From Settlement to Self-Determination: Towards an Anthropology of Education in Nunavut

by

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Abstract

Self-determination is a core concept framing the historical and ongoing efforts of Inuit in Nunavut seeking to align the territory's social and political institutions with Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ), or Inuit ways of knowing, being and doing. Educational self-determination represents an important and urgent aspect of these efforts, especially in the context of colonial education policies and practices which have deeply affected generations of Inuit. In 2008, the Nunavut territorial government set out to be the first provincial or territorial jurisdiction in Canada to implement an Indigenous-led vision for education when it passed the *Nunavut Education Act*. However, the mandates outlined in this act have yet to be fulfilled, prompting organizations such as the Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI), the legal representative of Inuit in Nunavut, to take recent action in an effort to advance Inuit control of education. In 2020, for instance, the NTI initiated a lawsuit against the Government of Nunavut based on cultural and linguistic discrimination of Inuit in the education sector.

This thesis constitutes an anthropological study of self-determination and education in Nunavut from a historical and contemporary perspective. I incorporate a holistic framework and qualitative research methods including semi-structured interviews and archival analysis to address the following questions: 1) How has self-determination historically underpinned narratives about education in Nunavut? 2) How is self-determination part of ongoing discussions and initiatives regarding education in Nunavut? This research aims to increase scholarly understandings and public awareness of education and self-determination in Nunavut while highlighting Inuit perspectives. Fostering this understanding and awareness is crucial given that education and self-determination in Nunavut will only continue to be a site of evolving and complex negotiation, exploration, and tension in future years.

Acknowledgements

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Research Context

Self-determination efforts to protect Inuit language and culture in Nunavut began shortly after Inuit movements and relocation into settlements, as part of Canadian state-led policy, and the circumscription of Inuit lives by government programming starting in the mid-twentieth century. These efforts particularly grew following the transfer of responsibility for the education system from the Federal Government to the Northwest Territories (NWT) in 1970. This period saw the introduction of initiatives and policies such as the Eastern Arctic Teacher Education Program, a new education ordinance emphasizing the importance of local Inuit decision-making authority and the inclusion of Inuit cultural content in curricula, the establishment of the Baffin Divisional Board of Education (BDBE) – the first Inuit-controlled education system in the NWT – and the publication of the landmark education policy called *Learning: Tradition and Change in the Northwest Territories*.

The passing of the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement* (NLCA) in 1993 and the creation of the Territory of Nunavut in 1999, with public government and a legislative assembly, instigated the abolishment of Regional School Boards in the Eastern Arctic and legislative action to implement a "new and improved" education system in Nunavut to better reflect Inuit ways of knowing, being and doing. The 2008 *Nunavut Education Act* constitutes the foundation of this education system. Although the Government of Nunavut was created as a public government for all residents of Nunavut, it was intended to be representative of the mainly Inuit population through its administration and policy (see NLCA 1993, Article 23). However, Inuit

representation levels within the government remain low, especially within middle and senior management positions in the Department of Education and within schools. Moreover, the territorial government's goal of implementing an Indigenous-led vision for curriculum and pedagogy across all schools and grade levels, as well as a fully bilingual education system offering instruction in both English and Inuktitut, has yet to be fulfilled (see Nunavut Education Act [2008] and the Inuit Language Protection Act [2020]).

In 2020, the Government of Nunavut passed an amendment to the *Nunavut Education Act* (2008), Bill 25, which requires that Inuktitut only be offered as a language course in schools, rather than be a primary language of instruction across all subject matters and grade levels. Bill 25 further established the deadline for the implementation of this language course to 2026 for grade four, and 2039 for grade twelve. In response, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI), which is the legal representative of Inuit in Nunavut responsible for ensuring the promises laid out in the NLCA (1993) are fulfilled, filed a lawsuit against the territorial government in 2021 based on linguistic and ethnic discrimination against Inuit in the education system (Murray 2021). Currently, NTI is negotiating with the Government of Nunavut to form a new education agreement, is working to develop new programs and legal frameworks to support educational self-determination and Inuit educators in the territory and is discussing potential avenues to pursue self-government in Nunavut. The NTI and other Inuit-led organizations within Nunavut such as the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), a non-profit organization which aims to serve as a national voice to protect and advance the interests of Inuit across Inuit Nunangat and Canada, are taking action in response to the current state of education in Nunavut with a deep sense of urgency, in part propelled by the reality that the number of Inuit who speak Inuktitut is declining

annually in the territory, increasing the risk for intergenerational loss of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (I explain and discuss what IQ is in Chapter Two).

1.2 Research Objectives

This research addresses the following two key questions: 1) How has self-determination historically underpinned narratives about education in Nunavut? 2) How is self-determination part of ongoing discussions and initiatives regarding education in Nunavut? By carrying out qualitative research to respond to these questions, I seek to lay the foundation for an anthropology of self-determination and education in Nunavut which emphasizes the lived experiences and perspectives of Inuit teachers, government and non-profit employees, education policymakers, and curriculum/program developers. My intention is to tell a nuanced story which humanizes and provides a critical understanding of self-determination and education in Nunavut. In this thesis, therefore, I center the stories and histories of individuals who are directly impacted by and implicated in processes of educational self-determination.

1.3 Research Significance

Given the present social, cultural and political context in Nunavut regarding education, this thesis offers a timely and relevant framework for further conceptualizing the historical and continued importance, meaning, and processes of educational self-determination in the territory. Firstly, my research increases public understandings of and brings awareness to specifically Inuit perspectives on self-determination and education in Nunavut. This is critical given the longstanding marginalization of Inuit voices and priorities within the territory's education system. Secondly, my thesis makes a scholarly contribution to a body of ethnography and literature that is limited yet valuable and that focuses on developing an anthropology of education and self-determination, which are underrepresented areas of study in the discipline.

Thirdly, this thesis is valuable for situating Nunavut's unique education system within the international and circumpolar context, an important distinction considering the numerous and ongoing education and self-determination efforts taking place in other territories, countries, and nations such as Alaska, Greenland, Norway, Russia, and beyond. More broadly, this research also contributes to deepening understandings of Nunavut's place within human and Indigenous rights discourses concerning education. Consequently, the research upon which this thesis is based has significant implications for both the public and scholarly spheres, as well as for an applied anthropology of Indigenous education, not only in the Circumpolar North, but in other Indigenous homelands where education is a critical issue for self-determination.

1.4 Impacts of Covid-19

Several unanticipated events, obstacles, and opportunities played a role in shaping and re-shaping my research path, including my ongoing discussions with the NTI (discussed further in the following section), recent developments in Nunavut concerning self-determination and education, and the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, which was declared an international public health emergency in early 2020 by the World Health Organization (WHO).

When I initially began my degree in September 2020, I intended to study how climate change education in Nunavut integrates Inuit ways of knowing, being, and doing by carrying out ethnographic research in one community. However, territorial and provincial travel restrictions brought on by the pandemic, as well as the limited capacity of teachers and students to participate in this research influenced my decision to alter the research topic and methodology. Therefore, I decided to shift my research proposal to focus on self-determination in education in Nunavut more broadly and adopted a multi-method approach which I could carry out remotely from Edmonton (at least until travel restrictions lifted).

Attempting to establish meaningful relationships and carry out interviews with key stakeholders remotely was challenging, especially because I had little to no prior established connections in Nunavut. I struggled at first to build these connections, but understood that this is integral to the anthropological endeavour of developing trust and strong working relationships with interlocutors and research partners. Carrying out research remotely and altering my research topic and methods also allowed for some unanticipated opportunities. For example, I was able to connect with individuals across many communities in Nunavut, as well as Toronto. Moreover, while archival research was not an original aspect of my research design, it became integral to formulating a critical and rich analysis of education and self-determination in Nunavut. Therefore, while the Covid-19 pandemic was out of my control, I responded to and adapted my research plan in light of this reality to the best of my ability.

1.5 Positionality Discussion

I believe that if I am going to share stories about others, I must know myself first. In this section, I therefore consider my positionality by reflecting on my personal research path, intentions, limitations, and ethical responsibilities towards others. In doing so, I aim to cultivate transparency, honesty, and accountability between myself and readers of this thesis.

Positionality refers to how an individual's sociocultural background, personal identities, and positions of authority and power all play a role in shaping how that individual perceives and interprets the world, including their reflections and assumptions regarding research questions, methods, and results. Factors such as race, class, and gender all formulate a particular lens through which we view the world, and this lens inevitably impacts research processes. Therefore, as Cousin (2010, 10) asserts, researchers should seek to understand the ways in which their positionality influences how they re-represent or re-tell the stories of the peoples and places

central to their research, and the ethics and responsibilities associated with doing so. For example, researchers might consider the power dynamics underlying their relationships with research partners and participants, and the pre-study beliefs they hold regarding what topics should be investigated and in what manner (Cousin 2010, 11; Holmes 2022, 2). Of great importance is the researcher's willingness to be reflexive and transparent about these dynamics and beliefs in their research reflections, writings, and final publications. It is with these understandings in mind that I developed this positionality statement.

