Early Intervention Program (IEIP) opened its doors full-time, offering a variety of programs geared primarily at young pre-school aged children but also supports for parents and other caregivers. (IEIP 2009a) Over the years the centre has offered daytime programs for two to three-year olds, four-year olds, teenaged parents (including pre and post-natal) and infant/toddler classes open to everyone. At various points over the course of its life, IEIP staff and school staff have arranged for teenaged parents-to-be to receive high school credits for participating in the pre-natal program because it offers skills development in the areas of cooking, nutrition, mental health/child development awareness as well as sewing and traditional parenting practices. One of the program's enduring strengths is that it is run exclusively in Inuktitut and has a strong focus on intergenerational transmission of traditional stories and culture.

Since its inception in the mid 1990s, the organization and its staff have made a concerted every effort to maintain a positive working relationship with other organizations and agencies in town, particularly the other educational facilities, the health centre and the Hamlet office. There are many examples to draw from, but a few stand

out. The relationship with the community health centre is one of the most important. Health centre and IEIP staff have often worked together to identify children who may have developmental delays or learning difficulties well in advance of the children starting school. Because of its role in the community, and because the majority of IEIP staff is always Iglulingmiut, the centre has been able to build trusting relationships with parents over a period of time and support them in their dealings with healthcare professionals and the school administration, institutions which are typically staffed by non-Inuit. The importance of this role in the lives of parents with young children cannot be overstated. The following statement from a 2009 annual report summarizes how the IEIP staff view the role of the program in the community:

We learned if we are to be successful, we must involve the whole community. We must work together and be flexible. We must build on the knowledge that the children bring. We must notice the needs and wants of our children and families, and work collaboratively to address the issues and create programs to begin to meet the needs. We must continually seek to gain additional skills and knowledge and always reflect on our actions and programs. (IEIP 2009b)

The role that IEIP staff envision for themselves, as evidenced in this statement, is clearly reminiscent of the role that the adult educators in the 1970s and early 1980s saw themselves playing in Igloolik. Although the Head Start programme has a very specific purpose in the community – early childhood education – it has served as an important point of connection and integration in Igloolik over its life. Like the other initiatives described above, Head Start has been engaged in the kind of community-building work

being done with and through the adult education centre twenty years earlier.

5.5.6 *The Baffin Divisional Board of Education: an Uncertain Future*

After the Nunavut Implementation Commission (NIC) reports came out in 1994 and 1995 recommending the amalgamation of the regional boards, it was unclear what would happen once Nunavut came into being in 1999. Although they were operating in an environment of uncertainty, the BDBE continued its work. Throughout the 1990s, the board oversaw the introduction of high school grades into communities, like Igloolik, that did not already have them, and they were working on developing a bicultural curriculum. The Board, which understood implicitly the importance of Inuit leadership in the education system, also introduced its vision for co-principles in Baffin schools. The idea was that the Inuk co-principal would bring knowledge of community, families, culture, language, etc., and the non-Inuk co-principal would bring administrative expertise.

Community and parental engagement were high priorities during this period for the BDBE, particularly in light of the impending potential changes to the system under the GN. The BDBE dedicated considerable time and effort to conducting visioning workshops with parents, educators, students, and communities-at-large at which they asked fundamental questions about the purpose and goals of education. The overwhelming message from these workshops was, “we want the best of both worlds for our kids.”¹¹⁴ These workshops worked well and were well attended in communities, including in Igloolik, which was already recognized as a leader in terms of the community’s dedication to implementing bilingual education. These visioning workshops

¹¹⁴ I am grateful to Cathy McGregor, Joe Ataguttaaluk, and Joe Enook for helping me to understand what was happening at the BDBE during this important period.

are an excellent example of why the Board's independence from the territorial government was an asset. There is little written about the BDBE during this period, particularly research that draws on the insights and perspectives of Board members and staff during the transition to Nunavut. This is a gap that I hope to fill in future research. Nonetheless, as will become clear in the next chapter, the value of the regional boards of education – particularly the BDBE – is now widely accepted by Nunavummiut.

5.6 Conclusion

During the period under examination in this chapter, a dual process of state and community building was underway. On the one hand, the GNWT was trying to enhance its power vis a vis the federal government, and at the same time (particularly in the 1970s and early 1980s) there was a parallel but independent community development process underway that shows what was possible when opportunities were created for, and seized by, Iglulingmiut to find zones of overlap between the endogenous and exogenous planes that had emerged in the previous decade.

In Igloolik adult education supported community-building and helped to promote the cultivation of civic life. There was a blurring of the lines between the state and civil society, which allowed for local innovations and the expression of an emerging community identity. Unlike the state agents operating in the community a decade earlier, by the mid 1970s, there was a small corps of southerners working in the community who were committed to supporting Inuit-driven community development, and the understood the value of intermediary institutions in this process. Lack of communications technology and vast geographic distance meant that communities were able to operate, more or less, independently. This meant that local institutions, like the schools and adult education

centres carried out their work without much oversight from the centre. There was greater inter-agency cooperation and engagement, which meant a more integrated and holistic approach to community development. These horizontal connections between and among local organizations emphasized the role of local leaders and fostered a sense of collective agency and purpose, rather than the vertical, core-periphery connections that began to emerge in the latter half of the 1980s and into the 1990s as the GNWT bureaucracy continued to mature. This community-building process was interrupted by the expanding territorial bureaucracy, which was also simultaneously “getting it right” in terms of responding to calls for local control in the Eastern Arctic by creating the conditions for the regional boards, which itself went on to do such important work.

The GNWT adopted a decentralized, diversified governance model in the 1970s and 1980s in response to relentless pressure by Indigenous communities and the Indigenous leadership at the time. They understood that they could not manage the diversity of cultures, languages, peoples, and communities of the Northwest Territories from Yellowknife. In education specifically, this practical realization aligned with contemporary philosophical approaches in education and education governance around the importance of local control, reinforced by the Indigenous rights movement. From the outside, a decentralized governance model may have seemed impractical given the relatively small population; however, what people wanted in the 1970s and 1980s was a political unit in and through which they could be efficacious. They wanted institutions that were, quite simply, the right size. The move towards a decentralized regional governance model, which included the boards of education, reflected this orientation.

And, the regional boards of education that emerged in the mid 1980s were the right size such that people could work with them and within them effectively.

At the same time, the institutionalization of adult education re-oriented adult education to the needs of the labour market (especially training for Nunavut in the 1990s) and altered the accountability structures of adult educators from the community to the Department. In the years leading up to the creation of Nunavut many (but not all!) of the people who had previously been involved in the important work of community building in Igloolik redirected their attention away from the local level to the business of polity-building on another scale. In the following chapter, I return to a higher-scale analysis of education governance in Nunavut after 1999.

Chapter 6: Education in Nunavut (1999-2017)

6.1 Introduction

Nunavut is more than Canada's newest territory; it's an idea, an aspiration. It is a means, not an end. The men and women who dedicated their lives to negotiating the Nunavut land claim agreement – the framework that made Nunavut possible – knew this. They understood that it would not be perfect; that the really hard work was still ahead. (e.g. Amagoalik 2007; Quassa 2008; QTC 2013b) The business of moving from “idea” to “implementation” is messy and often frustrating. Nowhere has this been more evident than in the case of education in Nunavut. As I (and many others) have pointed out, education and concerns about the education system are intimately bound up with early assertions of Inuit self-determination and Inuit rights – the foundation upon which Nunavut was created. In the midst of significant economic, social, and political transformations, Inuit have remained steadfast in their belief in the connection between education and self-determination. This vision is, perhaps, best articulated in the National Strategy for Inuit Education, released in 2011.¹¹⁵

According to the Strategy, an Inuit-centred education system must strive to be the best possible public education for Inuit. In doing so, it must:

- Be bilingual...and founded on Inuit history, culture and worldview;
- Be community-based and empower parents and Elders to support education;

¹¹⁵ The National Inuit Education Strategy published by ITK's National Committee on Inuit Education responded to the recognition by Inuit leaders across Inuit Nunangat that their communities were facing similar challenges with respect to education and that the education played a critical role in social and economic development in their territories. The National Strategy is an empowering document that sets out a clear vision for a system of education that validates Inuit knowledge, language and culture and encourages and promotes Inuit self-determination. The recommendations set out in the Strategy are aimed at both public and Inuit governments across the country.

- Restore the central role of the Inuit language;
- Embrace early childhood education, Kindergarten to Grade 12, postsecondary and adult learning; and
- Be continually informed and improved upon by monitoring, evidence and research. (NCIE 2011: 70)

With the creation of Nunavut in 1999 came the opportunity to design an education system that reflected similar principles.

In public discourse, education has often been referred to as both the cause of, and solution to, the challenges facing the territory. Nunavummiut saw early on that developing a high-quality system of education is an important and necessary component of achieving the dreams implicit in the Nunavut Agreement. They also, of course, recognized that the history of formal schooling in the Eastern Arctic is a difficult one with far-reaching consequences. It is within this context that the citizens and leaders of Nunavut grapple with the challenge of designing a public education system that validates and promotes Inuit language and knowledge and prepares students to participate in meaningful ways in the life of their communities, the territory, the country, and the world.

Education has also been a significant source of frustration for Nunavummiut since 1999. High-level considerations about the overall purpose and goals of a “made-in-Nunavut” education system regularly butt up against capacity limitations and resource allocation decisions in the Government of Nunavut. The frustrations Nunavummiut feel with their government and with the implementation of the Nunavut project more broadly are not limited to the education system, but they are amplified in this area because of the nature of education as a process of preparing future generations to live healthy and productive lives. The sense of urgency inherent in the 1970s and 1980s calls for Inuit

control over the education system has not abated despite the institutional changes that have taken place over the last 40 years. If anything, that sense of urgency to ‘get it right’ with the education system is heightened, nearly 20 years after the creation of Nunavut Territory.

In this chapter, I examine the main developments in education governance in Nunavut from 1999 to present day. In particular, this chapter focuses on the persistent theme of local control over education. I draw on legislative records, government and other public reports, public commentary by officials and citizens, and a small number of interviews with current and former public servants.¹¹⁶ As I explained in Chapter 1, I have chosen to focus primarily on education governance rather than pedagogical issues.

Pedagogy is, of course, critical to the design and delivery of any education system and impossible to ignore altogether. However, pedagogy and curriculum are not what I am most concerned with here; rather, I have tried to learn about the evolving relationship between citizens and the state by examining it through the lens of the education system.

In a 2015 submission to the Nunavut Legislative Special Committee on Education, NTI stated that, “the structure in which education is delivered is flawed.” (NTI 2015: 10) By any reading of recent events, this is a commonly held belief in Nunavut by citizens, educators, and administrators, alike. Much of the research on education in Nunavut has been focused on pedagogy but this focus gives an incomplete understanding: governance and governing institutions are fundamental because they

¹¹⁶ I did not interview any Ministerial staff or senior administrators in the Department of Education; however, I did try to meet with the ADM of Education in November 2015 while I was in Iqaluit, but my requests were denied. I was unable to interview current Ministerial or departmental staff.

affect how the education system relates to and interacts with citizens and other institutions at the territorial and local levels.

I begin with a general overview of governance in Nunavut, followed by an abridged history of the 2008 *Nunavut Education Act*, the legislation that now governs education in the territory. The bulk of the chapter examines four assessments of education under the new *Act*: the Qanukkanniq? GN Report Card (2009); the Auditor General Report on Education in Nunavut (2013); the Special Committee on the Review of the Nunavut Education Act (2014); and most recently, debates around the now-infamous *Bill 37*, and its proposed amendments to the Education Act (2017).¹¹⁷ These have made clear that the general principles and broad goals articulated in Nunavut's Education Act are still favoured by Nunavummiut, especially those that foster the inclusion of Inuit language and culture in the system and the place of local control. But they also reveal a system in trouble. The GN Department of Education has responded to these challenges (some might say failures) within the system with attempts to streamline and centralize education governance and decision-making. These familiar high-modernist attempts to design the system from the centre have been met with strong resistance by stakeholders in Nunavut, as this chapter will show. In particular, the non-government stakeholders express deep concern over what they perceive to be a move by the Government of Nunavut away from the principle of local control, which has been a key feature of

¹¹⁷ See Appendix F for a list of the main education events between 1999-2017.

education governance since the 1970s, and a refusal by the GN to entertain opportunities to enhance Inuit leadership in the system.

6.2 An Overview of Governance in Nunavut

Over the course of the land claim negotiations, the creation of a new territory with its own government became an important part of the vision for Nunavut. There were no precedents in Canada for weaving together a comprehensive land claim agreement – a modern treaty – and a public government. The parties to the 1993 Nunavut Agreement made provisions within Article 4 for the *Nunavut Political Accord* (1992), which set out the conditions and process for the creation of “A new Nunavut Territory with its own legislative assembly and public government, separate from the remainder of the Northwest Territories.” (Nunavut Agreement 1993 Article 4.1.1). Although the Nunavut Agreement was twenty years in the making, preparations for the creation of the territory happened fast – there were only six years between royal assent of the Nunavut Act in June 1993 and April 1, 1999 when Nunavut Territory came into being. Recall from Chapter 3 that the Nunavut Implementation Commission was established in 1994 to design the Government of Nunavut; and that a suite of training programs was created to help prepare those in the East to take on the new roles created in the territorial government and in the private sector as a result of Nunavut.

The Nunavut government operates as a Westminster style parliamentary system, with some important differences. Like the Government of the Northwest Territories, the Government of Nunavut has a non-partisan system (often referred to as “consensus-style government” in both cases), in which members of the legislative assembly run as independents. Once the MLAs are elected, the members hold a leadership forum to select

the Premier and the members of the Executive Council by secret ballot. The Premier and the Executive Council form the government, with the remaining MLAs serving as regular members. (Dacks 1990; Merritt et al 1994; Hicks and White 2015; Henderson 2007; NIC 1995)

Nunavut's political system was designed to bring together the principles of parliamentary democracy with Inuit values of "maximum cooperation, effective use of leadership resources and common accountability." (Government of Nunavut n.d) Early on, the GN developed a set of eight core governing principles, called *Inuit Qaujimagajatuqangit* (usually translated as Inuit traditional knowledge or Inuit societal values). These "IQ principles" are meant to reflect and infuse an Inuit way of thinking and being into all aspects of governance in Nunavut.

While these substantial changes were taking place at the territorial level, municipal governments in Nunavut remained the same. In many ways, they have been the one constant in Northern governance since the 1970s. Each of Nunavut's 25 communities has a municipal government responsible for both "hard" and "soft" services. Examples of hard services include the management of local airports (including search and rescue and medical-evacuations), as well as water, sewage, and garbage services. The Hamlets also run recreational programming and manage recreational facilities like the local arenas and community halls. In Igloolik, for example, the Hamlet government has a social worker, a community justice worker, and a community economic development officer. Local governments serve as important points of contact for community members in their dealings with other orders of government and as meeting spaces for community groups

and events. Municipal governments in Nunavut are not well-studied – a gap I intend to help fill in future research.

Alongside the public government, which serves all residents of Nunavut, there are a number of entities created to serve beneficiaries of the Nunavut Agreement. This includes Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and three regional Inuit organizations: Qikiqtani Inuit Association, Kivalliq Inuit Association, and Kitikmeot Inuit Association.¹¹⁸ According to NTI, its mandate is to coordinate and manage Inuit responsibilities set out in the Nunavut Agreement, and ensure that the federal and territorial governments fulfill their obligations. NTI also manages the Nunavut Trust.¹¹⁹ NTI has also become a political voice for Inuit in the territory – and has played an advocacy role vis a vis Inuit rights in Nunavut’s education system as I explain below. NTI has an eight-member board made up of the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of each of the three regional Inuit Associations, as well its own President and Vice-President. All of NTI’s board members are elected directly by Inuit in regional and territory-wide elections.¹²⁰

NTI engages in important work related to its mandate to support and enhance social, economic, and cultural wellbeing through the implementation of the Nunavut Agreement. NTI (and its predecessor Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut) has always been

¹¹⁸ The regional Inuit associations represent the beneficiaries in each of Nunavut’s three regions. Their primary purpose is to manage Inuit owned lands in their respective regions. Each regional body has developed its own mandate and mission. The Qikiqtani Inuit Association, for example, has been heavily engaged in work related to the Baffinland Mary River Project – a large-scale iron-ore operation on northern Baffin Island. QIA also initiated the Qikiqtani Truth Commission, which I described in Chapter 2.

¹¹⁹ The Nunavut Trust was set up to receive the capital transfers paid to beneficiaries of the Nunavut Agreement and to invest and protect these funds on behalf of the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area. For more information visit the Nunavut Trust website: <http://www.nunavuttrust.ca>.

¹²⁰ NTI’s organizational chart can be viewed here: <http://www.tunngavik.com/documents/Org%20Chart%20Final%20-%203%20languages/index.html>.

active in advocating for improved education and training in Nunavut for Inuit. In 2006, NTI launched a lawsuit against the Government of Canada over its failure to implement various promises in Nunavut Agreement. A central feature of the lawsuit was Article 23. In May 2015, NTI and Canada reached a settlement of \$255 million, the majority of which NTI has committed to spending on training Inuit for employment. Most recently, NTI has been a vocal critic of the proposed changes to the Nunavut Education Act particularly on the issues of bilingual and inclusive education. I will return to a more detailed discussion of these developments later.

6.3 The Road to a “Made-in-Nunavut” Education Act

In many ways, the public education system in Nunavut today looks like any other in Canada. The Department of Education’s duties and responsibilities are carried out by officials at the department’s headquarters and in three Regional School Operations offices, the French school board, three Curriculum and School Services offices, and 43 schools operating in Nunavut’s 25 communities. Each community also has its own District Education Authority. The Nunavut Arctic College, the only post-secondary institution in the territory, has three main campuses with community learning centres located in every community. The College offers programming on a wide spectrum from adult basic education, to trades certification, to diploma and degree programs in areas such as Environmental Technology, Education, Nursing and Law – the last three of which are offered in partnership with southern post-secondary institutions.

The system that exists today is governed by the *Nunavut Education Act* but is also a product of legislation, policies, and decisions made before the division of the territories.

When Nunavut came into being, it was not possible to develop a full suite of Nunavut-specific legislation right away; the process of creating made-in-Nunavut legislation across the Departmental spectrum has taken some time. In the interim, the existing NWT legislation has remained in force with policy and administrative changes made where possible or necessary. Important and complex areas of legislation, such as education and language – both of which are particularly intertwined with the colonial history of the Eastern Arctic and are simultaneously matters of significant public concern – have proven especially difficult to develop. What this has meant in the case of education is that for 10 years, between 1999 and 2008 when the Education Act was finally passed, “education administration and decision making was occurring in a vacuous context in the Eastern Arctic. The public and policy makers could not reach consensus on what a school system in Nunavut should look like, and how it should be run.” (McGregor 2010: 162)

The government’s first attempt at a “made-in-Nunavut” education bill (Bill 1) died on the order paper in 2002 amidst significant concerns about “inadequate incorporation of IQ, limited decision-making powers for DEAs, insufficient promotion of the Inuit language, negligence of French language rights, and inadequate consultation.” (McGregor 2012: 42; see also NTI 2015; D’Souza 2002) Then-MLA for Iqaluit Centre, Hunter Tootoo, was quoted in *Nunatsiaq News* as saying at the time:

By hastily adopting something now we run the risk of throwing out something that works, recognizing that it needs improvement, and replacing it with something that is worse...Not only does Bill 1 take us further away from self-reliance but it proposes to do so in a less open and less transparent manner than ever before. (D’Souza 2002)

It was more than five years before a new education bill (Bill 21) was introduced in the Legislative Assembly and Nunavut’s first Education Act assented on September

18, 2008. The Department of Education consulted with education stakeholders, including school staff, DEAs, regional Inuit organizations, and the general public in the development of the new legislation but many of the issues that caused the first bill to fail remain at the forefront of current debates regarding the state of education in Nunavut.

One of the major issues raised by stakeholders during the consultation process was the GN's early decision to dissolve the regional boards. Nunavut's First Assembly was keen to show Nunavummiut that things would be different under the new government. In the lead up to Nunavut, the Nunavut Implementation Commission had recommended that the three regional boards of education be amalgamated into a single territory-wide school board primarily as a means to save money, but the Commission also implied that there would no longer be a need for regional representation under the new government:¹²¹

“Nunavut will be a more homogenous society than the existing NWT. There will be a higher number of members in the Legislative Assembly to represent the people of Nunavut than there are representatives from Nunavut in the current NWT Legislative Assembly in Yellowknife.” (NIC 1995: 26-27)

Just 42 days after Nunavut came into being, Premier Paul Okalik announced in the Legislative Assembly that his government would “phase out” the regional boards of education and health over the period of one year, citing greater accountability and cost-savings as the main reasons for their elimination. But he also made another remark, which echoes the NIC's thinking and reveals an important and pervasive idea at the time

¹²¹ The NIC envisioned a board comprising 10-12 representatives elected directly from the territorial constituencies. The board's mandate would “maximize direct political control and accountability during the critical early years of the Nunavut government,” and “preserve the long-standing tradition in Canada that parents and other electors have a direct say in the running of the schools...” (NIC 1995: 27)

Nunavut was created: that the institutional architecture previously required to represent Inuit interests under the GNWT would no longer be necessary in the context of Nunavut:

As your elected representatives, we also made a decision to phase out the Health and Education Boards. We are now, all people, are represented with the Nunavut Government. Therefore, I would like to say again that we would truly like to represent the people out there. Those citizens who in the past at our Regional Health and Education Boards, and to those who will continue to represent their communities during the phase out of the Boards, I thank for their contributions to the growth and development of Nunavut. (Nunavut Legislative Assembly 1999: 7)

This was a controversial decision at the time and it remains so today. Most agree that the decision to eliminate the boards interrupted nearly two decades of momentum toward developing an Inuit-controlled education system that was actively and effectively engaging Inuit adults and communities in decision-making about education and working to develop school programs to reflect the communities they were intended to serve. In a 2007 *Nunatsiaq News* editorial, then-CNDEA chair Jeeteeta Merkosak wrote

In 2000, our Government eliminated regional boards of education and with this decision abolished local governance of the schools. In a stroke, what had been working as an Inuit way of governance of our schools, with decisions made by a council of parents, disappeared for a system where most decisions on schools are made by bureaucrats working outside our communities. (qtd in McGregor 2010: 164)

In June 2014, I spoke with Joe Enook, who was then sitting as a regular Member of the Legislative Assembly for Pond Inlet.¹²² Recall that Enook was one of the first chairs of the Baffin Divisional Board of Education (BDBE) and he remains a strong advocate for youth and the transformative potential education can have for young people in Nunavut today. Enook expressed great frustration with the decision to eradicate the

¹²² Mr. Enook is now Speaker of the Nunavut Legislative Assembly, replacing George Qulaut who lost his seat in the October 2017 election.

regional boards of education, even fifteen years later. I have reproduced part of my discussion with him at some length because Joe highlights what was really important about the regional boards – what they represented to people in the Eastern Arctic – and therefore, what really was lost when they were dissolved:

I wish I knew [the real reasons the Boards were abolished]. I wish I knew. And I hope there will be a day when we are told because I would love to argue. At my old age, I may not be full of piss and vinegar anymore, but hopefully I have the ability to ask, methodically, some questions. I think it was a terrible decision...Somebody made that decision, rightly or wrongly, but somebody thought that was the correct thing to do, and I respectfully beg to differ.

*It was everything against the creation of Nunavut. Our Leaders - Mr. Quassa, Mr. Okalik and all these guys who worked on the claim to get it to the people - all said, [Nunavut would be] government for the people, with the people, by the people. And, I always understood that 'by the people, for the people, with the people' was to bring it **to** the people, **by** the people, **with** the people. And I thought...what we did [with the BBDE] was with the people, for the people. And to take that away??... I'm just confused. Like I say, maybe there was a great reason they haven't shared, or maybe there's a great reason that I can't or don't want to understand. [But] the whole purpose of Nunavut was to bring it to the people, and I just have a hard time when you [the government] take that ability away from the people....*

...The BDBE and other boards were doing their work, to the best of their ability with the tools given to them. They were down in the communities, and unless my head had been in the sand, I had never heard of any negativity about the boards and what they were doing.

I guess it's just all about power to some people at the expense of the little guy, the really little guy. And I think it's just so wrong. It really, really breaks my heart - not because, you know, I was a forerunner in the whole process, not because we were powerful and so on and so forth, but because, maybe because as big as it became, we were the grassroots organization. Every week, we were meeting with local parents at our local education committee meetings and hearing their concerns, and then four times a year we were meeting at the divisional board level. It wasn't like

*we weren't in touch with reality in our communities because that's where we came from... And someone had a problem with **that**??*

If it was a financial issue – I beg to differ. At what cost do we do things? You know, I always use my own community as an example. Unfortunately, we have no marine infrastructure in Pond Inlet, and I always say to the government, “At what cost?” So, we've have one death of a gentleman trying to get out to save his boat because right now we have to go two miles down a river to save our boats... And the policy of the day, is, ‘well, we can't build marine infrastructure because there is no commercial value’ – the official policy of the federal government is, if there's commercial value of that dock or that marine infrastructure, we will gladly help you...[I ask], at what cost?!? Human lives. That's what I compare it to.

There are some things, maybe, I wasn't born to understand. When you play around and experiment with children's lives, that bothers me. Because of all people, the people who need the most stable direction and so forth, are the kids. And education has a great deal to do with that. If we can put them through the so-called proper education system...that's our job! And I thought we [the BDBE] were doing that; I thought we were on the road to doing that. We were building momentum – we thought - but apparently someone didn't. I would love to have the opportunity to sit down with that person, whoever it might be, and have him either prove me wrong or prove me right. (J. Enook, personal interview, June 6, 2014)

NTI shares Enook's view that the decision to abolish the boards went against the principles underlying the creation of Nunavut itself:

The time after April 1999 should have been the time when Inuit finally had the ability to finally and fully participate in a government responsive to their needs and aspirations, including education. But the authority and empowerment for education that Inuit fought so hard for since the early 1970s greatly diminished immediately after the GN became a new territory derived from Article 4 of the NLCA and that abolished the regional boards shortly thereafter. (Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2015c: 84)

Immediate effects of this decision were felt throughout the education system, particularly by the individual DEAs, which found themselves without the support or resources they previously had: “the roles and responsibilities of 27 individual DEAs

became confusing and muddled. It created an impractical partnership with so many individual DEAs and decentralized Department of Education offices. The DEAs no longer had the avenue of the DEAs to guide them [or to] channel their concerns in unity.” (Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2015c: 84) The Department of Education introduced Regional Schools Operations offices in each of the three regions to replace some of the functions of the boards, but these units were creatures of the Department of Education and ultimately accountable to the Minister. In short, in the absence of the regional boards, District Education Authorities were not given more responsibilities – power flowed to the Department of Education, causing a “significant interruption to local and regional capacity, [which] has not proven more effective in meeting the needs of Inuit students.” (McGregor 2010: 163) Although some people who were involved with the regional boards did move into Departmental roles, many long-time advocates of education, who were passionate and engaged at the Board level, were disheartened by these developments and moved on to other things.

Despite the negative public response to the dissolution of the boards, the government stood behind its decision. In 2007, Education Minister Ed Picco told a Nunatsiaq News reporter that the reinstatement of the boards of education was “not on at all.” (Thompson 2007) Board re-instatement remained “off the table” throughout the period of development for the 2008 Act, as well. No formal consultations were undertaken on this topic by the Department of Education despite repeated calls by parents and Inuit organizations for increased local control and parental involvement in education decision-making. In response to the “vacuum in advocacy” that emerged in the boards’ absence, the Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities was formed in 2006.

The Coalition of Nunavut DEAs is a non-government organization that “represents the third voice in education - the voice of parents - alongside the other two voices, the Minister, and the educators who are represented by the Nunavut Teachers Association.” (CNDEA 2016) The CNDEA is now a recognized and government-funded stakeholder in education in Nunavut but, as the organization itself would argue, its power is severely limited, and it has not served as an adequate replacement for the boards. (For example, see CNDEA 2014)

6.3.1 The 2006 Conciliator’s Final Report: A Warning

As these important debates and conversations about education and the education system were taking place, the Government of Canada, the Government of Nunavut, and NTI were engaged in negotiations regarding the parties’ implementation funding responsibilities vis a vis the Nunavut Agreement. Former NTI senior policy advisor, John Bainbridge recalls that during the negotiations, it “quickly became obvious within the GN that the implementation of Article 23 of the NLCA (the obligation to achieve and maintain a representative level of Inuit employment in the public service at all grade levels and in every occupational group) was not only going to be staggeringly expensive, it was well beyond the capacity of this small and inexperienced government to implement.” (Bainbridge 2008: 761-762) The federal government “denied responsibility for training another government’s workforce.” (762) The negotiations reached an impasse

in 2004, at which point the federal government appointed Justice Thomas R. Berger¹²³ to serve as a conciliator. Justice Berger chose to focus much of his 2006 report on education and training, their relationship to Article 23 of the land claim, and to the broader objectives of the “the Nunavut Project”. He was clear that the federal government bore significant responsibility for the full realization of Nunavut: “the only approach to Article 23 consistent with the honour of the Crown is to look beyond the specific obligations listed in Article 23. Moreover, it is the only approach likely to succeed. In other words:

If land claims implementation in Nunavut is to be anything more than a barren search for avoidance of responsibility, the "broader issues" must be addressed, not only by Nunavut, but by Canada. They necessarily arise out of Article 23, because it is impossible to have an intelligent conversation about the objective of Article 23 without discussing them. It is only by addressing the "broader issues" that we can breathe life into Article 23. (Canada 2006)

Specifically, Berger recommended in no uncertain terms that, “the only way in which we can fulfill the objective of Article 23 is by adopting specific measures in the near term, which will increase Inuit representation in the public service and, for the long term, establishing in Nunavut a comprehensive program of bilingual education in Inuktitut and English.” (Canada 2006)

Berger’s report implied, and was certainly interpreted as saying, that Nunavut’s school system was failing and that major changes were required if there was any hope of realizing the objectives laid out in Article 23. (NTI; Bainbridge 2008) Berger’s recommendations were aimed mainly at the Government of Canada but they helped to

¹²³ Justice Thomas R. Berger has a long career supporting Indigenous rights and self-determination. He was appointed to the Supreme Court of British Columbia in 1972 and between 1974 and 1977, he was commissioner of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry.

fuel the debates already taking place within the territory about the state of education in Nunavut.

The GN and NTI established a Joint Steering Committee to draft new education legislation. This committee, which also included DEA representatives and representatives from the francophone community (based largely in Iqaluit), drafted several sections of what would become Bill 21 but before the work was finished, “the GN took control of the drafting process away from the committee. A year later the GN presented the Joint Steering Committee with a finished draft.” (Bainbridge 2009) NTI maintained that the rights of Inuit to an education in the Inuit language should be entrenched in the Act; however, both Bainbridge (2009) and NTI (2015) have argued that few of NTI’s substantive recommendations respecting Inuit culture, language or local control were included in the draft.