My name is Selina Ertman. I am a 24-year-old white woman who was born and raised in South Cooking Lake, Alberta, an area traditionally inhabited by Nehiyawak (Cree), Siksiká (Blackfoot) and Tsuut'ina Nation (Sarcee) peoples. The name South Cooking Lake derives from the Nehiyawak word opi-mi-now-wa-sioo, meaning "a cooking place." My family historically arrived in Canada from Denmark, England, Germany, France, and Ireland in the early 1900s, and now mainly reside in the Edmonton area and Calgary.

When I began brainstorming a research topic and proposal for my master's thesis, several factors influenced me. I initially became interested in studying education issues given my family background (my mother, father, brother, and great-grandfather are/were all teachers) and the time I have spent volunteering in classrooms and at school events. I became particularly interested in what an anthropological perspective could bring to the study of education in the unique context of northern Canada while completing my undergraduate degree in anthropology at the University of Alberta, and specifically following an "Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology" class that touched upon this topic. Meetings with my supervisor, exploration of current literature, and email communications with educators in Nunavut in the year prior to and during my master's degree influenced the ultimate design of my research plan. Specific research

questions for this revised proposal were developed following communications with the NTI, Nunavut Research Institute (NRI), and the Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre in Iqaluit beginning in 2022. My recurring conversations with Tina Decouto, Senior Advisor for Education with the NTI, and the comments and suggestions she provided on my research proposal greatly influenced the final direction and scope of this research. For me, these conversations instilled the importance and urgency of raising awareness about educational self-determination in Nunavut and the imperativeness of highlighting Inuit experiences within this thesis

Reflecting on my research journey, I am incredibly humbled by my experiences. Over the past three years I have learned the importance of exercising cultural humility, sensitivity, and flexibility as a researcher. I now better recognize the need to engage with others on their own terms and prioritize the perspectives of research participants and partners when carrying out any aspect of research, including planning, implementation, and dissemination. I am also more aware of my own limitations as a southern-based and non-Inuit researcher. I am unable to truly comprehend the struggles affecting Inuit within the education system as an outsider who is inherently privileged by my socio-cultural background. In response to these limitations, I have endeavoured to re-represent the stories and histories of Inuit in this thesis with sensitivity and care. I have also sought to educate myself on the historical and ongoing processes of colonialism and unequal researcher/community power relations in the north. In consideration of my personal subjectivity and limitations, the content of this thesis should not be interpreted as a comprehensive overview of education and self-determination in Nunavut, but a partial account emerging from my experiences conducting this research. I welcome future learning experiences as a researcher and individual that will further expand and deepen my sense of ethical responsibility, and I embrace my position as a learner first and foremost.

Chapter Two

Locating Nunavut

Figure 1. *Inuit Nunangat* (Oceans North 2022)

2.1 Introduction

Inuit, meaning "people" in Inuktitut (a single individual is referred to as Inuk, two people are referred as Inuuk, and three or more as Inuit), are an Indigenous people whose traditional territories encompass significant portions of Greenland, northern Canada, Alaska, and Russia. Inuit are descendants of the Thule people, who entered northern Canada from Alaska approximately one thousand years ago. Inuit groups across the Circumpolar North are culturally and linguistically linked (Friesen 2022, 18; Légaré 2008, 339). However, they possess diverse

histories, heritages, and societal factors such as economic and social organization, level of mobility, and population density (Friesen 2022, 18). The total Inuit population is over 150,000 globally (World Atlas 2022), with approximately 64, 235 Inuit living in Canada (Government of Canada 2022a). The traditional homeland of Inuit in Canada is called Inuit Nunangat and comprises four distinct land claims regions: the territory of Nunavut, the Inuvialuit Settlement Region of the Northwest Territories, Nunavik in northern Quebec, and Nunatsiavut in Newfoundland and Labrador. As of 2016, 3.5% of Inuit in Canada reside in Nunatsiavut, 18.1% reside in Nunavik, 4.8% reside in Inuvialuit, 46.4% reside in Nunavut, and 27.2% reside outside of Inuit Nunangat (Statistics Canada 2016b).

2.2 Geography and Climate

Nunavut, which translates to "our land" in Inuktitut, represents the largest, newest, and northernmost territory in Canada, spanning over 2 million km^2 and constituting the greater part of the Canadian Arctic Archipelago (Kikkert 2007). Nunavut borders the Arctic Ocean to the north and east, Manitoba to the south, and the NWT to the west. Nunavut is internally divided into three distinct administrative regions: Qikiqtaaluk, Kivalliq, and Kitikmeot (Kikkert 2007). Within these regions lie twenty-five communities, including the territory's capital city of Iqaluit (formerly known as Frobisher Bay), which is situated on Baffin Island (Kikkert 2007). Settlements in Nunavut are generally small and clustered in coastal areas to ensure access to the sea.

Much of Nunavut's landscape consists of Arctic tundra, a biome characterized by long, cold winters and short growing seasons that prohibit tree growth (Kikkert 2007). Permafrost, or ground that remains frozen for two or more years at a time, is also a central feature of Arctic tundra and covers most of the territory (Shur et al. 2014). However, Nunavut's landscape is also

comprised of mountainous and watery regions. Much of the eastern coast of the territory is covered in vast chains of mountain ranges that are part of the Arctic Cordillera ecozone in northern Canada (Kikkert 2007). These mountain ranges include, among others, the Baffin Mountains and Innuitian Mountains, which are marked by glaciated peaks, ice fields, and ice caps. Nunavut is also distinguished by an extensive network of lakes, rivers, and streams, and contains 21% of Canada's freshwater (Statistics Canada 2016c). Sea ice also forms an important part of the landscape in Nunavut and is intrinsic to Inuit social life and subsistence (Aporta 2011, 8). Sea ice that is attached to the land serves as an important travel route for Inuit living in coastal communities and enables access to valuable recourses such as marine mammals, which are a major food staple in the territory (Aporta 2011, 9). While sea ice in Nunavut shifts seasonally, it generally forms within predictable cycles, making it possible for Inuit to have developed an intricate knowledge and understanding of sea ice features and movements over time (Aporta 2011, 9). From an Inuit perspective, Inuit Nunangat should therefore be understood as a homeland which encompasses not only land, but also water, ice, and permafrost.

Given that Nunavut is part of the Arctic climatic zone, surface temperatures in the territory are low (Rea 2022); however, they do vary by region. Nunavut's most northerly community of Grise Fjord has an average January temperature of -33°C, and an average July temperature of 2°C (Travel Nunavut 2023). Nunavut's most southerly community of Sanikiluaq, however, has an average January temperature of -22°C, and an average July temperature of 10°C (Travel Nunavut 2023). Precipitation is limited throughout most of the territory and falls mainly as snow (Rea 2022). Despite these climatic conditions, Nunavut is home to a diverse array of plant and animal life, including lichens, moss, hardy shrubs, caribou, polar bears, Arctic foxes, walrus, seals, whales, and narwhals. Inuit who occupy the territory and neighboring regions in

the Canadian Arctic have developed extensive cultural adaptions and dynamic bodies of knowledge that have allowed them to thrive in this northern environment for generations (Kikkert 2007).

According to climate change scientists and the observations of local Inuit, Nunavut's climate has undergone substantial changes over the past several decades (ACIA 2004, Gérin-Lajoie, Cuerrier, and Collier 2016, Bush and Lemmen 2019, Sansoulet et al. 2020). Warming trends in the territory because of global greenhouse gas emissions have resulted in decreased sea ice thickness and distribution, permafrost degradation, extreme weather events, and changes in the abundance and distribution of wildlife (Derksen et al. 2019, Bush and Lemmen 2019, Government of Nunavut 2011, 4). The impacts of climate change have in turn deeply affected Inuit traditional subsistence activities, food sovereignty, mobility over land, sea, and ice, and cultural connections with the environment, as well as magnified existing sociocultural and economic issues already experienced by many Inuit in Nunavut (Ford 2010, 180; Panikkar and Lemmond 2020; Sansoulet et al. 2020). In addition, climate change effects have created infrastructure hazards in the territory relating to problems in road and building conditions (Government of Nunavut 2011, 4). While reduced sea ice has enabled increased shipping activities in waterways surrounding the territory, presenting some economic opportunities for residents, there are also growing concerns over what environmental risks these activities may pose, as well as how Inuit dependencies on these waterways will be affected (Government of Nunavut 2011, 4). For example, the future of the Northwest Passage as a shipping route and contested case of Canadian sovereignty represents an ongoing pressing concern given that Inuit presently hold no jurisdiction or influence over domestic or foreign traffic travelling through the Passage (ITK 2017, 30).