When the draft legislation for Bill 21 was released in 2007 it was met with resistance by stakeholder organizations and members of the public. (Thompson 2007, 2008a; McGregor 2010). NTI proposed no fewer than 77 recommendations for amendments, with a strong focus on clarifying rights and responsibilities of the Department of Education, and those of Inuit parents and students in the education system. The CNDEA argued that the Bill lacked clarity on roles and responsibilities of DEAs and the Department of Education (Thompson 2008a), and that territorial officials seemed not

to understand the centrality of the principle of local control to education systems across Canada, including in First Nations and Inuit communities. (McGregor 2010:164)

6.4 The Nunavut Education Act (2008)

Finally, despite its controversial development the *Nunavut Education Act* (the Act) was passed unanimously in the Legislative Assembly on September 18, 2008. The goal of the Education Act was to ensure that the vision and beliefs about education held by Nunavummiut were embedded in the school system and in the education students received in the territory. McGregor and others have argued that the Act is an innovative and ambitious piece of legislation, which sets out a framework for an education system that “represents an overdue merging of the political and educational change movements.” (McGregor 2012: 28; CNDEA 2015)

A number of important changes are introduced in the Act, some of which respond to feedback received by stakeholders. These changes include:

- Entrenching Inuit societal values, or *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit* (IQ) as the foundation for education, with responsibility for implementation shared by the Minister of Education, District Education Authorities, and school staff.
- The requirement to implement bilingual education (English/French and Inuktitut) for all students by 2019-2020.
- Greater responsibility for DEAs in policy development, direction of principals, and the administration of school activities.
- Greater support for students through inclusive education, school counselors, attendance programs, behaviour management programs, and guaranteed student-teacher ratios.
- Legislated recognition of the Coalition of Nunavut DEAs to support DEAs and participate in Departmental planning. (Adapted from McGregor 2010: 170)

6.4.1 *Local Control under the New Act*

In the preamble, the *Nunavut Education Act* affirms the role of communities in supporting education and highlights the importance of the relationship between communities and schools:

Recognising that communities should be significantly involved in the education of their children to reflect local needs and values, that parents have special responsibilities and that Elders can make important contributions.” (GN, Education Act, S.Nu. 2008. C. 15)

It is clear that the responsibilities of DEAs, the organizations that represent parents and are intended to serve as liaisons between schools and the broader community, were expanded under the new Act. However, these changes did not increase their power in substantive ways. Prior to the new Education Act, DEAs consisted of elected individuals (typically parents and Elders), responsible for the school(s) in their community. Each DEA was allocated a budget for spending on school supplies, cultural activities, and costs associated with operating the DEA, including a part-time administrator salary and honoraria for board members. Prior to the new Act, DEAs had the power to set the school calendar and were involved in the school staff hiring process, but they had no supervisory power, and could not terminate employment unilaterally. They had the authority to influence local education programs (i.e. offering locally developed units of study that met curriculum standards), although, as McGregor (2010) points out – DEAs rarely exercise this power. (163-164) She writes:

In theory, the opportunity for local control was available through the DEAs, but this control proved severely limited in practice by the lack of access to adequate training, expertise, administrative support, and capacity-building through regionalized or combined efforts, which were previously provided by boards of education.” (McGregor 2010: 163)

Under the new Act, DEAs were given the authority to set school policies on student behaviour, attendance, and discipline as well as the responsibility to promote the value of education to students, parents, and the community as a whole. They were granted the power to monitor school plans and advise principals on how to administer schools. Moneys were also made available for DEAs to set up early childhood programs in their communities. DEAs retained their ability to develop local cultural programming and to set the school calendar. The Coalition of Nunavut DEAs received funding under the new Act to hire two staff persons, and some money for training. Unfortunately for the same reasons McGregor highlights (i.e. lack of access to adequate training, expertise, administrative support, and capacity-building) the expanded set of responsibilities held by the DEAs has not increased their power or their ability to strengthen local control over, or local engagement in, education in communities. If anything, DEAs have become less powerful and as a result parents and citizens feel alienated from the system.

The people I spoke with in Igloolik who were either current DEA members, or had been involved with the DEA in the past, were unequivocal: DEAs have less real power and authority since Nunavut was created. Former Igloolik DEA chair, Francis Piugattuk explained:

... 80% of the time you're pretty much rubber stamping what the government dictates, so as much as you're a board member you'd expect to have power, decision-making abilities but unfortunately that may not really be the case.

When the new Education Act was implemented, they provided a clause for the Coalition of Nunavut DEAs which has no powers compared to the Baffin Divisional Board of Education but at least it's an avenue for DEAs trying to work together – just chairs go but [it has] no clout, and no training. [There's] nothing like that anymore. Whereas before the DEAs

were able to have more say and control how things were operating...now we're rubber-stamping. (F. Piugattuk, personal interview, June 4, 2014)

Similarly, Ruby Irngaut, who worked as the DEA Administrative Assistant for several years up to 2012, explains one consequence of the decrease in DEA powers - a loss of a sense of responsibility or ownership over the DEA she observed:

...the DEA board of directors, although they can make their own opinions, [the DEA] always seemed to be run by the higher people...QSO [Qikiqtani School Operations] seems to be running them so much, that they have to say yes – mostly yes – to whatever QSO puts on the table. They have to run by the QSO rules, not their own... When it was BDBE [Baffin Divisional Board of Education], they seemed to be doing their own things and when it became QSO, they started to run it instead of the DEA. I mean, that's how I saw it anyway...and I don't want to be against them [the DEA members] but when it was BDBE, the chairperson and the board members would always just go to the school on their own without being asked and would want to hang around and help out and volunteer but after it became QSO now if I wanted them to come in [when I was working as DEA assistant], they would [say], 'I need money first' or 'I did this, now I want money.' (R. Irngaut, personal interview, June 2, 2014)

6.5 Assessments of the Nunavut Education Act and the “Made-in-Nunavut”

Education System

By the end of 2018, the *Nunavut Education Act* will have been in existence for 10 years. Since the Act came into force, there have been a number of opportunities for Nunavummiut to reflect on all aspects of the education system in the territory. In this section, I examine four of these: the Qanukkanni? GN Report Card (2009); the Auditor General Report on Education in Nunavut (2013); the Special Committee on the Review

of the Nunavut Education Act (2014); and most recently, debates around the proposed amendments to the Education Act (2017).

The Nunavut Education Act was intended to acknowledge and entrench the partnership between and among education stakeholders, but it is clear that many in Nunavut feel alienated by what they perceive to be a centralization of control over education by the Department of Education and unwillingness on the part of the Department to communicate with citizens on this critically important issue. All stakeholders agree that the Act is not perfect, and that implementation has proven to be much more challenging than expected. It is clear that the Act has not yet solved the problems it was created to solve, and it has had some, perhaps, unintended consequences. The interconnected issues of local control, parental engagement, and student attendance/retention are interwoven with concerns about political will and capacity within the GN to deliver on the parts of the Act that made it “innovative and ambitious” in the first place – namely its commitments to the inclusion of Inuit societal values, and to delivering bilingual education.

Before continuing, it is important to point out that the number of critical actors involved in education governance and in public debates about the education system in Nunavut is very small. All the events I write about here are very recent history, taking place for the most part within the last decade. In this context, it is difficult to assess what

is structural and what comes down to the individual. What seems important now, in 2018, may not seem so important twenty years from now.

6.5.1 *Qanukkanniq? The GN Report Card*

In 2009 under the new leadership of Eva Aariak, the GN commissioned a “report card” asking citizens and government employees to assess Nunavut’s first ten years and to weigh in on how things could improve in the future. The Report Card came at a time when Nunavummiut were reflecting on the territory’s first ten years. Not having served in the Nunavut Legislative Assembly until her premiership, Aariak was in a position to look back and listen with fresh eyes and ears, free of any personal responsibility for what had come before. During the Nunavut Leadership Forum (the internal process in which the newly elected MLAs select the Premier), Aariak praised her predecessors for their hard work in building a territory and government from the ground up but she also commented on the state of citizen engagement in the territory:

“When I look around me today, though, the energy and enthusiasm, which were so much part of us leading up to Nunavut, have apparently gone missing. Many Nunavummiut are moving away from their interests in government. Others are moving away from their personal hopes and dreams. Too many are moving away from their responsibilities.” (NLF 2008: 4)

The Report Card, which is based on conversations with more than 2000 people in all 25 of Nunavut’s communities, revealed what Aariak and others suspected: a lack of confidence in the new government:

When Nunavut was created, people expected better interaction with government and that they would be involved in decisions that affect them. *Today, they say that government has never seemed so distant.* They don’t know who in government does what, who they might call for advice or direction, or whether anyone will answer their phone at all. *People said*

that citizen participation in government decision-making was all but abolished when the GN first took office. They say they now have less information about government initiatives and fewer opportunities to influence decision makers. (GN Report Card 2009: 3, emphasis added)

According to the findings of the GN Report Card, many Nunavummiut expressed nostalgia about the way things operated under the Government of the Northwest Territories. In particular, they “often referred to [the GNWT’s] comparative responsiveness to emerging needs and their encouragement of citizen involvement in decision making.” (GN Report Card 2009: 4)

The report makes 26 recommendations related to education across six main topics: the K-12 system in general, language and bilingual education, local curriculum content, district education authorities, teacher preparation and orientation, and post-secondary and adult education. The findings described in the report mirror the concerns of many of the students, parents, and educators I spoke with in Igloolik. The Report Card summarizes the concerns in this way:

Nunavummiut told us that their public schools are failing to provide a quality education that prepares youth to move successfully into the workforce or post-secondary educational and training programs. They are extremely concerned about the ability of communities to be involved in the governance of education, the suitability of the curriculum, the teaching of Inuit language, the suitability of bilingual education programs, the inclusion of Inuit culture in the curriculum, high dropout rates, truancy, social promotion, the lack of guidance counsellors in most schools, and programs for children with special learning needs. They told us that many children in Nunavut regularly go to school hungry. (GN Report Card 2009: 11)

The Report Card found many that Nunavummiut believed, “the District Education Authorities established following division in 1999 [had] little authority and [were] ineffective.” (GN Report Card 2009: 15). According to the report, Nunavummiut were not confident that the changes to the role of the DEAs made by the new Act would

amount to a real increase in the power or influence of communities in the education system. (GN Report Card 2009: 16) The Report Card authors echoed calls by DEAs across the territory for the provision of adequate resources and training for DEAs to fulfill their duties and responsibilities as laid out in the new Act. Although the authors do not go so far as to call for a re-instatement of the regional boards, or even a single school board, the report does call on the GN to, “Provide a vehicle through which District Education Authorities can easily communicate community concerns on educational issues with each other and speak collectively to the appropriate departmental officials.” (16)

The GN Report Card affirmed the need to re-engage Nunavummiut in the Nunavut Project and raised many critical issues facing the territory. Aariak’s mandate, *Tamapta Building Our Future Together*, was an ambitious response to the Report Card, especially with respect to social issues like housing, poverty, and education. Hicks and White have argued that despite her strong start with the Report Card and comprehensive mandate, Aariak’s tenure as Premier was marked largely by a lack of focus, and thus she was not able to achieve what she set out to do. (Hicks and White 2015. For more about Aariak’s premiership see Kennedy Dalseg 2019, forthcoming)

In 2013 a new Premier, Peter Taptuna, was chosen to lead the government. Taptuna’s cabinet made education a top priority in their mandate, *Sivimut Abluqta*. (Legislative Assembly 2014c) Taptuna chose Paul Quassa, a respected leader and seasoned politician, to serve as Minister of Education - evidence of the GN’s commitment to making positive change in this area. One of Quassa’s first jobs was to initiate an overdue review of the *Nunavut Education Act*.

The Legislative Assembly's first statutory review of the 2008 Education Act should have been initiated in 2012-2013; however, the Assembly opted to delay the mandated review "to allow for the presentation of a number of reports that would inform the review process." (Special Committee 2015: 2) Specifically, the Assembly was waiting for the Department's annual reports from 2009 to 2013, which had not yet been tabled.¹²⁴ In addition, the Auditor General of Canada was scheduled to conduct an audit of the Department of Education and report to the Assembly in November 2013. Hearings on the Auditor General Report were held the following April.

6.5.2 *Auditor General of Canada Report: Education in Nunavut (2013)*

The purpose of the audit was to examine the extent to which Nunavut's Education Act was being implemented as intended. The Auditor General was careful to point out that this was an audit of the Nunavut Department of Education *not* of the quality of education in Nunavut. The audit focused on 6 areas: attendance, assessment, bilingual education, inclusive education, curriculum, and parental involvement. The auditors reviewed the Government of Nunavut's laws, regulations, policies, and guidance on the education system; and they interviewed officials from the Department of Education as well as school staff, representatives of District Education Authorities, and stakeholder groups. They audited eight schools in five communities and interviewed Education staff and teachers.

In general, the Auditor General found that the Department of Education had not adequately managed most aspects of implementing the Act, particularly in relation to

¹²⁴ It is worth noting that at the time of writing, the most recent Department of Education annual report to be tabled in the Assembly was the 2015-2016 report. <http://assembly.nu.ca/taled-documents>

bilingual education, inclusive education, and curriculum development. The AG report points to a lack of capacity within the Department of Education itself to undertake the activities required to implement the Act, but also recognizes that implementation of the Act is hampered by many factors beyond the Department's control: low attendance, parental/home life factors, and general human resources capacity issues across the GN as a whole. The report also acknowledges that many of the requirements in the act "involve long-term effort", the entirety of which may not have been wholly understood when the Act was passed in 2008. Specifically, the AG mentions recruiting and creating new resources, and providing support to the responsible parties (such as District Education Authorities and school staff). (Auditor General 2013: 5) In its formal response, the Department of Education agreed with all the conclusions and recommendations laid out by the Auditor General.

From April 1-3, 2014 the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts held hearings on the Auditor General's report in the Legislative Assembly. Representatives from the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) and from the Nunavut Department of Education were present at the hearings to respond to questions from the Standing Committee members.¹²⁵ The hearings were structured according to the sections of the AG report, and considerable time was taken up on the first day with MLAs asking the Witnesses for clarification on different aspects of the

¹²⁵ Standing Committee members included: Tony Akoak, Pat Angnakak, Joe Enook, George Hickee (Chair), David Joanase Simeon Mikkungwak Allan Rumbolt, Joe Savikataaq, Isaac Shooyook, and Alexander Sammurtok. Witnesses included: Michael Ferguson, Auditor General, Ronnie Campbell, Assistant Auditor General, Michelle Salvail, Principal, and Jo Ann Schwartz, Director from the Office of the Auditor General; and from the Department of Education, Kathy Okpik, Deputy Minister of Education, Brad Archambault, Director of Policy and Planning, and David Lloyd, Assistant Deputy Minister of Education.

history of formal schooling in the Eastern Arctic, and the basics of the education system in Nunavut today. The transcripts from these hearings shed light on the internal capacity and dynamics within the Department, as well as on Departmental perspectives and attitudes towards community involvement and local control over education. The transcripts also reveal that many of the MLAs on the Standing Committee were working with limited knowledge of the contemporary education system generally speaking, and of the Education Act in particular. The Minister of Education, Paul Quassa, was not present at the hearings.

Departmental Attitudes towards Regional and Local Control

Once again, the First Assembly's decision to eliminate the regional boards was raised. Pat Angnakak, MLA for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu, asked Departmental officials – all long-serving territorial public servants - what the impact of dissolving the boards has had on education. The Deputy Minister's response provides some insight into the state of the relationship between local education authorities and the Department once the boards were dissolved, and the resulting shift in authority or power away from the local level:

It's kind of hard for me to provide an opinion because I wasn't an administrator within the days of the divisional boards. I can only speak to what happened after the divisional boards were dissolved. The one thing I can say, though, is that there was a major disconnect between district education authorities and the Department of Education during that time. So there's a bit of history...

The intent was to create an Act right away but the boards were dissolved so all of a sudden you had 25 district education authorities out there operating without cohesion. Even though there were the regional school operations, it was a totally different way of functioning. So all of a sudden

you had RSOs that were starting up and operating under a different structure that wasn't a board structure.

By the time 2008 came and all the consultations that took place, we heard a lot of feedback from DEAs that they really felt that there wasn't the unity that they had previously and being represented. Hence, just before the *Education Act* was passed, there was the creation of the coalition of district education authorities, which ended up getting embedded into the *Education Act* and getting funded. (Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2014a: 86-88)

In her remarks, the Deputy Minister, Kathy Okpik, also mentioned the issue of standards. Her comments offer some insight into the way that senior officials in the Department think about the relationship between local control and standardization:

Although I can't comment about the dissolution of the three boards, the one thing that I have been working on over the years is to ensure that there's a clear standard. When we talked about the benchmark assessments, the balanced literacy is something to be used all across the board. The one thing about having three distinct boards would have been that you couldn't have had distinct standards and criteria all across the board because you would have had three different entities. If you look at the pros and cons of that and looking at it at a national level, the other thing that we're hearing from DEAs right now is they're having capacity issues with the implementation of certain provisions of parts of the Act. We have heard that very clearly with respect to the implementation side. I can't speak or give an opinion on is it operating better today than it was back then. (Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2014a: 86-88)

Under the GNWT model, the territorial government set curriculum standards and provided centralized administrative support to regional boards of education, which were responsible for maintaining those standards through the design and delivery of school programs, which met the specific needs and priorities of the populations they were meant to serve. While the three regional boards of education in what is now Nunavut were operational, they met regularly to encourage consistency across the three regions, and to learn from one another about what was working and what was not in their communities.

All provincial education systems operate in a similar manner, with the provincial government setting curriculum standards and school boards interpreting these for their own needs and priorities.

In the absence of the regional boards, the Nunavut Department of Education now must navigate and manage relationships with 26 individual DEAs, each with its own characteristics and challenges in terms of personalities, capacity, financial issues, principal-DEA dynamics, community-school relations, etc. If the boards were in place, many of these issues could be dealt with and streamlined at the board level. The Department would then only have to engage directly with three entities – a scenario that seems more likely to promote consistency and common standards.

Capacity

In her remarks quoted above, the Deputy Minister moves quickly from the issue of standards to the issue of DEA capacity in her argument against the desirability of local control. The Department of Education has consistently used lack of DEA capacity as an argument against local control over education. The Coalition of Nunavut DEAs regularly acknowledges that most DEAs in fact do lack the capacity to fulfill their obligations and fully realize their potential powers under the Act. For this reason, the CNDEA has made repeated requests to the Department of Education for increased training for DEA members to help address knowledge-gaps. (CNDEA 2016) The *Education Act* identifies DEAs as key partners in the education system, and it has been the position of the CNDEA that DEAs be able to access the resources they need to behave as such.

At the same time as the Department of Education cites lack of capacity as a reason to sideline DEAs, the Auditor General report is unequivocal that the Department

has been unable to fulfill *its own* obligations because of a lack of internal capacity and a lack of proper planning. At the hearings, Department officials themselves repeatedly point to lack of resources as well as high turnover and vacancy rates as the reasons for slow implementation of the Education Act. The GN's March 2018 employment report shows that 88% of the positions within the Department of Education are filled, but this number drops to the low 80s for senior and middle management. (Government of Nunavut 2018: 8) The percentage of jobs filled in the Department of Education does not seem to have fluctuated much in the last ten years. In August 2018, however, *Nunatsiaq News* reported that with just a few days remaining before the start of the school year in most communities, the Department was scrambling to fill 60 unfilled teaching positions. In Igloolik, where the school year typically begins in mid-August, the elementary school had to postpone the start of the year for some grades until teachers could be found for those classrooms. (Rogers 2018)

With respect to a lack of resources, according to the most recently available annual report (2015-2016), the Department of Education's total budget was just over \$200M. The annual report shows that the Department under-spent in all areas, including early childhood education, curriculum services, student services, educator development services, and policy and planning; and overspent on "directorate" and corporate services (by nearly 500%). (GN Department of Education 2016; see Appendix A for more detailed information) As I did not interview current Departmental officials about the Department's staffing or finances, any further comment on what these figures mean in terms of the Department's ability to carry out its work would be speculation on my part. However, it does seem important to point out that serious questions about resource-

allocation decisions made by the Department are not uncommon. (See Shirley Tagalik's open letter discussed below, for example)

During the Auditor General hearings Angnakak asked a number of simple but insightful questions, through which it seems she was trying to get Departmental officials to think about the ability of Nunavummiut to fully understand the implications of decisions they were making vis a vis education. For example, the Auditor General highlighted to the Standing Committee that current attendance rates (as low as 27% at some schools) meant that some students were missing up to three years of school over their lives. (Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2014a; see Appendix A for more education related data) Drawing on this discouraging figure, Angnakak asked Okpik whether she thought parents have a good understanding of the implications of their children not attending school. Okpik's response was a curt "Obviously, parents know when their children don't attend school." The Deputy Minister went on to state that graduations are major community celebrations before providing information about initiatives the Department was planning to encourage more community engagement with schools. (Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2014a: 66) Okpik reiterated that it is not only the Department's or the school's responsibility to encourage children to attend the school: "if you see school-aged kids around town during the day, say 'you should be in school'." (66)

Later, when the practice of issuing departmental "letters of authority" to allow uncertified teachers to fill vacancies in the school in absence of qualified teachers comes up, Angnakak again asked whether the department believed that DEAs understood the implications of hiring "unqualified" people to teach in the schools. Okpik responded

simply with “Great question.” Finally, on the second day of the hearings, Pat Angnakak asked Departmental representatives what incentives they saw for students to stay in school, to which the Deputy Minister replied simply, “to graduate and get an education.” (Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2014 a: 17)

Angakak’s questions about parental and DEA understanding about the implications of their decisions are a way of asking whether the people or entities that the Education Act is meant to empower as so-called partners in the education system (i.e. parents and DEAs) have adequate information to fully participate in and benefit from the institutions created as a result of the Nunavut Agreement. Or, in other words: are our citizens equipped to make informed choices about the future of our society? The MLA’s question about student incentives for staying in school is, in essence, a question about the overarching purpose of education and the ways in which this is communicated to students. In each case, the Department’s response is uninspired. Without a doubt, these hearings could not have been easy for Okpik and her staff, who were there to account for five years of challenges and missteps outlined in the AG report. It’s possible, of course, that their responses reflect their mental state on the day more than their overall attitudes towards their political leaders and their work. Nonetheless, that a Deputy Minister and senior Departmental officials were seemingly unwilling or unable to even attempt thoughtful or imaginative responses to these vital questions on such an important occasion is striking.

6.5.3 Special Committee to Review the Education Act (2015)

In 2014, the Legislative Assembly established a five-member Special Committee on Education co-chaired by George Hickers (MLA for Iqaluit-Tasiluq) and Simeon

Mikkungwak (MLA for Baker Lake).¹²⁶ Although this Special Committee was set up to review the *Nunavut Education Act*, the Committee also considered the Acts that pertain to language in the territory because of the relationship between the two with respect to bilingual education in Nunavut.¹²⁷ The Committee reviewed the relevant pieces of legislation, their associated regulations and policies, departmental reports, the 2013 Auditor General report, and documents published by NTI and others. The Committee also invited written submissions from key stakeholders, including the Department of Education, NTI the Nunavut Teachers' Association (NTA), individual DEAs, the CNDEA, the CSFN, and the Languages Commissioner. Members of the public were also invited to make written submissions. In total, the Committee received 24 submissions from individual members of the public and eight submissions from individual DEAs,¹²⁸ in addition to formal responses from each of the key stakeholder organizations listed above.

The Special Committee held four community consultation meetings in 2014 in Baker Lake, Kugluktuk, Pond Inlet, and Iqaluit. The Committee does not explain why these communities were chosen; however, these are the communities in which the Regional Schools Operations offices are located, with Iqaluit being the home of the

¹²⁶ The other members were Pat Angnakak (MLA for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu), Joe Savikataaq (MLA for Arviat South), and Hon. Paul Quassa (MLA for Aggu and Minister of Education). The structure of the Committee (i.e. 4 regular MLAs, and 1 Ministerial member) is standard for Nunavut Legislative Committees, according to the Special Committee's final report. The Committee had three alternate members (2 regular MLAs and 1 Ministerial alternate), and 3 staff persons, including a clerk and two researchers.

¹²⁷ The names of the two acts are: *Official Languages Act* (2007) and the *Inuit Language Protection Act* (2007).

¹²⁸ The Igloolik DEA was not one of the eight.

Department of Education's headquarters. According to the Special Committee's final report, 150 members of the public participated in the community consultations in total.

In May 2015, the Committee held two days of public hearings at the Legislative Assembly to review submissions. Participation at the hearings was by invitation only, although the hearings were transmitted by radio and television and were open to the public. The Committee invited witnesses that they felt represented the "broad range of views" about the education system, including former students, parents, educators, and administrators. (Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2015b)

The 2015 Special Committee report makes 23 recommendations on six key themes: the overall goals of Nunavut's education system, the place of Inuit societal values; Language of instruction, Access to education, Inclusive education, and Administration and governance. These themes reflect the content of the submissions made to the Committee and it is clear from the report that the Committee took seriously what Nunavummiut told them about the education system and tried to find compromises in challenging areas such as the place of Inuit language and culture, and the role of DEAs in the system.

The report offers a frank assessment of Nunavut's education system. The Committee acknowledges that the 2008 Education Act was "overly ambitious" and calls for pragmatism in future deliberations about what is possible vis a vis the education system. The language in the report pulls no punches:

The delivery of an education system is too important to be driven primarily by political idealism. The Standing [sic] Committee is of the view that the objectives of an education system must be practical, realistic, and attainable. Despite tremendous effort and dedication, as well as significant investments of time, money and resources, it has become

apparent that the delivery of Nunavut's education system under the current *Education Act* has fallen short of a number of its objectives. In many respects, the potential for the success of Nunavut's education system has been weakened by an overly ambitious agenda that was, to some extent, entrenched within the legislation itself. *It is important to acknowledge that changes must be made to the provisions of the current legislation with a view to improving and standardizing the delivery of Nunavut's education system.*" (Nunavut Legislative Assembly Special Committee Report 2015: 8 *emphasis added*)

A striking feature of the report, however, is its focus on territorial consistency and "standardization" as a means to improving the education system. The notion of standards appears throughout the entire report in each of the thematic areas listed above. The Committee acknowledged that there was no single view about what the system should look like, noting for example that some people envision a system oriented towards local control, while others envision a standardized system. I would make two observations about this: the first is that based on my reading of the submissions to the Special Committee, the calls for standardization came primarily from the Department of Education itself, and to a certain extent from the Nunavut Teachers Association, whereas citizens, DEAs, and the Inuit organizations were calling for increased local and/or Inuit control over the system. The other is that implicit in both the Special Committee reports and in the Department of Education's statements at the Auditor General hearings discussed above is that local control and standardization are dichotomous. Put another way, that the centralization of decision-making authority over education is the only way to ensure consistency (and by extension quality) across all 25 communities.

This issue of standards and standardization is raised again and again in these and subsequent hearings and debates. Using the notion of standards as an argument against a regional board governance model or enhanced local control, I argue, indicates that the

Government of Nunavut (or, at least, the Department of Education) is “seeing like a state”. The impulse to standardize and control from the centre seems to be driven by the view that the GN is solely responsible for implementing the broader vision of Nunavut, within which education plays an important role. What drives this attitude is not entirely clear.

The Committee concluded that the distribution of roles and responsibilities between the Minister, administrators, staff, DEAs, parents, and students is “problematic and, in many circumstances, dysfunctional or unbalanced.” (Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2015a: 18) While the Committee acknowledged calls by some stakeholders for the re-instatement of a Board governance model, it noted that a major legislative overhaul would be required to do this. In their submission to the Special Committee, NTI was unequivocal, as were many others, that Inuit have less control over education in Nunavut than they did under the GNWT. They pointed to the dissolution of the boards as others have done but they also highlighted the particularly low representation of Inuit in the Department of Education as compared to other GN departments. It is well known that the objective to have representational public service set out in Article 23 of the Nunavut Agreement has not been met. In the Department of Education nearly all the senior administrators in Headquarters and the Regional Schools Operations offices are non-Inuit, most principals in Nunavut are non-Inuit, and the majority of teachers in schools across the territory (especially at the secondary level) are also non-Inuit. NTI argued that without Inuit in these jobs, there is little hope of Inuit societal values, or Inuit language ever receiving the attention or resources needed to achieve the stated objectives of the

Act. I will return to this point in Chapter 7.

6.5.4 *Bill 37: An Act to Amend the Nunavut Education Act and the Inuit Language Protection Act*

In 2017, then-Minister of Education, Paul Quassa, introduced *Bill 37 An Act to Amend the Education Act and the Inuit Language Protection Act* in the Nunavut Legislative Assembly. Bill 37 was meant to respond to the concerns and issues raised in the above reports, particularly the formal review of the Education Act from 2015. The bill proposed to amend or repeal several aspects of the Education Act that made it innovative and ambitious in the first place, including provisions around IQ, bilingual education, and the role and powers of DEAs.

Specifically, the Bill proposed to:

- “Consolidate” references to IQ in the foundational sections of the Act;
- “Revise” provisions for inclusive education and language of instruction, including extending the deadline for bilingual targets by 10 years for Grades 4-9, and indefinitely for Grades 10-12;
- “Clarify and revise” roles and responsibilities of the DEAs, such that DEAs would lose authority over the areas of school and education programs, choice of language of instruction models, inclusive education oversight and reviews, authority to ensure annual assessments of individual education plans, choice of school calendar dates, direction to principals and establishment of hiring panels for principals and recommendations on selection of principals; and
- Establish an arms-length DEA Council to replace the Coalition of Nunavut DEAs.

Bill 37 prompted widespread backlash across Nunavut, including from the Office of the Languages Commissioner, the Coalition of Nunavut DEAs as well as individual DEAs, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and the regional Inuit organizations, the Nunavut Teachers’ Association, and dozens of concerned citizens, including former

educators and students, parents, former public servants, and academics.¹²⁹ Thirty-nine of the forty written submissions received by the Standing Committee on Legislation called for a rejection of the Bill, as written.¹³⁰ The main message from critics was that the amendments proposed in the Bill – particularly those around bilingual education and the role of the DEAs - were directly counter to the vision for Nunavut as a Inuit territory. That this bill was introduced by one of the chief negotiators of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement was a source of much confusion and frustration. For many, Bill 37 represented everything that seemed to be going wrong with Nunavut.

In their submission, the Pond Inlet DEA referred to the proposed changes as regressive, and as evidence of a self-serving system that is more interested in the appearance of success than in actually serving the citizens of Nunavut:

The proposed [changes] to the Education Act does not provide benefit to our Nunavut students. The wide range of changes appears to be bringing the education system back to the days of colonialism, before the creation of Nunavut and the Nunavut Land Claims agreement. Communities should be concerned about the changes as it presents a slow withdrawal of responsibilities to all DEAs, as well as the ability to have a say in our communities in the matter of our children 's education and future. The education system in Nunavut appears to have gone from providing our children with "encouragement, empowerment, confidence and a challenging rewarding education" to a system of passing children regardless of skill sets in order to present an education system that "appears" to be working well and a system that caters to the needs of the Department of Education, and not to the people of Nunavut to whom this

¹²⁹ For a full list of the 40 submissions tabled in the Legislative Assembly, see Appendix F.