A multitude of researchers and scientists have written on the regional and community-level impacts of, and responses to climate change in Nunavut communities, especially in the context of climate mitigation, adaptation, and vulnerability (see Duerden 2004, Ford 2006, and Prno et al. 2011 for examples). In addition, the ITK recently released a *National Inuit Climate Change Strategy* (2019) emphasizing the need for Inuit to be partners in shaping climate policy alongside the government and discusses some important ongoing developments in regional Inuit climate change strategies. The report emphasizes that effective climate actions must be guided by Inuit priorities and visions for a sustainable and prosperous future and outlines five priority areas for climate action to help achieve this mandate (ITK 2019, 4). These priority areas include: 1) knowledge and capacity-building 2) health, well-being, and the environment 3) food systems 4) infrastructure 5) energy (ITK 2019, 4). Given the dramatic impacts of climate change for Inuit communities in Nunavut, conversations around climate policy and action such as those initiated by the NTI will only continue to be increasingly relevant and critical in coming years.

2.3 Our Land: The Making of Nunavut

The creation of Nunavut was driven by Inuit desires for political, social, and economic autonomy. Efforts to secure Inuit self-determination in the eastern Canadian Arctic and divide the Northwest Territories into two distinct regions began in the mid to late twentieth century. The creation of Nunavut and the comprehensive Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA) (1993) was first proposed in 1971 by the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (ITC), later renamed to the ITK in 2001 following the signing of the Labrador Inuit Land Claims Agreement (Henderson 2007, 24). The central purpose of the "Nunavut Project" was to create a territory where social and political institutions could better reflect the values and perspectives of the majority Inuit population, thereby protecting Inuit language and culture (Légaré 2008, 336). In a broader Canadian context,

the initial development of the NLCA (1993) was supported by the Supreme Court's *Calder* decision in 1973, which recognized "unextinguished Aboriginal title to land" (Henderson 2007, 24) and encouraged the Canadian Government to establish the Comprehensive Land Claims Policy Process in an effort to settle "outstanding Aboriginal title with those groups who had not yet signed a land-cessation treaty with Canada" (Légaré 2008, 344). To provide further foundation for the NLCA (1993), in 1973 the ITC proposed that research be conducted in the NWT to record and map past and present Inuit land use and occupancy in the territory. This research was carried out between 1974 to 1977 and resulted in a three-volume report titled *The Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project* (ILUOP) (Canada and Milton Freeman Research Ltd. 1976). The ILUOP played a critical role in solidifying Inuit claims to land, ice, and subsurface rights and establishing the sociocultural importance of traditional homelands for Inuit.

In 1993, the NLCA was signed between Inuit in the eastern Canadian Arctic, the federal government of Canada, and the territorial government of the Northwest Territories (NWT). Through this land claim, Inuit gained title to 350,000 kilometers of land, including subsurface mineral rights to 35,000 square kilometers (Henderson 2007, 1). In addition, the NLCA (1993) mandated that over $1.1 billion in federal money was to be transferred to Inuit over a period of fourteen years, and that Inuit would receive royalties from mineral, oil, and gas development on Crown land, as well as receive hunting and fishing rights and participate in land and resource management decisions through co-management boards (Henderson 2007, 1). The NLCA (1993) also delineated a political accord for the creation of the Government of Nunavut in 1999 (further solidified through the *Nunavut Act*, which was enacted by the Parliament of Canada in 1993). To this day, the NLCA (1993) represents the largest of all Aboriginal land claims agreements settled by Canada (Légaré 2008, 336).

2.4 Socio-Cultural, Economic, and Political Landscape

Nunavut possesses a unique sociocultural, economic, and political landscape in the broader context of Canada. Most significantly, Inuit represent 85% of the territory's 35,944 residents (Statistics Canada 2016a). More than three quarters of Inuit living in Nunavut reported Inuktitut as their mother tongue in a 2016 census; however, this number had dropped by ten percent since 2001 and continues to decline annually (Statistics Canada 2016a). Nunavut is also the youngest jurisdiction in Canada. The median age in the territory is twenty-two while the median age for the rest of the country is thirty-seven (Henderson 2007, 29). This has important implications for discussions surrounding the role and value of education (both formal and informal) in Nunavut communities.

In terms of socioeconomic standing, Nunavut consistently rates lower than the rest of Canada. Inuit in Nunavut are disproportionately affected by food insecurity, high unemployment, suicide, poverty rates, crowded housing conditions, low educational attainment, lowered life expectancies, and social dysfunction including family violence, substance abuse, and conflict with the law (Burczycka and Conroy 2018; Henderson 2007, 29; ITK 2018). The Inuit Statistical Profile produced by the ITK in 2018 helps to illustrate these inequalities through the following comparative statistics: 34% of Inuit aged 25 to 64 in Inuit Nunangat have earned a high school diploma, compared to 86% of all Canadians within the same age range; 70% of Inuit households in Nunavut are food insecure, compared to 8% of all households in Canada; the projected life expectancy for Inuit in Canada is 72.4 years, compared to 82.9 years for non-Indigenous people in Canada; the median before tax individual income for Inuit in Inuit Nunangat is $23,485, compared to $92,011 for non-Indigenous people in Canada; 52% of Inuit in Inuit Nunangat live in crowded homes, compared to 9% for all Canadians. These realities are shaped by multiple

factors. For instance, the cost of living in Nunavut is exceedingly high compared to the rest of the country since supplies such as food and household goods must be flown or shipped into communities due to limited road networks (Henderson 2007, 27). Moreover, many of the challenges experienced by Inuit in Nunavut stem from the rapid cultural changes that occurred in the Canadian Arctic during the mid-twentieth century period of Euro-Canadian colonial expansion. This period saw the establishment of federal day schools and residential schools, as well as the introduction of Christianity, High Arctic relocations (see Marcus 1992), forced settlement, tuberculosis treatment in the south, and a formal wage-earning economy that significantly altered Inuit society and ultimately contributed to the accumulation of "transgenerational grief" that continues to impact Inuit in the territory today (Crawford 2014; Henderson 2007, 31; Stevenson 2014; Tester 2010; QIA 2013).

The Canadian government began "experimenting" with Inuit resettlement policies in an effect to reinforce national sovereignty and limit overhunting, among other motivating factors, as early as 1934 via the Dundas Harbour Relocations (QIA 2013, 16). In the case of the High Arctic Relocations, seven Inuit families from Inukjuak, Nunavik, and three families from Pond Inlet on Baffin Island were relocated (and, in the process, family members were forcibly separated) to the harsh environments of Grise Fjord and Resolute in 1953 (QIA 2013, 21). The government's general lack of concern for Inuit welfare led to devastating impacts, both for those who were relocated, and the family members left behind (QIA 2013, 23). Government-led resettlement strategies and relocations which historically took place in Nunavut represent just one example of how Inuit lives were transformed during this colonial period. As of today, long-standing inequalities between Inuit and non-Inuit peoples in Nunavut because of the legacies of colonialism have yet to be adequately addressed or reconciled by the Canadian Government.

However, organizations such as the Qikiqtani Inuit Association (QIA) are playing an important role in fostering awareness and working to promote Inuit-led and Inuit-driven solutions to heal past wrongs, strengthen Inuit culture and governance, and create healthy communities (QIA 2010).

Nunavut's economy may be characterized as mixed (Harder and Wenzel 2012, 306). Historically, the territory's economy relied solely on the harvesting (hunting, fishing, gathering) traditions of Inuit (see Luijk et al. 2022 for a discussion on current risks to harvesting activities in Inuit Nunangat). Today, however, many households in Nunavut rely on either a combination of a traditional harvesting economy and a wage economy (what scholars often refer to as a mixed economy combining informal and formal economic activities), or they depend on government transfers (i.e., unemployment insurance, social assistance) for most of their incomes (Légaré 2008, 360). In recent decades, Nunavut's economy has also expanded to include a variety of other industries, such as tourism, mining, and oil and gas exploration (Kikkert 2007). Increasingly, narratives surrounding the economic future of Nunavut have been centered on resource extraction, which more broadly reflects the increasing amount of international attention that has been placed on the Arctic in recent years because of the region's perceived potential as a "resource frontier" (Bennett 2016; Hickey 2022; Nuttall 2010, 45-61).

Increasing resource extraction developments in Nunavut have spurred both positive and negative reactions and interactions. In 2021, for example, the proposed expansion of the Baffinland Iron Mines Corp.'s Mary River iron ore mine in Pond Inlet led a group of Inuit protesters to block worker access to the mine for one week over concerns about the potentially damaging impacts of the expansion on drinking water, wildlife, sea ice, and the already high dust levels in the area (Beers 2021; Venn 2022). The Baffinland Iron Mines Corp. is currently

reformulating a proposal to keep operating the mine and claim they will address community questions and uncertainties in the future (Tranter 2022). Conversations surrounding the Mary River mine illustrate the increasing complexity of Nunavut's socio-cultural and economic landscape, especially considering how such conversations entangle a diverse number of actors, ranging from the Canadian Government, environmental groups, and regional, national, and international Inuit-led institutions such as the ITK and the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC). Unlike the ITK, which is a national, representative (non-profit) Inuit organization in Canada, the ICC is a multi-national, non-governmental organization which works to protect the rights and interests of Inuit at the international level spanning Alaska, Canada, Greenland, and Chukotka (Russia) (Ritsema et al. 2015).