¹³⁰ The one exception was the Kugaaruk District Education Authority.

is supposed to be benefiting. (Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2017a: 85)¹³¹

In her submission Alethea Arnaquq-Baril¹³² wrote:

As a Nunavummiuq and an Inuk, I am deeply concerned that this proposed bill has gone this far when our leaders and Elders argued strongly for decades to have our language rights be enshrined into territorial law. We were promised that Nunavut would stand for our unique language and culture, not just protect our rights to land and resources. (Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2017a: 95)

Similarly, Lena Ellsworth wrote:

We have been waiting since colonialism to have our basic rights recognized and respected and the right to speak Inuktitut was number one on that list. The creation of Nunavut gave Nunavummiut hope and the promise of language and cultural protection. The GN has already failed in many areas delivering some of the promises and have extended “deadlines” in the past and it seems this is yet another one of those empty promises which will, if passed, once again be delayed in ten years from now. This looks like the GN is actively participating in and continuing the assimilation policy. (Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2017a: 103)

Several submissions refer to the government’s treatment of, or dismissive attitudes

towards citizens. Lena Ellsworth wrote:

The education system has been treating Nunavummiut as mental retards. Being Inuk is like continuing to being in an abusive relationship with its own government (first the Canadian federal government). The education system is subconsciously telling Inuit that they are stupid and unwanted and in the way and should forget about our language and culture and is succeeding in a rapid pace to continue the eradication of our heritage. (Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2017a: 103-104)

Qajaq Ellsworth, who worked as Minister Quassa’s Executive Assistant until 2017

¹³¹ During the 2015 Education Act Review hearings, NTI had made similar argument: that the Nunavut Education Act “merely gives the appearance” that it is guided by the foundational belief that parents, communities, and Elders have key roles to play in decision-making about education. Noting, rather, that power is held by the Minister.

¹³² Alethea Arnaquq-Baril is a celebrated Inuit filmmaker, co-founder of Qanak, parent, and former Iqaluit DEA member.

wrote:

While I will not go into details at this time, I will impart that a large part of my reason for leaving [my EA position] is Bill 37, the changes it proposes, and the process by which it got to this stage. My understanding is that this current government is under the impression that they are under pressure to pass an education act. If you intend to pass such significant legislation, you must do so in a matter that respects rights, validates and addresses concerns shared by community members, DEAs and other partners. *The current administration and leadership seems to think that people don't know what we need or want.* That we don't deserve the existing rights we have because of the government's failure to meet obligations set out in the laws that have been in place for years... (Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2017a: 105, *emphasis added*)

It is striking to compare these comments about the state of the education system and education governance in 2017 to those from the 1970s and early 1980s, when Inuit were calling for a proper and equitable place in decision-making about education – and by extension the future – of their own children. Then as now, they were concerned that the government did not take seriously the import of teaching Indigenous children their own language, cultures, and histories. Then, as now, they were fighting to have their Inuit rights recognized and incorporated into the institutions that governed their lives.¹³³

6.5.5 *DEAs and Local Control over Education under Bill 37*

The Coalition of Nunavut DEAs and several individual DEAs made submissions to the Legislative Assembly. Each DEA was provided with a standard template letter for

¹³³ Bill 37's proposed amendments to remove references to IQ and to delay (indefinitely) the implementation of bilingual education were seen by most as an assault on the hard-won right of Inuit to access education in their own language. During the 2015 *Education Act Review*, NTI was critical of the treatment of IQ in the 2008 Education Act, pointing out that while Inuit culture and values *seem* to be entrenched in the Act, in fact, these values are never explicitly identified, and no guidance is given within the Act itself on how to operationalize them. NTI suggested, in their submission in 2015 that in the absence of specific measures coupled with empowered parents and communities, including IQ in the Act was essentially useless. NTI recommended removing all references to IQ from the Act altogether or amending the Act to include specific measures for implementing IQ. The GN responded to this

their Chairs to sign, by the CNDEA. Most DEAs who made a submission did use this standard letter, but many added their own annotations. These submissions reveal widespread frustration in communities about the state of the relationship between DEAs, the regional schools operations units, and the Department of Education headquarters. In several submissions, the DEAs argue that Bill 37 amounted to nothing more than “an abandonment of IQ principals” and an “extraordinary centralization of authority in Iqaluit (HQ) & micro-management of community life.” (Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2017a: 21) From these submissions, it is clear that most DEAs feel they have not been sufficiently supported or resourced, particularly since 2008 when the new Education Act was passed. As the Coral Harbour DEA wrote:

Since 2008, DEAs have consistently sought increases in resources to support their scope of authorities. DEAs responsibilities increased by 43%¹³⁴ in the 2008 Act but DEA operating budgets did not increase. DEAs have been forced to operate in a manner that is underfunded and under-resourced, and this generates a lot of criticism against DEAs. (Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2017a: 63)

The issue of DEA capacity has come up again and again since 2008; and despite a decade of calls by the CNDEA, individual DEAs, school administrators, parents, and researchers very little has been done to help ensure that these organizations can execute

recommendation when in Bill 37, the *Act to Amend the Education Act*. The Bill proposes to remove IQ from the legislation and make it a matter of curriculum. This proposed change was met with considerable resistance from a wide range of stakeholders, including NTI. NTI’s 2015 recommendation to remove the references to IQ was premised on *also* empowering parents and communities. In other words, NTI’s position was that *if* DEAs (i.e. parents and communities) were meaningfully empowered by the Act (i.e. with proper training and resources) then a legislated requirement to “integrate and incorporate Inuit societal values and the principles and practices of IQ and respect for Inuit culture and language” would not be necessary. (NTI 2015b: 4) However, what Bill 37 proposes is to remove IQ, extend bilingual education implementation deadlines (indefinitely at the senior high school level) *and* decrease DEA powers.

¹³⁴ It is not entirely clear to me how CNDEA arrived at this precise figure. An important contribution to the literature on education governance in Nunavut would be a comprehensive history and analysis of the district education authorities themselves, perhaps as case studies, and also an historical examination of the CNDEA. A project of this kind would help to add some texture and nuance to the CNDEA’s current work and advocacy efforts.

the full scope of the responsibilities afforded them by the Act. During the Auditor General and Education Act Review hearings, Departmental attitudes towards the principle of local control were revealed, and with Bill 37, the lack of DEA capacity was used by the GN to justify the reduction or elimination of DEA powers in favour of greater Ministerial authority.

The Proposed DEA Council: An Olive Branch?

The proposed DEA Council outlined in Bill 37, it seems, was intended to serve as a compromise. It is clear that the GN has no plans to re-instate the education boards, but it would be hard pressed to ignore, altogether, the persistent calls for a better resourced arms-length intermediary body between local DEAs and the Department of Education. According to Bill 37, the Council of DEAs would replace the Coalition of Nunavut DEAs and would provide support to individual DEAs in areas such as: training, school plans, teacher orientation, and identifying representatives on hiring panels. The Council would also participate in long-term strategic planning with the Department of Education. The DEA Council would be arms-length from the Department, but its mandate would be set by the legislation. It is possible to see how the proposed Council could help to fill some of the capacity gaps that DEAs say they are trying to address, and it would ensure some protection, in law, for such an institution to exist; however, the proposed model elicited much criticism for its lack of independence from government.

The Iqaluit District Education Authority argued that the proposed DEA Council was “ill-conceived and irresponsible”:

The DEA Council, in our opinion, should not be created nor should it effectively replace the CNDEA. The DEA Council strips away authorities that should remain with DEAs. The proposed makeup, proposed areas of

responsibilities of the DEA Council, accountability of the DEA Council are ill-conceived and irresponsible. Give the CNDEA more authority and resources instead. The Department of Education's "A Guide to Bill 37" says that there is a lot more accountability and independence with the DEA Council. However, if the Council were to be truly independent then: funding would not flow through the Department of Education; reporting would be directly to the House, via the Speaker, not the Minister of Education; and the Department of Education would not be able to adjust an Attendance or Inuuqaligiisiarniq Policy that was mandated by the Council. (Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2017a: 72)

Several other DEAs also noted that an important characteristic of the existing Coalition of Nunavut DEAs is that it is a grassroots organization, something that the proposed DEA Council would not be:

The Coalition of Nunavut DEAs was created from DEAs. The Coalition emerged because DEAs were frustrated after the regional boards were dissolved. The Coalition was created to advocate in a unified manner on behalf of parents with the Department of Education. Dissolving the Coalition and replacing it with a government established Council will undermine the independent voice of DEAs in their efforts to be the voice of the parents at the local level. (see, for example the submissions by Coral Harbour (p.64); Gjoa Haven (p.66); and Hall Beach (p. 68) of Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2017a)

The Rankin Inlet DEA echoed their support for the Coalition of Nunavut DEAs, and expressed frustration with what they perceived to be a power-grab the Department of Education:

The Coalition is needed to offer guidance and support to the DEAs that the RSOs are not able to provide. They offer a clearer understanding of the Education Act, which allows the DEAs to better serve the students and community. *The proposed recommendations are very much reflective of centralizing responsibilities and authorities to the headquarters and to the Minister of Education. We see this as a step backward. We have been trying our best to communicate and work with the Department staff to no avail. The line of communication from the Minister's office is only from the top down, not vice versa. To say we are frustrated is an understatement.*

We do not want more policies and more reporting procedures. We want to

build our schools, our staff and our committees. The recommendations undermine all...the team efforts and collaboration that exist within our schools. The Legislative Assembly must communicate with us in a way that accommodates us more, not solely in a bureaucratic manner. (Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2017a: 90 *emphasis added*)

The Iqaluit DEA turned the issue of DEA capacity on its head in their submission noting that many of the proposed DEA Council responsibilities are, in fact, responsibilities that the Department of Education has historically found challenging (or in some cases, such as improving attendance rates, impossible) to fulfill:

Training and support to DEAs that were the responsibility of the Department of Education will now be the responsibility of a body without the resources of a government department. This downloading of responsibilities is irresponsible, puts more administrative pressure on DEAs, and will not improve student outcomes or experiences in the classroom.” (73)

Another notable feature of the proposed DEA Council is the lack of Inuit institutional representation. The Coalition of Nunavut DEAs presently has NTI and Regional Inuit representation. The proposed Council would not. Effectively, the GN would be pushing the land claims organizations out by setting the Council up in this way. In its proposed form, the Council would exist to support DEAs in performing their reduced (now primarily administrative) duties but it would not contribute to their empowerment as active partners in the design, delivery, and monitoring of education in the territory. Given that NTI has earmarked a significant proportion of its lawsuit winnings for education and training, it seems odd that the GN would choose to structure the Council in this way. Taken together, it is difficult to dispute claims by NTI and

several DEAs that the Department of Education is actively working to centralize power and control over education.

GN Capacity and Internal Politics

Strong criticisms have been levied at the Government of Nunavut and the Department of Education in particular in recent years. Capacity issues within the GN Department of Education and among DEAs have repeatedly been blamed for the lack of progress on successful implementation of the Education Act. (Auditor General 2013; Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2014a; 2014b; CNDEA, etc.) However, the Department of Education has also been criticized for not making use of previously developed materials, and there have even accusations by some that the Department is deliberately sidelining or forcing out the people and materials that could improve performance in the areas of bilingual education and inclusion of Inuit societal values.

Among the strongest critics to speak publicly on this issue is Shirley Tagalik a former educator and manager of Curriculum and School Services based out of a decentralized Department of Education office in Arviat. In an open letter Tagalik penned in 2017, she points to a troubling trend within the Department of Education towards marginalizing Inuktitut and Inuit societal values. In her letter, Tagalik notes that since 1999, important work has been taking place to develop a made-in-Nunavut curriculum but that much of this work has “never seen the light of day.”¹³⁵ Tagalik explained that

¹³⁵ Other former public servants in the Department of Education have also alluded to the existence of these materials. For example, in his submission to the Legislative Assembly regarding Bill 37, Qajaaq Ellsworth, former Executive Assistant to Minister Quassa wrote: “all those resources your department of education is sitting on...the materials developed to support and advance Inuktitut and Inuit education...start using them.” (p. 105)

when she left the Department in 2009, her division, which was working on developing bilingual IQ-grounded curriculum, was already being dismantled; that jobs were moved from Arviat to the Department headquarters in Iqaluit:

“But since there were not Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (IQ)-qualified people there, (the director) shifted the job roles and began to dismantle IQ as well. Over the ensuing 8 years this has just been scaled up as QQ (Qallunaat Qaujimagatuqangit) staff do what they know and try to discredit what they don’t understand – IQ. Those of us who worked to develop a made-in-Nunavut curriculum have been marginalized and discredited. So we have been removed from being able to impact the system in any way – unless we are willing to run for government.” (Tagalik quoted in LeTourneau 2017)

Tagalik suggests in her letters, as others have before her, that a significant barrier to achieving the vision for a bilingual bicultural education system, is the Department’s own senior administrators: “What a travesty is being brought onto Inuit by the few gatekeepers who believe that the system they know must be superior when in fact it has had years to prove its worth and continues to fail our children on every front.” (Tagalik qtd in LeTourneau 2017) These are heavy accusations by just one well-respected, long-time educator and resident of Nunavut, but Tagalik is not alone in her frustration.

Education Assistant Deputy Minister, John MacDonald, responded to Tagalik’s letter by explaining that once the Act passed, the Department had to “shift gears” and focus on the implementation schedule associated with the Act, including developing regulations, training, support and communications: “It is often lost, in terms of the general discourse, how much of an effort and what the magnitude of that type of project

is. There are no other jurisdictions that have, from scratch, created an Education Act, certainly not in the last 50 to 60 years.” (MacDonald qtd in LeTourneau 2017)

When you juxtapose Tagalik’s assertions that she and her staff were well on their way to developing a bilingual curriculum grounded in Inuit societal values with MacDonald’s comments about creating an Education Act – and thus an education system – “from scratch”, it is possible to see that the unquestioning belief in the importance of made-in-Nunavut approaches (the same belief that drove Inuit in the 1970s to fight for their right to self-determination) may be having unintended and perhaps harmful consequences. It is also worth mentioning that while the design of a made-in-Nunavut education act offered great opportunity for change, the GN was not, as MacDonald suggests, starting “from scratch”. Nunavut’s architects, politicians, and senior administrators could have chosen to maintain the decentralized system they inherited, opting to “steer rather than row” through new waters. The centralization of control and decision-making that has taken place in Nunavut is not *required* to implement a new system.

Ultimately, Bill 37 did not progress past the Standing Committee stage. In May 2017, Committee members acknowledged the overwhelmingly negative response to the Bill and made a formal announcement that they would not bring the Bill forward to a Committee of the whole for debate. In response, Minister Quassa sent a letter to Tom Sammurtook, chair of the Standing Committee offering a number of compromises on the Bill and requesting that the Committee reconsider its decision to let the bill die before the Fall election to give all MLAs a chance to discuss the Bill as a matter of record. (Nunavut Legislative Assembly 2017b) When the Assembly returned for its Fall sitting, Quassa

introduced a motion to bring the Bill forward for debate but Members voted against the motion – the bill was dead.

No piece of legislation can or will be perfect. The challenges within the Nunavut education system are complex and deeply intertwined with colonialism, intergenerational trauma, and social wellbeing. What the debates around Bill 37 really brought to the fore, however, is how delicate the relationship is between citizens and the state in Nunavut; how frustrated Nunavummiut are with their government; and how insecure the Government of Nunavut is about its own power. Importantly, though, the resurgence of grassroots mobilization against Bill 37 is evidence, once again, that Nunavummiut are committed to upholding the relationship between education and Inuit self-determination.

6.6 Conclusion

Inuit have made it clear over the last 40 years that decision-making authority over the education system is their *right*. This right was expected to be institutionalized in the creation of the Government of Nunavut. What the story of education governance in Nunavut since 1999 presented in this chapter, shows is that Nunavummiut are disenchanted and disappointed with their government and their education system but they still believe in the idea of Nunavut and the potential Nunavut holds as an expression of Inuit self-determination.

As Sandra Inutiq writes, “[Nunavut] territory was created as part of a ‘package’ of Inuit having more control over their own affairs, to recover from assimilation policies and start reversing them.” (Inutiq 2017a) However, what seems to be happening is that since Nunavut was created, power has become increasingly centralized in the Government of Nunavut – a public government that is struggling with its own capacity issues. The

analysis I presented of recent events in education in this chapter shows that the GN seems to be displaying high modernist tendencies towards the elimination of local difference, standardization, and the centralization of power and control. The elimination of the regional boards of education was an early signal, as were the exclusion of NTI from legislative design process, and the components of Bill 37, which proposed to abandon much of what differentiated the Act from its provincial counterparts, reduce DEA control, and eliminate the CNDEA - a grassroots organization - in favour of a GN-controlled one.

The Department's impulse to batten down the hatches in response to chaos is on some level an understandable one – and it may even work in the short term –but, as I will argue in the final chapter, their impulse to standardize and centralize control in the face of what they perceive to be disorder is essentially no different than the impulses of the high-modernist Canadian welfare state. This approach will not engage or empower; it will only further alienate citizens who have been told repeatedly in their dealings with governments since the 1950s that they are not capable and that they do not know what is best for themselves. At the end of *Seeing Like A State* (1998), Scott writes:

If I were asked to condense the reasons behind these failures [of high modernist schemes] into a single sentence, I would say that the progenitors of such plans regarded themselves as far smarter and farseeing than they really were and, at the same time, regarded their subjects as far more stupid and incompetent than they really were. (343)

The GN has identified parents are key “partners” in the education system but has demonstrated very little trust in citizens and has allotted very few resources to engaging them. Although, the Department does have a Parental Engagement strategy called “It Starts at Home,” to the best of my knowledge, little to no financial resources have been allocated to implement it. The GN has said on multiple occasions that the DEAs do not

have the knowledge or the expertise to participate meaningfully, and that they have shown since 1999 that they are incapable of carrying out their duties appropriately. The DEAs themselves do not dispute this and have been calling for supports since Nunavut was created. Rather than respond with increased opportunities and resources for training or better institutional supports for DEAs, the GN responded with Bill 37, which proposes to reduce or eliminate DEA powers, and replace the CNDEA – an important intermediary institution – with an organization the GN can control. Parents and DEA members are not and never have been experts in curriculum design or delivery. *No* parents are in any jurisdiction. The way the system is structured now makes it impossible for DEAs to be effective without *significant* leadership at the local level.

The GN's focus on "standards" is understandable – consistency across communities with respect to learning outcomes is not unreasonable or undesirable. As an argument against local control, though, it is problematic. All education systems with school boards work in this way – the province sets standards and the boards work within that framework to serve their own districts, communities, and schools. By centralizing power in the Department and ignoring calls for the re-instatement of some kind of intermediary body, the GN avoids having to do anything about DEA training or capacity-building, eliminates possible competition with, or criticism from an independent education board, and does not have to worry about explaining itself to citizens who get a glimpse into how things are working internally. Ultimately, though, what you end up with

is less civil society and therefore less democracy. This is exactly the opposite of what Inuit thought they were going to get when they created Nunavut.

In the final chapter, I reflect on the main themes and arguments presented throughout this dissertation. I return to my main argument about the gap between Inuit and the institutions that structure their daily lives - most especially the school. Drawing on Scott (1998), I conclude with a discussion of what I believe can be learned from the Igloolik experience to engage citizens and to make these institutions more meaningful.

Chapter 7: “We Have to Keep Trying”: A Case for Intermediary Social Institutions

7.1 Introduction

In her 2017 special ministerial report, *A New Shared Arctic Leadership Model*, Mary Simon concluded that education must be the cornerstone of Arctic policy in Canada at all levels, arguing that improving educational outcomes and supporting Indigenous education is, “at its core, the highest test of nation building.” (Simon 2017) Simon’s recent statements on education are among ongoing calls by Inuit leaders for improvements in education, as well as ongoing debates concerning the broad objectives of education and the best path forward to pursuing them. As Nunavut’s 20th birthday looms, the territory faces global pressures to exploit non-renewable resources, threats associated with climate change, the opening of the Northwest Passage and the potential changes that brings for demographics and resources in the region, ongoing struggles stemming from historical trauma, and significant governance challenges in a complex political system. In the face of all this, a well-educated, engaged, and healthy citizenry is essential. And yet, the education system remains one of Nunavut’s greatest challenges.

I began this dissertation with a quote that spoke to the relationship between the school, parents, and the community at large in Igloolik, Nunavut. Formal schooling was used as an especially sharp instrument of colonial intervention and oppression in the Eastern Arctic, as elsewhere in the country. (Inutiq 2017a) Canada’s post-war high modernist tendencies created the conditions under which Inuit children were separated from their families, and families were in turn separated from their homelands, forced into permanent settlements structured around a set of institutions Inuit did not choose. After

more than 50 years, over which time Inuit have regained political control over the education system, educational outcomes have not improved dramatically, and the school is still seen by many to be a foreign institution – an island unto itself in the community.

In the discourse about education in Nunavut today, a common explanation for poor educational outcomes, resistance or lack of engagement by parents, and difficult community-school relations is the history of residential schools. After the significant contributions of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Qikiqtani Truth Commission, there can be absolutely *no doubt* that the residential school experiences of Inuit and the legacies of those experiences continue to influence the Nunavut education system and Inuit-state relations more generally. However, my early discussions with Iglulingmiut and with both Inuit and non-Inuit advisors convinced me that a more nuanced analysis of the relationship between the community and the school was required. My central argument is that the persistent problems with the school, and school system, are symptoms of a larger problem of distance – of disconnection, disengagement, and detachment – between citizens and the institutions that shape their daily lives. This dissertation is, at its core, an exploration of what happens in a society if citizens do not or cannot find meaning in the institutions that structure their lives.

As I explained in Chapter 1, the dominant narrative of Northern political and economic development since the 1970s has centred on the relationship between Indigenous peoples and a high-modernist Canadian state. The analytical emphasis has been on the exploitation and marginalization of Inuit (in the case of the Eastern Arctic) and the privileging of Qallunaat social, cultural, political and economic values and practices. This gave rise to the rights-based Indigenous movements of the 1970s, which

in turn led to the settlement of the NLCA and other modern treaties, and the reclaiming of the political and, to some degree, economic control those treaties represent. This narrative has become the accepted framework for discussions about Northern development and has shaped northern political and public policy discourse for close to forty years. While this narrative holds truth, it is incomplete because it does not account for the diversity of experience at the local and regional levels, and it largely leaves out an examination of society itself.

One of the primary objectives of this dissertation has been to add nuance to this version of the story of northern development by documenting and reflecting upon the experiences and perspectives of the people who lived through the changes under examination here. It is my hope that this dissertation, which has relied heavily on the insights and analysis of Iglulingmiut, sheds new light on some of the challenges that Igloolik is facing with respect to education and the full participation of its citizens in local society and beyond. Similarly, that the lessons learned here may help policy makers, particularly in the Government of Nunavut, identify more accurately the problems they are trying to address, particularly with respect to education governance and community development.

As I mentioned in the introductory chapter, this is not a theoretical study of education. I have used education policy and education governance as a way into exploring Inuit-state relations. Education is particularly useful as a lens because of the role that formal schooling plays in state-building and the production and re-production of citizens. In Chapter 3, I provided a detailed history of northern education policy and governance and its relationship to so-called “northern development” and the Indigenous

rights movement culminating in the settlement of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. Chapter 3 shows how education has been used as an instrument both of colonization and of Inuit self-determination in the Arctic. This higher-scale historical account served as necessary background information for Chapters 4 and 5, which offer a micro-level analysis of what the events and policies covered in Chapter 3 meant for, and to, the people of Igloodik in their own words.

Guided by the insights of Scott (1998), Arvaluk (2007), Qitsualik (2013), Qulaut (2014a; 2014b), and others, I have argued that one of the outcomes of high-modernist state intervention in the Eastern Arctic has been the emergence of two planes of social life in the “semi-artificial” settlements created by federal welfare state policy in the 1960s: an endogenous plane rooted in the centuries-old Inuit society, and an exogenous one consisting of the set of imposed institutions, including the school. Each of these planes, I have suggested, has associated with it a set of ideas, values, practices, and expectations about how people should act and relate to one another and their surroundings, and about what constitutes a productive, meaningful life.

Many have used the phrase “living in two worlds” to describe what it was like when they were in school or when they finished their schooling and moved home again. Today Inuit leaders and parents often say they want young people to have “the best of both worlds”. While this metaphor highlights just how stark the differences can be in the values, ideas, and characteristics that comprise Inuit and Qallunaat society, I think this way of conceptualizing what people were (and are) experiencing, reinforces the notion that these differences are incompatible – irreconcilable – when the experiences of Iglulingmiut in the 1970s and 1980s suggests otherwise. I have, instead, chosen to use

the term “plane” to capture the simultaneous co-existence of two sets of social institutions that Inuit navigate in their daily lives. I suggest that while the two worlds metaphor lends itself well to the idea of two worlds colliding, by employing the concept of “planes”, it is possible to see the complex and evolutionary ways in which these planes can overlap, creating opportunities for mutual transformation.

The enduring existence of the endogenous and exogenous planes (albeit each in modified form, 50 years on) in Igloodik is proof that colonization does not “destroy everything” and has not done so. I used this framework as a way to name and examine some of the “dynamics of colonialism” in one place over a relatively long period of time. In doing so, I have argued that while all of the institutions that make up the exogenous plane were imposed by a high modernist welfare state within roughly the same 10-year period, their application and meaning in Igloodik have been neither uniform nor linear. In some cases, such as with the cooperatives and local governments, the endogenous and exogenous planes have intersected or overlapped more easily; whereas in other cases, such as with the schools and school system, the two planes have butted up against one another. I believe that there are important lessons for community and state-building to be found in these differences, and in the trajectory of education policy and governance as it was experienced by Iglulingmiut.

7.2 Nunavut and the creation of “mētis-friendly” institutions

Scott (1998) argues that the only way to prevent failure in state-building “schemes” is through the inclusion of so-called “mētis-friendly” institutions – institutions that incorporate local knowledge. The project of trying to develop “mētis-friendly” institutions, including a “mētis-friendly” education system, is in essence what Inuit have

been trying to do since the 1970s. Nunavut, as a political project, was meant to bring the two planes I described above together; to develop a set of institutions recognizable to the federation that would allow for the expression of Inuit self-determination. When the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement was settled, the Nunavut Implementation Commission (NIC) was tasked with designing a system of government to meet the overarching goals set out in the Agreement and by Inuit leaders at the time. In other words, it was the job of the NIC to design a set of institutions that would reflect the integration of these endogenous and exogenous planes that were now part of the reality of social life in Nunavut. This is, of course, no small task but it has been made eminently more challenging, I suggest, by a critical omission on the part of Nunavut's architects and early leadership.

In *Seeing Like A State*, Scott (1998) argues that the compulsion of high-modernist states to standardize and centralize must be resisted if state-building projects are to succeed. His argument is that in the process of standardizing and centralizing, high-modernist states render invisible the diversity and complexity that contribute to the fabric of social and civic life. Scott argues that diversity and complexity have advantages – they help to create and maintain stability and adaptability in the face of change. And indeed, that it is this diversity and complexity that brings meaning to institutions and allows them to function properly. (352-355)

All along Inuit have understood the importance of diversity and complexity. All along they have understood that by “seeing like a community” they could protect themselves against the impulses and intrusions of outsiders. In the case of education, this has taken the form of unrelenting calls for local and regional control – the

institutionalization of diversity and complexity in the design and implementation of formal schooling. The need for local and regional control was obvious when Inuit were contending with distant governments in Ottawa and Yellowknife. This does not seem to have been taken up in the context of Nunavut.

When Nunavut was created those in positions of power, perhaps necessarily, shifted from seeing like a community to seeing like a state. Nunavut's architects and early leaders were focused on differentiating Nunavut from the NWT, determined to develop new "made-in-Nunavut" institutions. As Nunavut Senator Dennis Patterson explained:

It was a new broom-sweep clean approach. There was a sense that Yellowknife was bad; that we had split from Yellowknife because it was bad. Yellowknife wasn't bad. In fact, Yellowknife allowed the creation of Nunavut. Yellowknife and the residents of the major centres of NWT could have voted against division in the plebiscite, in '82 and '93 but they respected Inuit desire to start a new public government. Yellowknife had evolved into a nationally and internationally respected system for cross-cultural governance. But, these inexperienced new MLAs wanted to be different... (D. Patterson, personal interview, March 12, 2014)

There are many who would disagree with Patterson about the role that Yellowknife and senior officials in the GNWT played in the creation of Nunavut. One of them is John Amagoalik, one of the celebrated "fathers of Nunavut" who writes:

The Government of the Northwest Territories started out having a very hostile attitude towards Nunavut and the creation of a new territory. We went through a period of very emotional debate because they were so hostile towards what we wanted to do. A lot of the time we had to drag them screaming... They started coming on-side after the plebiscite in 1982, but they were still very reluctant. They did not cooperate a lot of times, and they were slow in their reactions to recommendations... There was some resistance from the bureaucracy for sure, but it was a very quiet,

subdued opposition. The noisy opposition was from the politicians.
(Amagoalik 2007: 132)¹³⁶

The status of the relationship with the GNWT notwithstanding, it is clear that Inuit were understandably determined to re-imagine and re-work the institutions that governed their lives when Nunavut was created.

As I explained in Chapter 6, Nunavut's early leaders seemed to believe that the new Government of Nunavut was a legitimate and sufficient replacement for the intermediary institutions previously required by Inuit to protect themselves against colonial and distant governments. Recall the recommendations in *Footprints in New Snow* as well as in Okalik's statements in 1999 that the regional boards of education were no longer needed. In taking this perspective, the architects and early leaders of Nunavut seriously underestimated the importance of those intermediary social institutions for cultivating the ongoing integration of the two planes, and for the cultivation of a collective sense of purpose in the communities in which most Nunavummiut carry out their daily lives.

I argued in Chapter 6 that the Government of Nunavut seems to be displaying all-too-familiar high-modernist tendencies, with a strong focus in education on standardization and the centralization of power and control within the Department of Education. The debates around 2017's *Bill 37* have made clear that the citizens of

¹³⁶ Abele and Dickerson (1985) explain that the social and political dynamics around the issue of division were more nuanced than they might appear. Their analysis of the results of the 1982 plebiscite on division shows that it was not simply Inuit or Indigenous voters in favour of division, and non-Indigenous voters opposed, nor was it the case that Inuit were in favour and other Northern Indigenous peoples opposed. They also note that at least one non-Indigenous MLAs in the 9th Assembly (see Chapter 3 for more about the 9th Assembly), supported the plebiscite.