Nunavut also possess a distinct political environment emerging from several overlapping factors. Firstly, since most of Nunavut's population is Inuit, the territory has a de facto Inuit self-government. Therefore, while government in Nunavut is public and meant to serve Nunavummiut, which refers to all who live in the territory and translates to "people of Nunavut" in Inuktut, Inuit perspectives and preferences (in theory) inform political decision-making processes in the territory (Wiseman and Kreuger 2016, 291). As a result, the Government of Nunavut has made efforts to integrate IQ into their operations, institutional structures, and policies (Henderson 2007, 191), and has also sought to make Inuktitut the working language of all government institutions in the territory (Légaré 2008, 355).

While Nunavut operates according to a Westminster style of government like the rest of Canada, the territory's legislative assembly is small and without political parties. Instead, the territory employs a system of consensus politics (Henderson 2007, 33). Nunavut leaders have attempted to instate a decentralized government, which refers to the transfer of responsibility for

public functions from a central government to regional and local authorities (Hicks and White 2015). However, the success of such decentralization efforts has been questioned by the territory's residents and have been impeded by capacity problems, telecommunications issues, and budget constraints for training and recruiting local Inuit to fill decentralized positions (Hicks and White 2015, 225). Further reflective of Nunavut's distinctive geopolitical position is the considerable political pluralism that exists within the territory. More specifically, political culture in Nunavut is influenced, albeit unequally, by all the following: traditional Inuit approaches to resource distribution and social control, the liberal Canadian political system into which Inuit were integrated, and the institutional structure of the Northwest Territories (Henderson 2007, 215).

The various public political bodies that co-exist with the Government of Nunavut, including the NTI and co-management boards such as the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board (NWMB) and the Nunavut Water Board (NWB), further heighten this pluralism. Most of these bodies were created because of the NLCA (1993), and they play a significant role in governance in the territory alongside legislative members. NTI serves to ensure that the obligations made to the NLCA (1993) by federal and territorial governments are fulfilled, while co-management boards ensure that Inuit have a role (although it is not always an equal role) in decision-making processes relating to the management of traditional land and resources in the territory (see Armitage et al. 2011 and Rodon 1998, for a more in-depth discussion on co-management initiatives in the Canadian Arctic and Nunavut). Additionally, each region in Nunavut has a designated Inuit association responsible for representing the interests of Inuit in Qikiqtaaluk, Kivalliq, and Kitikmeot communities (Henderson 2007, 33). These political bodies and regional

associations interact with varying levels of territorial and federal government, as well as international organizations, to direct decision-making practices in Nunavut.

2.5 Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit in Context

I would like to preface this section by stating that my intention is not to provide readers with a comprehensive summary of IQ. Given that the concept of IQ is so deeply situated within Inuit culture and language, I do not believe that providing such a summary would be possible or for me as a qallunaaq (pl. qallunaat, which is used to refer to non-Inuit). In this section, I rather seek to introduce IQ by drawing on the words of Inuit Elders and scholars. In addition, I aim to frame my discussion of IQ by providing insight into how individuals, groups, and institutions in Nunavut have located IQ. This approach will serve to contextualize IQ within the territory's specific social, political, and historical contexts, thereby providing a foundation for understanding the role of IQ in Nunavut's education system.

Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit or IQ directly translates to "that which Inuit have always known to be true" (Tagalik 2010, 1). IQ therefore encompasses every aspect of past, present, and future Inuit culture including "values, world-view, [spirituality/cosmology,] language, social organization, knowledge, life skills, perceptions, and expectations" (Tester and Irniq 2008, 48). IQ is also fundamentally about maintaining harmony and balance in relationships; that is, Inuit relationships with the land, with family, with oneself, and with larger society (Tagalik 2015). IQ therefore constitutes a specific and unique cultural worldview which situates Inuit within a holistic and interconnected universe. Inuit Elders have composed the following six guiding societal values or principles as a framework for understanding the knowledge and skills embodied by IQ (Tagalik 2010, 5):

1. Pijitsirniq: the concept of serving and providing for family and/or community.

2. Aajiiqatigiinniq: the concept of decision making through discussion and consensus.
3. Pilimmaksarniq/Pijariuqsarniq: the concept of the development of skills and knowledge acquisition through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort.
4. Piliriqatigiinniq/Ikajuqtigiinniq: the concept of collaborative relationships or working together for a common cause or purpose.
5. Qanuqtuurniq: the concept of being innovative and resourceful to solve problems.
6. Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq: the concept of respect and care for Nunangat (the land, sea, and ice), Sila (the environment), and animals.

Inuit Elders have further identified four central laws or *maligait* through which all Inuit cultural beliefs and values should be implemented (Tagalik 2010, 1):

1. working for the common good
2. respecting all living things
3. maintaining harmony and balance
4. continually preparing and planning for the future

While IQ is often ascribed to the broader categories of "Indigenous Knowledge "(IK) or "Traditional Ecological Knowledge" (TEK), these categories tend to reject nuanced and multidimensional understandings of Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing in favour of presenting them as distinct sets of facts or data, often relating to the natural world (Wenzel 2004, 239). IQ is not a fixed "museum piece" nor does it encourage a return to the past (Tester and Irniq 2008, 56). Rather, IQ involves the "transfer of an ever-evolving set of knowledge and skills" (Tagalik 2010, 2) that can guide and connect generations in the past, present, and future

through changing circumstances (McGregor 2010, 32). Because the cultural concepts expressed within IQ are not easily translated into other languages without some loss of meaning, the inter-generational transfer of IQ is also intrinsically tied to the continued use of Inuktitut in Inuit communities (Tagalik 2012, 6). Furthermore, as the guiding principles and laws listed above demonstrate, IQ refers to not only philosophy but also practice. It is the wisdom gained through experience and engagement with the world that is passed down through generations and which provides cultural grounding and purpose to Inuit (Tagalik 2010, 2). This active process of relying on and living through IQ is an essential determinant of Inuit social and personal wellbeing, and it is critical for helping individuals become capable, contributing members of family and society (Tagalik 2009).

In the context of Nunavut, the creation of the territory as a means of protecting Inuit language and culture has had significant implications for the social and political "life" of IQ. Since 1999, the Government of Nunavut has sought to bureaucratize IQ by integrating it into the territory's official operations, structures, and policies. These efforts formally began in 2001 with the creation of the Task Force on IQ, composed of two Nunavut Social Development Council (NSDC) staff members, two Government of Nunavut employees, and two Inuit Elders (Lévesque 2014, 122). The mandate of this Task Force was to "direct the Nunavut government on how to apply Inuit traditional knowledge to its programs, policies and services, and to make government offices more conducive to the Inuit lifestyle" (Lévesque 2014, 122). The task force produced one report in the summer of 2002 which included recommendations for how IQ could be used as a catalyst to incorporate the newly formed territorial Government into Inuit culture (Lévesque 2014, 122). Steps to integrate IQ into institutional structures in Nunavut were reformulated in 2003 with the establishment of the IQ Katimajiit (IQK). The IQK consists of a group of Inuit

with expertise in IQ who are appointed the task of advising the Government of Nunavut on developing and implementing "culturally relevant programs and services for Inuit" throughout government and public agencies (Lévesque 2014, 123). Following the creation of the IQK, each government department in Nunavut hired an "IQ coordinator" to monitor the implementation of IQ into institutional planning, policy development, and decision-making processes in the territory (Lévesque 2014, 123).

Despite the Government of Nunavut's goal of employing IQ as a guiding compass, the key philosophies, attitudes, and practices of the territory's Inuit majority are not adequately reflected within the territory's social and political operations, structures, and policies. For example, narrow definitions of IQ continue to be privileged within the context of co-management boards that are primarily concerned with biophysical resources. The Nunavut Water Board and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, for instance, tend to reduce IQ to "biophysical information" that does not include social and cultural matters (Tester and Irniq 2008, 49). These ongoing issues exemplify the difficult and complex process of trying to incorporate IQ into all aspects Nunavut society while maintaining a nuanced and culturally relevant understanding of IQ, a process made more challenging by the fact that Nunavut is not an Inuit self-government.

In the context of Nunavut's education system, many existing barriers continue to hinder the successful incorporation of IQ into the Department of Education's policies and students' learning. These barriers include, for example, the persistent shortage of Inuit and bilingual educators, administrators, and support staff in the territory (McGregor 2013, 105), particularly at the junior high and high school levels (Walton 2013, 3). As of November 2018, the Department of Education employed 610 teachers, 429 of whom were non-Inuit and 181 who were Inuit (Bell

2019). This staffing issue also extends to positions of higher authority in Nunavut schools. Of the 75 principals and vice-principals employed by the Department of Education in November 2018, 64 were non-Inuit while only 11 were Inuit (Bell 2019). Given this shortage of Inuit and bilingual educators, many qallunaat teachers are faced with the difficult task of translating the multidimensional concept of IQ into tangible lesson plans that will be communicated to students in English. How educators locate IQ in their daily lives and classrooms is therefore a pertinent question. Furthermore, discussions surrounding the development and practical implementation of an IQ education framework in Nunavut carry an added layer of complexity considering that the knowledge and skills embodied by IQ are traditionally transferred through processes of observation and lived experience in Inuit communities, rather than through the formal pedagogies generally employed in North American classrooms today.