Nunavut object to these moves by the GN to centralize and standardize. Thought leaders outside the GN are highly critical of the state of governance in Nunavut, and of what many are simply calling neocolonialism. Sandra Inutiq, former Nunavut Languages Commissioner and co-founder of the Iqaluit-based citizens' group Qanak Collective writes:

[A] major challenge in Indigenous governance generally is to ensure that governance continue to reflect cultural norms, values and traditions, while remaining practically effective against the forces of neo-colonialism. We are clearly seeing this in Nunavut. Neo-colonialism is winning, right now. We must act on it!

A question remains whether we have a shared vision within Inuit and the territory about our approach. This has been critical right from the beginning of creation of Nunavut. I would say we did in the early days of Nunavut, and it is now starting to unravel. (Inutiq 2017b)

The 2009 GN Report Card and the debates around the proposed new Education bill clearly showed that the citizens of Nunavut and particularly Inuit feel alienated and dismissed by their government. It is clear from 2013 Auditor General report, 2015 Special Committee report, and most of the citizen interventions in the consultation and legislative processes around these reports that the institutions in Nunavut, especially the education system, are not working. In the case of education, it is not just a matter of getting the curriculum right or the increasing the number of Inuit teachers. No doubt, these are challenging issues in their own right, but they are not insurmountable with political will, openness to learning from other jurisdictions, and adequate resources. What Inutiq, quoted above, is identifying is a much deeper problem.

Inutiq comments that there was once a "shared vision for Nunavut" and that the vision is now unravelling. Such a thing, if it can ever exist, must be fostered and tended

to on an ongoing basis. People need opportunities to express their individual and collective identity; and to work out areas of agreement and disagreement, especially in complex matters related to education, which is so critical to any society. But since Nunavut was created, very little has been done to support the kind of social institution-building that is critical for the work that Sandra is talking about. The sense of possibility and empowerment to make change that people like George Qulaut felt in the 1980s has to be re-cultivated at each generation. The tasks and hurdles facing each generation will be different, of course, but in order to build on what has come before and to expand the range of imaginable possibilities, there must be opportunities for citizens to express their ideas, experiment, innovate, and critique.

7.3 The Case for Intermediary Social Institutions

If, as Scott suggests, mētis-friendly institutions are essential to successful state-building, then it is necessary to think about how to create them. The predominant argument in Nunavut for how to make institutions meaningful seems to be to increase the number of Inuit working within them. Politically, Inuit have increased their control over education over the last 50 years, but we know that the number of Inuit in education-related jobs, for example – particularly in senior management, curriculum design, and in secondary schools – has not increased. (See Appendix A) An important, but as yet unfulfilled test of Nunavut’s institutions is to see what might be possible if those institutions were animated by Inuit. Certainly, to use Scott’s language, it would be impossible to create mētis-friendly institutions without including the people who hold that knowledge. Inuit participation in positions of authority and decision-making in *both* the political and public service realms is absolutely required. However, I am not certain

this will be sufficient on its own. Simply putting more Inuit bodies into institutions that are not working cannot be the answer. The solution to a problem is seldom to do the opposite of what has been done.

I think there is something to be learned from the community-building period I described in Chapter 5. During this period, educators and community members were working together to figure out how to make the so-called “semi-artificial” settlements into communities in which people – citizens – could have meaningful lives. This work was done largely through intermediary institutions as important vehicles of civic participation and expression. It was through these institutions that people in Igloolik began to find the zone(s) of overlap between the endogenous and exogenous planes. And it was in finding these zones of overlap that Iglulingmiut, and perhaps Inuit in other communities, were able to see how they might use some of the institutions they did not choose to serve their own purposes vis a vis self-determination.

Without this combination of local leadership and intermediary social institutions to create opportunities for overlap between the two planes and thus finding meaning and purpose in the institutions that now structure life in Northern communities, the endogenous plane fades into the background as the process-oriented institutional requirements of the exogenous plane dominate peoples’ time and energy. The effect is that community members are reduced to performing their externally assigned roles in the siloed, vertically oriented public institutions that operate in communities. They are patients, parents, tenants, case files, employees, prisoners, and customers; they are service recipients, not citizens. This apportioning out of roles and the kind of relationship

with the state it represents begin to take a toll. In a conversation I had with Lucasi Ivalu he reflected on the life of many young people in Igloolik, with concern.

...everything is so costly up here also which is another thing that makes it very difficult for young parents. That's true when I say young parents...young parents I don't agree with – not because they have children but because I want them to have a young life. When I was growing up 16,17-21 – full of energy, full of fun! I used to stay awake for 24/36 hours because life was so exciting. And I did this without alcohol or drugs, you know, doing things! With my own hands.

Some people think that Inuit just want to party. Not all Inuit want to do nothing but party...Lack of education, no jobs, and when they go to collect their income support cheque, they're only allowed to get \$150 in cash because the GN doesn't trust them to give them the full amount of welfare. I mean, if you're an adult treated like this all the time, how would you feel? Probably not very good. I don't know because I don't do income support, but you know...I don't want to be in their shoes.

You feel neglected, you feel embarrassed because it's not part of our culture to depend on other people all the time. We try to make do with what we can do with our own hands, feed our family, and now the young people seem to have no more Inuit role models; only southern role models like Justin Bieber? Why is that? Inuit don't create anymore role models.

In 2009, when Peter Ivalu and his wife returned to Igloolik after a decade working for the GN in Iqaluit, he observed changes in his home community:

It became worse. There was no morale. There were no longer people talking about the future. No trying. People just wanted handouts. They just wanted to sell stuff on the radio. It seemed that the will to provide for oneself was no longer there.

OK. Before I moved, I knew there were a lot of dropouts and what have you, and [a] low graduation rate but being away for 10 years and moving back, I...it was really sad to see the hopelessness in Iglulingmiut. All this potential with jobs from Mary River – so many years of people not wanting to finish school, the norm back then was to drop out. It seemed it came back to haunt the residents of Igloolik. Being in an environment or community like Iqaluit where there's a lot of businesses, there's an entrepreneurial

spirit...but going back here there just wasn't any of that. (P. Ivalu, personal interview, May 30, 2014)

These statements contrast sharply with Kadlutsiak's letter in the *Midnight Sun* from the 1970s and the recollections of so many Iglulingmiut I spoke with who were active in their community during that time. There may be readers thinking "that's all well and good but Inuit didn't have any real power in the 1970s" (recall Louis Tapardjuk's observation about prominent leaders being reduced to dog catchers when they moved into the settlement). I would respond to that by saying that it is true that Inuit had less institutionalized power in the 1970s than they do today but their relative isolation from government oversight coupled with resources for local institution-building created opportunities for independent action and innovation, and ultimately, a collective sense of empowerment to turn the settlement they did not choose into a community they could live with. The value of this seems to have gotten lost in the push for, and implementation of, Nunavut.

7.4 Local Leadership and Scale Matter

In order for institutions – particularly those that have been imposed as so many were in the Eastern Arctic – to take on meaning to citizens, to communities, they have to become legible from "below" (i.e. from the community view). In 2015, Sheila Watt-Cloutier gave a keynote address at conference in celebration of Nunavut Sivuniksavut's 30th anniversary, in which she encouraged participants to consider the value of small-scale initiatives:

...Sometimes people can minimize "cottage" or "private" initiatives. But change often happens in these smaller ways. [It's] Not just grandiose

national initiatives [that make change] but ways that people in this room in their small ways are making change, every day. Foster these smaller pockets on smaller scales – the chances of us turning things around is remarkable. Start from the ground up. This will foster more support.

Without appropriately sized (in the case of Igloolik, quite small) social institutions as avenues for social and civic expression, the siloed, institutionalized nature of the “semi-artificial” societies across the North deepened, creating greater distance between the two planes. The process that was underway during the 1980s and 1990s through the regional boards was the process of creating a mētis-friendly institution, on a scale that made sense to the intended beneficiaries. As independent intermediary institutions the regional boards and the DEAs they supported were able to work through some of those philosophical questions about the nature and purpose of the education system, taking seriously what students, parents, educators, and communities said and thought about it.

There may be some who question the “practicality” of having many small organizations to serve what is, ultimately, a very small population. My response to this would be simply, “practical from whose perspective?” What I have learned is that the people who call Igloolik home still “see like a community”; and they are still committed, as many others are in Nunavut, to maintaining local control. They are proud that Nunavut exists, but they can see clearly that the governance model has limitations with serious consequences to them and their families. If diversity and complexity are critical components of building and sustaining meaningful institutions, then opportunities to

accommodate diversity and complexity must be reflected in governance structures and systems.

I believe, in the end, that what is most important – what will engage parents and begin to improve community-school relations in Igloolik – is to encourage and support the development of intermediary social institutions. It is not enough to make public institutions more amenable to the population they are serving – there also needs to be support for social institution building, independent of the state. Citizens need multiple sites of social engagement– this is where we find efficacy and meaning.

I wish to conclude as I began – with the words of Iglulingmiut. George Qulaut, whose insights I have relied upon throughout this dissertation, remains pragmatic and optimistic about the future of education in Nunavut.

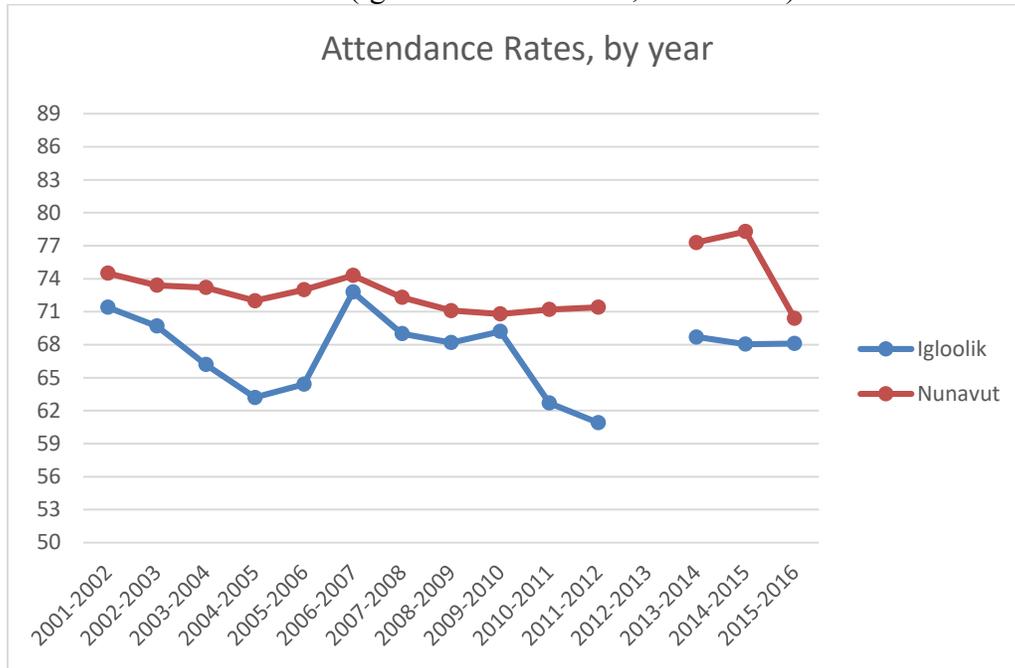
*So, I hope you have a better understanding of where we are, and what education is all about to us; the conflicts between the two cultures and trying to put them together. How best can we educate further using that model to teach our next generation? To me, we actually lost the culture and language and fought to get it back [and] have learned a lot and seen it [happen]. To me, in a community this size, southern education is OK, but if you're to go out of the community, the language of Inuktitut and the environment - what has been passed on generation to generation - is so crucial, so important...How best can we marry these two cultures? How best can we do it? This is the biggest battle we're facing. There'll be a lot of prejudice, a lot of bias, but we have to do it. We'll make mistakes, I'm not afraid to make a mistake. **We have to keep trying.***

Appendices

Appendix A Education Data

A.1 Attendance Rates

Table 6 Attendance Rates (Igloolik and Nunavut, 2001-2016)

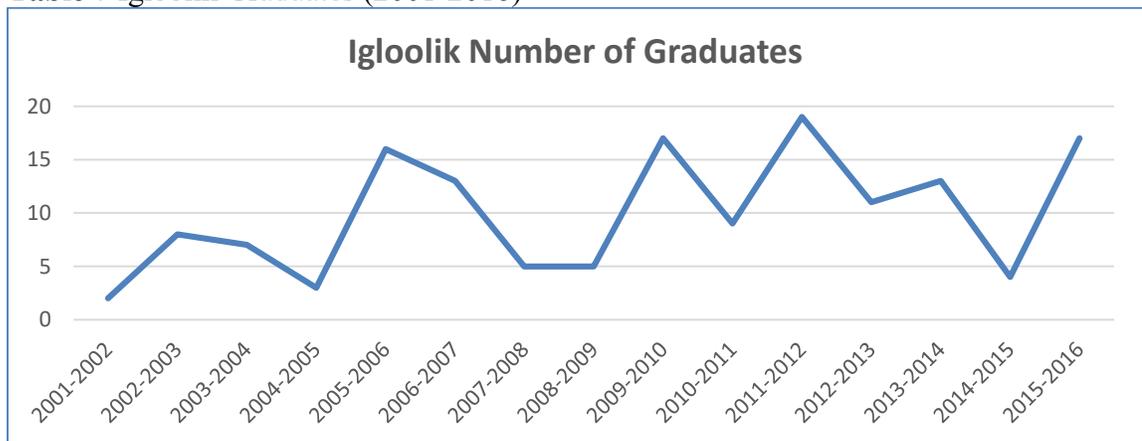


Source: Department of Education Annual Reports (2002-2016)

**Data not available for 2012-2013

A.2 Igloolik Graduates (2001-2016)

Table 7 Igloolik Graduates (2001-2016)



Source: Department of Education Annual Reports (2002-2016)

A.3 Department of Education Nunavut-wide Employment Data

Table 8 Department of Education Employment Data (March 2018)

<i>Employment, by category</i>	<i>Total positions</i>	<i>% Inuit</i>
Executive	2	50%
Senior Management	20	-
Middle Management	72	17%
Professional	744.5	27%
Paraprofessional	168.8	92%
Administrative Support	310.4	92%
Total	1,317.71	49%

Source: Government of Nunavut (2018)

Table 9 Department of Education Employment Data (March 2001)

<i>Employment, by category</i>	<i>Total positions</i>	<i>% Inuit</i>
Executive	3	66%
Senior Management	14	33%
Middle Management	84	19%
Professional	439	28%
Paraprofessional	265	77%
Administrative Support	119	92%
Total	918	48%

Source: Government of Nunavut (2001)

Appendix B State-funded Northern Research Initiatives (1958-1979)

Area Economic Surveys

From 1958-1968, the Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources commissioned 16 area economic surveys across the Northwest Territories and parts of Northern Quebec, authored by contract researchers as well as departmental research officers. The main purpose was to document Indigenous land use and to suggest ways to improve it. It was intended that the research carried out under this program would help to inform and guide northern development. The earlier reports – the so-called “crisis-oriented reports” – focus on the impacts of the changing economy: unemployment, high welfare costs and other social problems, mine closures, and the loss of the Hudson’s Bay Company. The later reports “attempted to present proposals for improving the lives of the local populations within a general assessment of regional and local resources.” For more information on area economic surveys see: Jim Lotz, “Area Economic Surveys: Critique and Assessment,” in *Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project: A Report, Vol. 2*. M. Freeman (Ed.). Ottawa: Dept. of Indian and Northern Affairs, 23-29.

Mackenzie Delta Research Project

The purpose of the studies conducted under the umbrella of the MDRP was to document and analyze socio-economic factors related to development in the Mackenzie Delta region of the Northwest Territories. In total, the department commissioned 12 individual studies, typically based on the summer fieldwork of university researchers. The project generated a series of community studies on different aspects of the changing social and economic conditions in the region’s settlements. Each of the reports in the

series complements the others to create an overarching description of the Mackenzie Delta region in the mid-1960s.