Chapter Three

A History of Education in the NWT/Nunavut: Stories of/for Change

3.1 Inuit Ways of Learning

Inuit ways of learning are best understood through a "communities of practice" model that is anchored in processes of enskilment. Communities of practice may be defined as groups of people who "share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly" (Wenger 2006, 1). Cognitive anthropologist Jean Lave and educational theorist Etienne Wenger first coined the concept in their 1991 book titled *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation,* wherein they seek to recontextualize learning as an informal type of apprenticeship that occurs during daily life and may take place without conscious awareness or intention (Lave and Wenger 1991, 65). Lave and Wenger assert that it is through this extended, participatory learning process that individuals become sustained members of communities of practice (1991, 64). They further contend that communities of practice involve two kinds of production: the production of continuity with, and the displacement of, the practice of older community members (Lave and Wenger 1991, 74).

The concept of "enskilment" is directly related to and informed by a "communities of practice" model and refers to the process by which individuals actively engage with the environment to acquire skills. According to Gísli Pálsson (1994: 901), enskilment "emphasizes immersion in the practical world, being caught up in the incessant flow of everyday life, and not simply…the mechanistic internalization and application of a mental script, a stock of knowledge or a 'cultural model'" that one needs to behave as a "functioning member of one's society". A novice hunter, for example, learns through enskilment in the sense that the instructions they

receive on the land to "watch out for this, attend to that, and so on," take on meaning only in the context of their engagement with the environment (Ingold 2000, 37). Therefore, "culture" in this conceptual framework cannot be considered an "independent body of context-free knowledge that is available for transmission prior to the situations of its application," but is rather situated in a local ontology of practical engagement and sensory attunement with the world (Ingold 2000, 37).

There are many parallels between Inuit ways of learning, Lave and Wenger's concept of communities of practice, and the process of enskilment. Prior to the establishment of formal, Eurocentric systems of education in the Canadian Arctic, learning among Inuit took place within a relational network of human and non-human actors, including family members, animals, ice, water, and land. In Inuit camps, which were typically composed of two or three extended families (Bennett and Rowley 2004, 226), youth gained an abundance of cultural skills, ecological awareness, and spiritual knowledge from a very young age through the extended, daily observation and imitation of family members performing various activities, such as hunting or sewing (Bennett and Rowley 2004, 14). The seasons further dictated what specific knowledge and skillsets were passed onto youth at different times of the year (Armstrong, 1987), and learning occurred as a natural, practical, and sensorial process necessary not only for the functioning of individuals, but also for the survival of the entire social group (Stairs 1991). Inuit ways of learning, doing, and being must therefore be disentangled from purely "Western" notions of education to account for the more integrated role of learning in Inuit society. Inuit "education" is not comprised of a disembodied set of practices that is transmitted to youth and documented by an "administrative body;" rather, it involves the active and immersive intergenerational transfer of knowledge to ensure cultural, social, and economic continuity

(McGregor 2010, 10). The following excerpts by Inuit Elders in *Uqalurait: An Oral History of Nunavut* (2004) help to illustrate these experiential, place-based, and relational learning practices:

> "I followed my father's directions on how to hunt seal. My first lesson was to learn how to crawl towards the basking seal. I kept my father's words without forgetting what he had told me. When the seal pops its head up, I had to duck down…But if it lies back down I have to keep on crawling towards it. If I kept doing this, the seal would like I'm a seal too…It was a challenge and an exciting event as I followed by father's encouragement as a young boy" – Frank Analok, Inuinnait, KHS (in Bennett and Rowley 2004, 56)

> "When he reached the age of six, the boy would be given a toy bow to play with. He was also allowed to help his father as he worked, his father carefully explaining all there was to be done. One day, perhaps as his father was building an *iglu,* the boy would be invited to help and among the other skills he learned were how to harness the dogs and the proper gathering of the dog-team traces…" – Martha Angugatiaq Ungalaaq, Amitturmiut, 1985:3 (in Bennett and Rowley 2004, 14).

> "By watching our mothers as they worked, we learned their style of working on skins. As girls we tried by working on clothing for our wooded dolls…I was about ten or eleven years old when I when was able to concentrate on these

> things…We used the leftovers from the caribou skins our mothers were working with…Anything that our mothers discarded from their work with skins…I would use to cut into patterns and to sew…" – Rachel Uyarasuk, Amitturmiut, IE299 (in Bennett and Rowley 2004, 26).

Traditionally, Inuit ways of learning took place along gendered divisions of labour. For example, boys would generally accompany and assist their fathers in performing tasks mainly ascribed to men, such as going on hunting trips, building iglus, or harnessing sled-dogs (Bennett and Rowley 2004, 14). Girls, on the other hand, would remain close to their mothers and grandmothers to learn skills in economic activities mainly performed by women, such as scraping skins, tending to oil lamps, and sewing clothes (Bennett and Rowley 2004, 14). This division reflects a gendered community of practice model, but it is important to recognize that this does not mean greater social value is necessarily attributed to the enskilment of either Inuit men or women. Moreover, these gendered divisions of labour and learning are more flexible and nuanced that one might assume. Barbara Bodenhorn (1990, 58) contends that assumptions surrounding gendered divisions of labour in Inuit societies, particularly regarding hunting, stem from Euro-American models that do not account for the cultural complexities underlying Inuit constructions of gendered knowledge and skills. She asserts that Iñupiaq women, for instance, are considered pivotal to successful hunting in their society, given that hunting among the Iñupiat is "defined to include attracting, killing, butchering, transforming the animal into food and clothing, and following the proper rituals, all of which are needed to maintain amicable animal/human relations" (Bodenhorn 1990, 64). Iñupiaq women participate substantially in all these practices, hence their central role in hunting and ultimately group sustenance and survival.

In addition, given that survival was the main motivating factor for enskillment in traditional Inuit society, both men and women naturally learned some of the tasks typically associated with either gender; for example, men often learned how to sew by watching their parents "so that they could mend their clothing while out hunting if anything happened" (Shaimaiyuk 1991, 139). Consider the following descriptions by Inuit Elders in *Uqalurait: An Oral History of Nunavut* (2004):

> "Sometimes if a girl had often gone hunting with her father at an early age, she would be as capable a hunter as any man. She would also be respected as such…Some men were also good at sewing and could do housework themselves. They would reach the same level of skill as any good woman. So, a woman could catch a seal as well as a man, and a man could do housework as well as a woman. This was not considered bad at all. As a matter of fact, it was considered all for the good." – James Muckpah, Tununirmiut, 1979:5 (in Bennett and Rowley 2004, 15).

> "The girls used to take the part of the young boy if the father didn't have a son. As my father didn't get his son until I was quite old, I used to go along and help him [hunting]." – Samoine Elizabeth Kanayuk, Uqqurmiut, ILUOP (in Bennett and Rowley 2004, 14).

Karla Williamson (2004, 188) further emphasizes that in Inuit society, greater importance is fundamentally placed on the individual rather than the sex characteristics they possess, which points to a "sense of genderlessness". This is reflected, for example, in Inuit naming traditions

that enable both males and females to carry the same name (Aila 2009, 24-29; Williamson 2004, 188).

Inuit ways of learning may ultimately be understood as holistic and deeply rooted in kinship, community relations, the land, and a gendered yet nuanced division of labour. While it is not possible to capture all the complexities and underlying cultural meanings embedded in Inuit ways of learning within this section, this rudimentary introduction to Inuit ways of learning offers necessary background to better understand the impact and extent of educational transformations that took place in Inuit communities in the Canadian Arctic and what is present-day Nunavut. The introduction of mission schools and, eventually, a formal, government-led system of education drastically altered the ability of Inuit to continue their traditional and community-based learning practices.

3.2 Colonial Policies and Paternalism

Historical and ongoing patterns and legacies of paternal colonialism (also referred to as welfare colonialism) have underlined educational change in Nunavut from the mid nineteenth century onwards. Paternal colonialism may be defined as a colonial encounter where decisions are ambiguously made by colonial powers "on behalf of the colonized," with these decisions prioritizing the sociocultural, economic, and political aspirations of the colonists (Paine 1977, 46). Mission and state-imposed education policies and practices in the Canadian Arctic were shaped through this paternalistic colonial lens. However, it is important to recognize that Inuit were not simply passive victims of change or colonialism but rather were and continue to be central participants in processes of contact and change. Inuit have always been situated at the forefront of discussions, debates, and calls for action regarding education in the Canadian Arctic. It is also important to understand that colonial interactions between Inuit and non-Inuit in the

Canadian Arctic varied by region, and not all Inuit communities experienced contact and change in the same way. The federal and early territorial school systems featured considerable local and regional variability in the practical implementation of policy. Furthermore, educational change in the Canadian Arctic did not occur in a vacuum, but in the context of a host of other political, economic, sociocultural, and religious shifts, such as the influence of Christian missionaries, the military and the presence of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) (Shackleton 2012), the introduction of disc numbers and project surname (Aila 2009, 65-89), and the integration of a new system of medical care in Inuit communities (Olofsson, Holton, and Partridge 2008). There are many valuable resources available discussing these shifts which emphasize the personal stories and voices of Inuit, such as Ann McElroy's *Nunavut Generations: Change and Continuity in Canadian Inuit Communities* (2008). For the purposes of this section, however, I will provide a general overview of educational change in the NWT and Nunavut from the late nineteenth century to the mid twentieth century.

Historically, the NWT has undergone several reforms, boundary shifts, and social, cultural, and political transformations. Many First Nations and Inuit groups, including the Yellowknives, Chipewyan, Sekani, Beaver, Nahanni, Dogrib and Slavey, have inhabited the geographical region of the NWT since time immemorial (Government of Canada 2022b). However, the arrival of Martin Frobisher and his expedition team in the area around what is now Baffin Island in the 1570s, representing the first Europeans to enter the region since the Norse in 1000 AD, initiated a new era of exploration and trade in what is now known as the NWT (Government of Canada 2022b). The NWT was initially founded as the North-West Territory of the United States in 1787 via the Northwest Ordinance, officially titled "An Ordinance for the Government of the Territory of the United States Northwest of the River Ohio" (U.S. Congress)

1934. The North-West Territory encompassed land west of Pennsylvania, north of the Ohio River, east of the Mississippi River, and south of the Great Lakes. In 1870 control of the North-West Territory was transferred from the British government to Canada, leading to the formation of the North-West Territories (Government of Canada 2022b). The North-West Territories included portions of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Yukon, and most of Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec between 1870 and 1905, after which time the Northwest Territories was formed (Government of Canada 2022b). In 1999, the boundaries of the NWT shifted once again when Nunavut was created and 60% of the NWT's land was transferred to the new territory (Government of Canada 2022b).

Educational developments in the NWT were limited until the territory became part of Canada in 1870. At this time, the government began funding the operation of missionary day and residential schools in the region, which persisted for nearly a century before standardized education was implemented for all northern peoples in the 1950s (Macpherson 1991, 27). The period from 1860 to 1950 may be designated the "mission era" in the history of education in the NWT. While most Inuit children from the western and eastern Arctic regions did not enter the full-time school system during the mission era—prior to 1955, less than 15% of school-aged Inuit children were enrolled in schools (McGregor 2015, 24)—it represents the first stage of major educational transformation in Inuit communities. Mission schools were mainly operated by Catholic and Anglican missionaries, who taught classes to local, available Inuit at trading posts, whaling stations, and eventually Inuit settlements (Macpherson 1991, 27). Fewer missionary schools were operated and funded in the eastern Arctic, given that many eastern Inuit kept nomadic lifestyles and did not remain at settlements for extended periods of time (Meenen 1994, 159). Classes at mission schools generally consisted of religious teachings alongside

instruction in the writing of syllabic characters, arithmetic, geography, and other rudimentary subjects (Macpherson 1991, 38). There were no education policies or regulations dictating the quality or method of teaching in schools in the NWT at this time; therefore, the missionaries at each school established their own curriculum and pedagogy (Meenen 1994, 151). As a result, some missionaries taught in Inuktitut while other prohibited its use in schools (Meenen 1994, 151).

Education and state policy leading into the early twentieth century mandated that missionaries control Inuit education. At this time, however, the federal government held the view that universal, standardized education was unnecessary for Inuit because of the following reasons: 1) Inuit could earn a living through traditional methods of hunting, fishing, and trapping 2) education would disrupt Inuit traditional lifestyles 3) employment requiring education in the NWT was limited 4) informal education was available to Inuit through missionary schools (Meenen 1994, 160). However, beginning in the 1940s, the government's perspective on education changed. The period from 1944-1970 marks the "federal government" era of education in the NWT, during which the federal government became incentivized to instate a formal system of education in the north. This decision was likely influenced by a 1939 ruling by the Supreme Court of Canada asserting that Inuit are a "federal responsibility" (Re Eskimos R.C.S. 104). Frank Tester and Peter Kulchyski (1994) propose that the establishment of schooling in the NWT (along with additional measures taken by the Canadian government during the mid-twentieth century, such as the High Arctic Relocations) emerged out of a colonial and strategic effort to strengthen Canada's claim to sovereignty in the Arctic during the Cold War. Inuit welfare, it appears, was merely a secondary consideration that led the federal government to reluctantly begin intervening in the lives of Inuit by providing them with social services such as

education (McGregor 2015, 23). In turn, this period saw a shift from non-assimilative to assimilative education policies, as well as the introduction of greater numbers of federally run residential schools in the Canadian Arctic.

In 1876, the *Indian Act,* which has since been amended multiple times, was enacted under the residing government of John A. Macdonald to assimilate First Nations by rendering them wards of the state, extinguishing Indigenous self-government structures, and affording the federal government control over nearly every aspect of Aboriginal life, including education (Milloy 2017, 21). Residential schools were established within this framework to forcibly remove and isolate Indigenous children from their families, traditions, languages, and cultures, and to ultimately assimilate them into Canadian society. The government viewed education as the most critical element of their assimilative strategy and believed that the residential school experience would "lead children most effectively out of their 'savage' communities and into 'higher civilization' and 'full citizenship'" (Milloy 2017, 22). In 1884, attendance in residential schools became mandatory for status Indians in Canada until the age of sixteen. While the *Indian Act* was not specifically targeted towards Inuit, residential schools nevertheless became tools of assimilative education policy in the Canadian Arctic, although there were important differences between residential school policies and experiences in the north and south. More specifically, residential schools were established much later in the north and integrated both Inuit and non-Inuit students (McGregor 2015, 21).

By 1950, the Education Division of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development was operating eight federal residential schools in the eastern Arctic and recruiting government welfare teachers to work at them (RCAP 1996, 349; Macpherson 1991, 63). Simultaneously, federal support and funding for mission schools rapidly declined (although the

last mission school in the NWT was not closed until 1996) (Meenen 1994, 221). As of 1959, the total number of government-operated schools in the NWT and northern Quebec was 48, and by 1960, 60% of Inuit children were attending full-time federal schools or part-time mission schools (Meenen 1994, 203-19). These schools, which were largely built by the federal government with little to no consultation with local Inuit and utilized education programs designed and taught by southerners, did not exist to serve the needs of Inuit communities (Special Committee on Education 1981, 29-30).

Figure 2. *Portage la Prairie Indian Residential School in southern Manitoba, 1963*. (United Church Archives 2014)

From 1964-1965, the primary vocational school for Inuit youth in eastern Canada was the Churchill Vocational Centre (CVC) in Churchill, Manitoba, which housed 250 students (McElroy 2008, 140). From 1971 onwards, the Gordon Robertson High School in Frobisher Bay accommodated many Inuit adolescents from both local settlements and those located on Baffin

Island (McElroy 2008, 140). Inuit children who were sent to CVC, Frobisher, and other residential schools generally stayed there for several months of the year while their parents remained in camps (Brody 1991, 233). Some Inuit children were also sent to southern residential schools in Edmonton, Sturgeon Lake, Portage, Shingwauk, Fort Frances, Birtle, and Joussard (Milloy 2017, 240). Parents felt immense pressure from government officials to send their children to residential schools and some were even threatened with the loss of Family Allowance payments, should they refuse (King 2006, 12).

Inuit children's increased attendance at residential schools influenced, in part, the broader movement of Inuit families into permanent settlements in the mid twentieth century, as many parents did not wish to be separated from their children or other family members (Brody 1991, 80). Other factors impacting the increased settlement of Inuit during this time include the consolidation of government services and the presence of greater employment and housing opportunities in towns (McElroy 2008, 105-107). Whether or not increased permanent settlement among Inuit was an intended outcome of the federal government's residential school system in the Canadian Arctic is unclear (McGregor 2015, 25).

Many Inuit students were negatively impacted by the residential school system because they experienced prolonged separation from their families, encountered shame and received penalties for speaking Inuktitut, dealt with poor living conditions such as overcrowding and malnutrition, and suffered additional forms of emotional and physical abuse (McGregor 2015, 26; QIA 2013). Countless Inuit children underwent profound and irrevocable "social and cultural dislocation" within the residential school system (QIA 2013, 22). In an open-forum discussion with Inuit and non-Inuit participants titled "Inuit Education: Breaking the Family Circle," broadcasted by CBC radio in 1969, Inuit speakers discussed how the placement of children in

residential schools was detrimental because it broke family circles and ties. They further emphasized how Inuit youth were left in "limbo" by the new education system and were of "no use at all" when they returned home to their families and communities because they no longer possessed the skills or knowledge necessary for group survival, such as the ability to hunt (CBC 1969). Federal policy emphasizing English as the primary language of instruction in schools and undervaluing or excluding the use of Inuktitut, except perhaps during religious instruction or social activities, certainly facilitated the breaking of family circles and ties, resulting in the loss of language and cultural knowledge among a generation of Inuit (King 2006, 10).