Northern Science Research Group

Between 1968 and 1975 the Northern Science Research Group commissioned 13 individual studies on a wide range of topics. These studies were concerned primarily with the departmental programs and policies that were part of the “expansion” of the Canadian state into the Arctic. They serve as early assessments of housing, industrial employment and adult education programs, as well as northern economic development policy. The scope of the studies varies considerably from short descriptive studies of certain programs, to multi-volume analyses of the mixed economy with recommendations for future northern development policies.

Appendix C Research Timeline and Interview Participants

C.1 Research Timeline

Table 10 Timeline of Research Activities

<i>Date(s)</i>	<i>Research Activity</i>	<i>Location</i>
March 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preliminary Fieldwork 	Igloolik, Nunavut
October-December 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Archival research (Library and Archives Canada) ▪ Foundational interviews 	Ottawa, Ontario
December 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Archival research (Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre & Northwest Territories Legislative Library) 	Yellowknife, Northwest Territories
December 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Meeting with Mary Simon, Chair of National Committee on Inuit Education 	Halifax, Nova Scotia
January 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Foundational interviews; research trip preparation 	Ottawa and Toronto, Ontario
February 15 – March 12, 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Igloolik community interviews; foundational interviews continue 	Igloolik and Iqaluit, Nunavut
March – May 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Foundational interviews continue ▪ Transcription and data review 	Ottawa and Toronto, Ontario
May 9 – June 6, 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Igloolik research trip ▪ Foundational interviews • Archival research 	Igloolik and Iqaluit, Nunavut
Summer – Fall 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transcription, inventory and preliminary analysis of data 	Toronto and Ottawa, Ontario
January – March 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of interview files and inventory of archival materials ▪ Development of database and dissertation chapter outline 	Toronto, ON
March 16 – April 10, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follow-up meetings and visits in Iqaluit and Igloolik • Community interviews and archival research 	Iqaluit and Igloolik, Nunavut
November 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Travel to Iqaluit to share findings and discuss dissemination. ▪ Met with Coalition of DEAs Executive Director to discuss potential project in Igloolik on parental engagement; ▪ Meetings with Arctic College staff; former senior Department of Education official; • Legislative library research 	Iqaluit, Nunavut

C.2 Interview Participants

Table 11: List of Individuals Referenced

Name	Location	Date(s)
Eva Ariak	Ottawa, ON	April 1, 2014
Jeela Allurut	Igloolik, NU	June 2, 2014
Julia Amarualik*	Igloolik, NU	March 5, 2014
Michelline Ammaq	Igloolik, NU	March 10, 2014
Joe Ataguttaaluk	Igloolik, NU	March 6, 2014
Susan Avinga**	Igloolik, NU	June 3, 2014
Helen Balanoff	Yellowknife, NWT	December 5, 2013
Mark Cleveland	Yellowknife, NWT	December 6, 2013
Tagak Curley	By phone	March 25, 2014
Elijah Evaluardjuk	Igloolik, NU	April 2, 2015
Terry Forth	Iqaluit, NU	March 12, 2014
Theo Ikummaq	Igloolik, NU	June 4, 2014
Ruby Irngaut	Igloolik, NU	June 2, 2014
Peter Ivalu	Igloolik, NU	May 30, 2014
Leah Ivvalu	Igloolik, NU	June 3, 2014
Lucasi Ivvalu	Igloolik, NU	March 31, 2015
Josiah Kadlutsiak*	Igloolik, NU	February 28, 2014
Bart-hannah Kappianaq	Igloolik, NU	June 2, 2014
Gary Kennedy	Igloolik, NU	May 30, 2014
Vivi Kunuk*	Igloolik, NU	March 3, 2014
Zacharias Kunuk	Igloolik, NU	March 6, 2014
Hugh Lloyd	Ottawa, ON	November 6, 2013
Kathy Oluvson	Yellowknife, NWT	December 6, 2013
Dennis Patterson	Iqaluit, NU	March 12, 2014
Francis Piuggattuk	Igloolik, NU	February 25, 2014 June 4, 2014
Daniel Qattalik*	Igloolik, NU	February 28, 2014 May 2, 2014
George Qulaut	Igloolik, NU	February 26, 2014
Bryan Robinson	Ottawa, ON	July 31, 2014
Mark Stiles	Ottawa, ON	November 6, 2013
Frank Tapardjuk	Igloolik, NU	May 23, 2014
Louis & Lucy Tapardjuk	Igloolik, NU	March 27, 2015
Mary Ellen Thomas	Iqaluit, NU	February 17, 2014
Abraham Ulayaruluk*	Igloolik, NU	February 27, 2014
Andre Uttak	Igloolik, NU	May 29, 2014
Louis Uttak*	Igloolik, NU	February 27, 2014 May 23, 2014
Hannay Uyarak*	Igloolik, NU	February 27, 2014
Maren Vsetula (and Larissa MacDonald)	Igloolik, NU	May 29, 2014

*Interpretation by Francis Piuggattuk, Interview available through the Archives of the Igloolik Research Centre

**Interpretation by Jeela Allurut, Interview available through the Archives of the Igloolik Research Centre

Appendix D Maps

D.1 Map of Nunavut

Figure 1: Map of Nunavut

D.2 Map of Inuit Nunangat

Figure 2: Map of Inuit Nunangat

Appendix E The Story of Ataguttaaluk

As told by Tagurnaaq, wife of Palluq, in 1922¹³⁷

Uumaga [the pet name for her husband, Palluq] and I were travelling from Iglulik to Tununiq [Pond Inlet area] when he dreamed one night that a friend of his had been eaten by his nearest kin. Uumaga has the gift of second sight, and always knows when anything remarkable is going to happen.

Then we heard a noise. We could not make out what it was; sometimes it sounded like a dying animal in pain, and then again like human voices in the distance. As we came nearer, we could hear human words, but could not at first make out the meaning, for the voice seemed to come from a great way off. Words that did not sound like real words, and a voice that was powerless and cracked. We listened and kept on listening, trying to make out one word from another, and at last we understood what it was that was being said. The voice broke down between the words, but what it was trying to say was this: ‘I am not one who can live any longer among my fellows; for I have eaten my nearest of kin.’

Now we knew that there should properly be no one else in this part of the country but ourselves, but all the same we could distinctly hear that this was a woman speaking, and we looked at each other, and it was as if we hardly dared speak out loud, and we whispered: ‘An eater of men! What is this we have come upon here!’

We looked about us, and at last caught sight of a little shelter, built of snow with a

¹³⁷ NOTE: This version of the story as recorded by Knud Rasmussen in 1922, and was republished in Nunatsiaq News in 2006. The story has been told and recorded many times over the years. To hear an oral version of the story told by Iglulik Elder Rose Ukkumaluk: <http://www.isuma.tv/isuma-productions/attagutaaluk-starvation>.

piece of skin rug. It lay half hidden in a drift and was hardly to be noticed in the snow all round, which was why we had not made it out before. And now that we could see where it was the voice came from, it sounded more distinctly, but still went on in the same broken fashion.

We went slowly up to the spot, and when we looked in, there lay a human skull with the flesh gnawed from the bones. Yes, we came to that shelter, and looking in, we saw a human being squatting down inside, a poor woman, her face turned piteously towards us. Her eyes were all bloodshot, from weeping, so greatly had she suffered.

‘Kikkaq,’ she said - this was her pet name for Palluq - ‘Kikkaq, I have eaten my elder brother and my children.’ [“My elder brother” was her pet name for her husband.] Palluq and I looked at each other, and could not understand that she was still alive and breathing. There was nothing of her but bones and dry skin, there seemed indeed hardly to be a drop of blood in all her body, and she had not even much clothing left, having eaten a great deal of that, both the sleeves and all the lower part of her outer furs. Palluq bent down quite close to hear better, and Ataguttaaluk - for we knew her now, and could see who it was - said once more: ‘Kikkaq, I have eaten your fellow-singer from the feasting, him with whom you used to sing when we were gathered in the great house at a feast.’

My husband was so moved at the sight of this living skeleton, which had once been a young woman, that it was long before he knew what to answer. At last he said: ‘You had the will to live, therefore you live.’

We now put up our tent close by, and cut away a piece of the fore curtain to make a little tent for her. She could not come into the tent with us, for she was unclean, having

eaten dead bodies. When we went to move her, she tried to get up, but fell back in the snow. Then we tried to feed her with a little meat, but after she had swallowed a couple of mouthfuls, she fell to trembling all over, and could eat no more. Then we gave her a little hot soup, and when she was a little quieter, we looked round the shelter and found the skull of her husband and those of her children; but the brains were gone. We found the gnawed bone, too. The only part she had not been able to eat was the entrails. We gave up our journey then, and decided to drive back to Iglulik as soon as she felt a little stronger.

And when she was once more able to speak, she told us how it had come about. They had gone up country hunting caribou, but had not been able to find any; they then tried fishing in the lakes but there was no fish. Her husband wandered all about in search of food, but always without success, and they grew weaker and weaker. Then they decided to turn back towards Iglulik, but were overtaken by heavy snowfalls. The snow kept on. It grew deeper and deeper, and they themselves were growing weaker and weaker every day. They lay in their snow hut and could get nothing to eat. Then, after the snow had fallen steadily for some time, there came fierce blizzards, and at last her husband was so exhausted that he could not stand.

They kept themselves alive for some time by eating the dogs, but these also were wasted away and there was little strength in them as food. It simply kept them alive, so that they could not even die. At last the husband and all the children were frozen to death; having no food, they could not endure the cold. Ataguttaaluk had been the strongest of them all, though she had no more to eat than the others. As long as the children were alive they had most. She had tried at first to start off by herself and get through to Iglulik,

for she knew the way, but the snow came up to her waist, and she had no strength, she could not go on. She was too weak even to build a snow hut for herself, and the end of it was she turned back in her tracks and lay down beside her dead husband and the dead children. Here at least there was shelter from the wind in the snow hut and there were still a few skins she could use for covering.

She ate these skins to begin with. But at last there was no more left, and she was only waiting for the death to come and release her. She seemed to grow more and more dull and careless of what happened. But one morning, waking up to sunshine and a fine clear sky, she realized that the worst of the winter was over now, and it could not be long till the spring. Her snow hut was right on the road to Tununeq, the very road that all would take when going from Igloodik to trade there. The sun was so warm that for the first time she felt thawed a little, but the snow all about her was as deep and impassable as ever.

Then suddenly it seemed as if the warm spring air about her had given her a great desire to go on living, and thus it was that she fell to eating of the dead bodies that lay beside her. It was painful, it was much worse than dying, and at first she threw up all she ate, but she kept on, once she had begun. It could not hurt the dead, she knew, for their souls were long since in the land of the dead. Thus she thought, and thus it came about that she became an inuktumajuq, an eater of human kind.

All this she told us, weeping; and Palluq and I, realizing that after all these sufferings she deserved to live, drove her into Iglulik, where she had a brother living. Here she soon recovered her strength, but it was long before she could bear to be among her fellows. It is many years now since all this happened, and she is married now, to one

of the most skilful walrus hunters at Iglulik, named Ittuksaarjuat, who had one wife already; she is his favourite wife and has had several more children.

Additional Historical Notes from Kenn Harper's *Taissumani* column in *Nunatsiaq News* (2006) available here: http://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/taissumani_july_16_1948_-_the_passing_of_ataguttaaluk_queen_of_iglulik_par/

The terrible events that Tagurnaaq described took place in the spring of 1905.

Although it is rare that an event that forms part of Inuit traditional lore can be accurately dated, this tragic story is an exception. Atuat, the adoptive daughter of Tagurnaaq and Palluq, had accompanied her parents on the trip they had taken to the Pond Inlet area to trade. Captain James Mutch had wintered at Erik Harbour, just to the east of Pond Inlet, in the winter of 1903-04 and the news of his arrival had spread quickly among the Inuit, for Mutch had trade goods and was the first whaler to winter in the area. In her old age, Atuat retold the story of Ataguttaaluk's ordeal. The tragic events, she said, took place during the winter and spring following Mutch's first wintering.

After her rescue Ataguttaaluk spent several months recovering. In the fall, a famous hunter, Ittuksaarjuat, took her as his wife. With her marriage, Attaguttaaluk acquired status and influence. The explorer, Knud Rasmussen, referred to her as the "first lady" of Fury and Hecla Straits. White people in the region would later call Attaguttaaluk and her husband the "king and queen of Iglulik.

Attaguttaaluk was one of the first to be baptized in 1931 when Father Bazin established the first mission in the area, on the island of Avvajja. Her husband was finally baptized nine years later.

In June of 1948, Ataguttaaluk fell ill when an influenza epidemic hit Iglulik. Father

Rousselière visited her and she began to complain about her illness. Then her tone suddenly changed. “Come, come,” she said, “it’s your turn to say beautiful things to me.” The priest spoke to her about her impending death, but she, who had lived with death, cut him off. “I am not afraid,” she told him.

In early July she was moved to a camp, Kangiq, on Melville Peninsula. Refusing to stay inside her son’s tent, she awaited death outside. On the 16th of July, having outlived her husband by almost four years, Ataguttaaluk passed away peacefully. She was buried on a hilltop overlooking the shore. In memory of her, a school in Iglulik bears her name.

Appendix F Main Education Events (1999-2017)

Table 12. Main Education Events from 1999-2017

1999	Nunavut Territory comes into being
	Nunavut Department of Education is created
	Divisional boards of education dissolved
2002	Bill 1, <i>Education Act</i> dies on Order Paper
2006	Conciliator's Final Report: Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Implementation Planning Contract Negotiations for the Second Planning Period
	Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities
2008	<i>2008 Education Act</i> passes
	Nunavut General Election
2009	Qanukkanniq The GN Report Card
2011	<i>First Canadians, Canadians First A National Strategy for Inuit Education</i> is launched by Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
2013	Auditor General of Canada report on Education in Nunavut
	Nunavut General Election
2014	Special Committee to Review the Education Act is struck
2015	Report of the Special Committee to Review the Education Act tables final report
2016	Bill 37, An Act to Amend the Education Act and the Inuit Language Protection Act” introduced in the Nunavut Legislative Assembly
2017	Nunavut General Election
	Bill 37 voted down by Members of the Legislative Assembly before going to debate

**Appendix G Standing Committee on Legislation, Submissions Received on Bill 37,
An Act to Amend the Education Act and the Inuit Language Protection Act**

- Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated/ Qikiqtani Inuit Association/Kivalliq Inuit Association/Kitikmeot Inuit Association
- Nunavut Teachers' Association
- Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit
- Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities
- Office of the Languages Commissioner
- Commission scolaire francophone du Nunavut
- Cape Dorset DEA
- Coral Harbour DEA
- Gjoa Haven DEA
- Hall Beach DEA
- Iqaluit DEA
- Kugaaruk DEA
- Naujaat DEA
- Pangnirtung DEA
- Pond Inlet DEA
- Rankin Inlet DEA
- Qanak Collective
- Aliqartuqtuq, Lizzie
- Arnaquq-Baril, Alethea
- Clarke, Bernice
- Debicki, Jeremy and Mearns, Ceperah
- Eccles, Tagalik
- Ellsworth, Lena
- Ellsworth, Qajaaq
- Idlout, Lori
- Inutiq, Sandra
- Ipeelie, Emmeline
- Kaviok, Jillian
- Mike, Jesse
- Milton, Justin
- Pewatualuk, Michael
- Sallaffie, Moriah
- Schaubroeck, Amber
- Shappa, June
- Takkiruuq, James
- Takpannie, Katherine
- Thibaudeau, Sandra
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- Martin, Ian (York University)

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