Although government narratives in the north purported residential schools as "cultural bridges" meant to "preserve" Inuit culture through a multicultural education system that also prepared students for the modern world, this rhetoric of cultural preservation and sensitivity was overshadowed by the reality of a system in which cultural assimilation was the overwhelming norm (Milloy 2017, 251). Assimilative tactics in northern schools were sometimes also strengthened to appeal to non-Aboriginal parents because, unlike in the south, students from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities attended residential schools in the Canadian Arctic (Milloy 2017, 253). In addition to this profound social and cultural dislocation, some children died from disease, neglect, fires, accidents, and suicide while attending residential schools, and allegations of corporal punishment and sexual abuse of students by authorities across residential schools in the north and south have been proven (King 2006, 15) (see the Legacy of Hope Foundation Production *We Were so Far Away: The Inuit Experience of Residential Schools* (2010) and the *Qikiqtani Truth Commission* (QIA 2013) for more resources on the impact of residential schools on Inuit).

The establishment of a southern-imported education system in the Canadian Arctic saw a dramatic shift in responsibility for learning from Inuit parents, families, and communities to foreign colonial institutions, thereby marginalizing traditional Inuit ways of learning and undermining Inuit control over their children's education. Government efforts to colonize students' bodies and minds ultimately resulted in intergenerational trauma that continues to impact Inuit emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing in northern communities to this day. Such efforts are reflective of what Michel Foucault describes as a form of biopower or anatomo-politics of the human body by which bodies are controlled to produce docility (1926-1984). In military barracks, for example, forms of control may include securing individuals within an enclosure and having them adhere to a strict schedule and exercise routine. In the context of the Canadian Arctic, Inuit children were similarly regulated in a coercive system of disciplinary social power at mission and residential schools.

3.3 Unbalancing Power in the North

Many Inuit educators, parents, community members, and organizations challenged the mission and federal education systems. These trailblazers sought to re-center Inuit knowledge, language, and culture through new pedagogy and curriculum suited to the needs and aspirations of Inuit. The transfer of responsibility for education from the federal government to the NWT in 1970 played in a significant role in shifting the general dialogue of education policies and practices in the NWT from one of cultural assimilation to cultural protection and integration. This transfer in responsibility was part of a wider process of decentralization meant to advance the Territories toward acquiring representative and responsible government, "if not full provincial status" (Milloy 2017, 246). The period from 1970 to 1999 may be described as the "territorial era" in the history of education in the NWT. In 1970, the NWT government began

efforts to reformulate the education system and established that the central the purpose of education was, in part, to "provide…citizens with the necessary skills and competencies to enable them to live a full life in the north or elsewhere," "recognize, encourage, and develop English, French, Eskimo, and Indian cultures," and "foster an awareness and understanding of cultural differences" (Government of the Northwest Territories 1970, 73). Over the next two decades, the creation of a new government became a major goal for Inuit associations, organizations, and communities in the Eastern Arctic seeking greater social, cultural, and political autonomy (Nunavut Constitutional Forum 1984, 117). Their efforts eventually culminated in the creation of Nunavut.

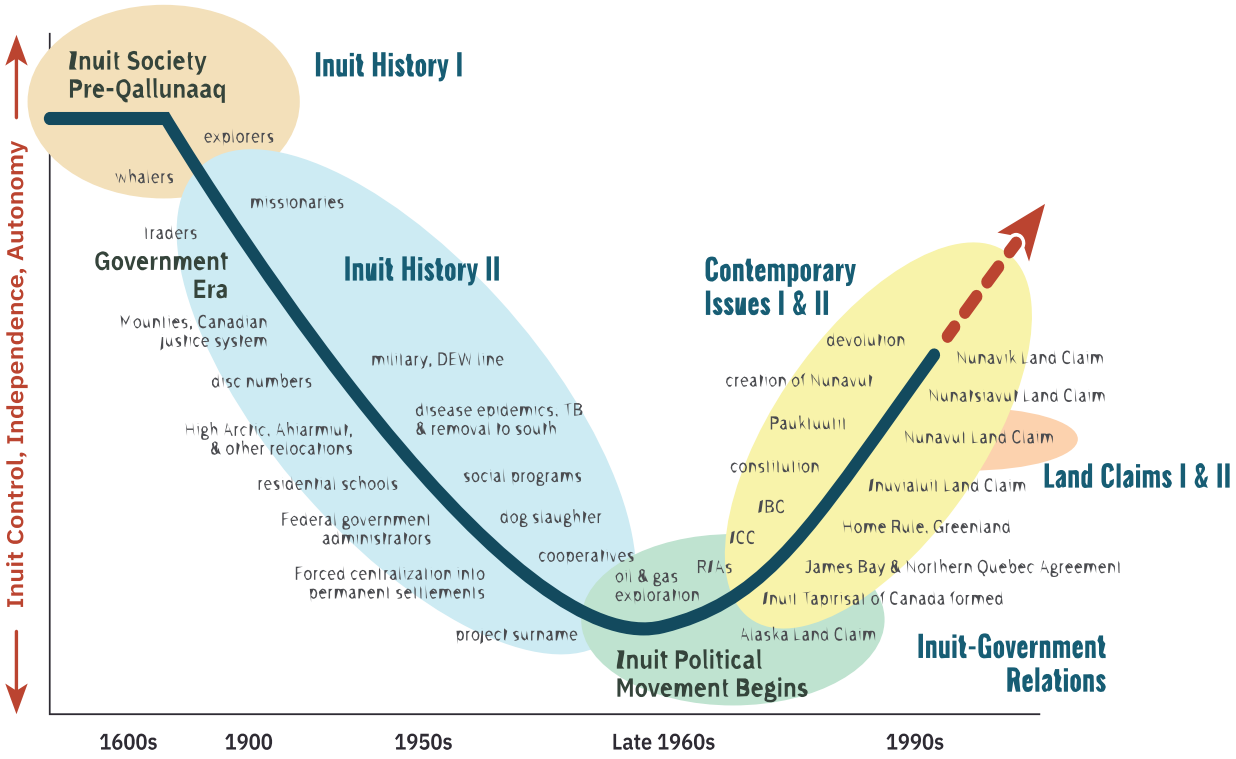

Figure 3. *The Inuit Story* (Nunavut Sivuniksavut 2022)

Inuit aspirations and interests regarding education in the late twentieth century are reflected in numerous public reports, media broadcasts and publications, and scholarly works. For example, in the "Cultural Impact" section of Thomas Berger's 1977 *Northern Frontier,*

Northern Homeland: The Report of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry report, he discusses the assimilative tactics of the formal, government-imposed education system in the north and stresses Inuit beliefs that this system does not reflect their values or allow for their cultural continuity (1977, 93). He specifically writes, "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). Berger's report is significant because it helped reveal the crisis underpinning education in the north and emphasized Indigenous peoples' aspirations for educational self-determination.

These aspirations are further articulated in a 1982 CBC television broadcast titled "Inside the Cultural Chasm at N.W.T. Schools." This forum-based broadcast spotlights the perspectives of Inuit and non-Inuit teachers, principals, parents, high school students, government administrators, and Inuit Elders. Throughout the forum discussion, participants emphasize the need for Inuit cultural knowledge and languages to be better incorporated into the education system, and for "Western" and Inuit culture to be bridged through classroom teachings (CBC 1982). According to many of the forum's participants, positive educational change can only occur if control of the education system in the north is given to Inuit (CBC 1982). Ethel, an Inuit teacher from Yellowknife, states in one segment of the broadcast, "we [Inuit] have been the players, and the rules have been theirs [non-Inuit southerners]. We want the benefits of both kinds of education systems and knowledge...We have the facility to do just that and no one else can do that for us. Our ideas must be supported, not just with lip service, but also with an attitude of real change. We must be able to feel that support, and we're not." Ethel's words challenge

Inuit-state relations in the north and represent an appeal for Inuit voices and values to be recognized in education contexts.

Governor General of Canada Mary Simon's keynote presentation at the Inuit Control of Inuit Education seminar, held in Iqaluit from June 27 to July 1, 1987, further reflected growing efforts for educational self-determination in the Canadian Arctic at this time. In her presentation, Simon asserted that to ensure the survival and development of Inuit culture and language, Inuit must "not only participate in [their] northern systems of education but be able to profoundly influence its policies and priorities" (Simon 1987, 43). She additionally outlined five principles, elements which are crucial for Inuit control of Inuit education: 1) comprehensive policy development 2) adequate funding 3) a flexible system of education 4) parent and community involvement 5) appropriate teacher training (Simon 1987, 45-46). These principles remain central to ongoing discussions surrounding the future of education in Nunavut today, which focus on the importance of Inuit being able to establish and control their own educational priorities and processes with culturally relevant and appropriate classroom content.

Calls for change and shifts in the NWT's education landscape were not isolated events, but rather mirrored initiatives taking place in other areas of northern Canada. In 1975, for example, the Kativik School Board (KSB) was established in Nunavik because of the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement (JBNQA) and became the first Inuit controlled school board in Canada, setting an important precedent for other regions of northern Canada where Inuit communities were seeking greater political, social, economic, and educational self-determination (Vick-Westgate 2002, 2). Shortly after, in 1977, a new education ordinance was approved in the NWT to not only support the inclusion of Inuit cultural content in the curriculum and the employment of non-professional local staff to instruct this content, but also establish local

decision-making authority over the language of instruction from kindergarten to grade two in schools (McGregor 2012, 34). This ordinance provided the formal, legislative basis for altering the structure of educational decision-making in the NWT from one of centralization to decentralization. Later, in 1982, the NWT Department of Education published *Learning: Tradition and Change in the Northwest Territories* (LTC). LTC mandated the transfer of administration of schools from the Department of Education to divisional boards of education, in addition to encouraging teacher training at the community level and greater parental involvement in children's' education "with the intended benefit of improving attendance and lowering drop-out rates" among Inuit youth (McGregor 2012, 37). LTC additionally recommended the integration of traditional knowledge into classroom learning (Northwest Territories 1982, 86). The themes and language present in LTC constitute a rejection of the continuation of Inuit dependence on "southern" education systems, making it a significant document in the broader context of education in the NWT and, later, Nunavut (King 1998, 26).

Between 1985 and 1999, three regional school boards of education were established in the NWT under the Baffin Divisional Board of Education (BDBE). The BDBE represents the "first Inuit-controlled education system to come into existence in the Northwest Territories" and consisted of fifty board members were who appointed by local education authorities in communities, most of whom were Inuit (McGregor 2012, 37). BDBE priorities included the enhanced provision of Inuit language programs, the production of Inuit language learning materials, increased recruitment of and support for Inuit educators, cultural integration in curriculum, employment of Elders, delivery of grades ten to twelve in every community, and "unprecedented community and parental involvement in education" (McGregor 2012, 38). In 1987, the BDBE published *Our Future is Now: Directions for Education in the Baffin*, outlining

the changes experienced by Inuit and emphasizing that education in the north must reflect these changes. In 1989, the BDBE published *Piniaqtavut: Integrated Program*, a curriculum framework document asserting that northern education should focus on topics relating to the north and Inuit language and culture. These early documents reflect many of the underlying themes present in the *Nunavut Education Act* (2008) that was passed following the establishment of Nunavut.

The creation of Nunavut brought about a "new balance of power in the north" (Brody 1991, 12) that had significant ramifications for education policy and practice. When the Government of Nunavut formed, it sought to establish a Department of Education to reflect and promote the principles and values of IQ, as well as direct departmental responsibilities to local levels. In 1999, Nunavut closed previously established school boards in the eastern Arctic and instated community-based "education authorities and regional and territorial Department of Education officers" who were to become responsible for overseeing the implementation of education policy and curriculum in schools (McGregor 2012, 291). In 2000, Nunavut's Department of Education initiated the first stages of development for the 2008 *Nunavut Education Act*, a collaborative effort involving the input of a large group of Nunavut educators, Inuit Elders, community experts, and curriculum and school services staff from across the territory (McGregor 2013, 100). Since traditional forms of education endured for most Inuit leading up to the mid-twentieth century, Inuit Elders were better positioned than many other Indigenous groups in Canada to contribute their voices, stories, and knowledge regarding their languages, cultural practices, and traditions to the production of a new education act (McGregor 2013, 93).

One of the foundational documents of the *Nunavut Education Act* (2008) that specifically articulates and outlines the integration of IQ in schools is the *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Education Framework for Nunavut Curriculum*. This document states that the goal of implementing IQ in Nunavut's education system "is to provide a learning environment where silaturniq (becoming wise) is fostered, and within which the strength of inummarik (a capable person) can develop" (Nunavut Department of Education 2007, 21). The document further outlines several beliefs and overarching principles that are important to an Inuit sense of being and should therefore be integrated into classroom teachings, including "Laws of Relationships," *Inuit Maligait* or "Natural Laws," *Inuit Atuagat* or "Cultural Laws," *Inuit Piqujangit* or "Communal Laws/Principles," and "Values and Attitudes" (Nunavut Department of Education 2007, 23). Each of these categories is detailed in greater depth throughout the document; *Maligait* or "Natural Laws," for example, are described as composing of the four following principles: working for the common good, being respectful of all living things, maintaining harmony, and continually planning/preparing for a better future (Nunavut Department of Education 2007, 27). According to the *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Education Framework for Nunavut Curriculum*, these Inuit beliefs and principles are to be employed as "cross-curriculum [and cross-cultural] competencies expected from all students at all levels" (Nunavut Department of Education 2007, 30).

The *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Education Framework for Nunavut Curriculum* also defines the pedagogical approach to be taken by educators in relation to "Learning Continuum Stages," which recognizes that everyone is engaged in a personal and lifelong learning process. The "Learning Continuum Stages" approach to learning "conceives of the learner's path as continuous, forward-moving and sequential," a process likened to building an iglu (Nunavut

Department of Education 2007, 39). In addition, the document emphasizes the necessity of community-based partnerships and multileveled cooperative efforts for the successful implementation of IQ in schools by advocating for "extensive consultation with District Education Authorities, educators, parents and students in each community about Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit education" (Nunavut Department of Education 2007, 58). Moreover, the *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Education Framework for Nunavut Curriculum* underlines the importance of "collaboration with Inuit Elders, Inuit organizations, and Government of Nunavut departments to translate the core Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit values and beliefs into working models and goals for school improvement" (Nunavut Department of Education 2007, 58).

Significantly, the 2008 *Nunavut Education Act* also included a commitment to implementing a "comprehensive bilingual education program" in the territory that would provide students from kindergarten to grade twelve with education in both Inuktitut and English by 2019 (Hodgkins 2010, 1). A bilingual education system is necessary for accurately and meaningfully transmitting the principles and values of IQ to students and has been proven to increase "high school graduation rates and Inuktitut literacy," thereby encouraging the social, cultural, and economic development and prosperity of Nunavut youth (Hodgkins 2010, 1). The passing of the *Inuit Language Protection Act* the same year as the *Nunavut Education Act* (2008) further supported Nunavut's vision for a bilingual future and education system at the legislative level.

Today, the Government of Nunavut's goal to cultivate an education system guided by Inuit languages, culture, and values remains largely unfulfilled because of several overlapping factors. For example, despite the promising bilingual education goals put forth by the *Nunavut Education Act* (2008), "the development of resources, program planning, and availability of Inuit bilingual teachers required to reach these goals" are lacking (2010, 296). Bilingual education is

viewed by many teachers as a "hit and miss" enterprise that requires greater consistency, accountability, and higher standards within Nunavut schools (Aylward 2010, 307). Moreover, persisting colonial power relations and ideologies in Nunavut contribute to the reluctance of Inuit parents and grandparents to support their children's integration into the formal education system, participate in their children's learning, or communicate with their children's teachers and principals (Tulloch et al. 2016, 194). Low levels of education among Inuit are therefore perpetuated and foster continued dependency on social assistance, as well as cycles of poverty that are heightened by the high cost of living in the territory (Walton 2013, 3). Relations between parents, educators, students, and community members are further strained by the persistent teacher turnover that occurs in Nunavut (Preston 2016, 121), which is in part a result of the wide geographic dispersal of schools in the territory and a lack of necessary infrastructure such as staff housing (McGregor 2012, 300).

Low class attendance and graduation rates among Inuit students further limit the ability of Inuit youth to benefit from Nunavut's vision for an *IQ*-based learning environment (Walton 2013, 3). According to a 2016 census, 47.8% of individuals aged 25 to 64 in Nunavut had a high school diploma or equivalency certificate, compared to 86.3% for the rest of Canada (Statistics Canada 2016a). A study done by Melanie O'Gorman and Manish Pandey in 2014 found that Inuit students are most likely to drop out of high school due to issues relating to substance abuse and the consumption of alcohol, along with parents' attitudes toward schooling, education levels, and occupational statuses. Unfortunately, there are not enough robust support systems present in Nunavut's schools to address these students' diverse challenges and needs (O'Gorman and Pandey 2014). Inadequate funding of schools is another major obstacle to successfully incorporating IQ in Nunavut schools. As Andrew Hodgkins (2010, 4) argues, the Canadian

Federal Government has been reluctant to cover the costs necessary to achieve the legal mandate of a fully functioning bilingual education system in the territory. The *Nunavut Education Act* (2008) therefore rests on "shaky economic foundations" that make it difficult to apply education policy into practice (Hodgkins 2010, 2).

The successful integration of an IQ education framework in Nunavut schools is ultimately both limited and enabled by a wide and complex range of factors, extending from micro-level social interactions to decision-making processes in the federal government. These broader factors engage educators in the difficult task of incorporating Inuit ways of knowing, being, and doing in an education system that has historically and purposefully excluded Inuit perspectives and voices. While the "southern hegemony" over education in the north has been destabilized, at least to some degree, Nunavut's unique education system does not clearly provide meaningful local control or facilitate effective relationships between the central government and communities. In Chapter Seven, I draw on interviews with Inuit and other education stakeholders to illustrate more perspectives on why and how Nunavut's goal for education remains unfulfilled and why that is of concern.

Chapter Four

Mapping Self-Determination: Time, Space, Place

4.1 Introduction

Self-determination may be broadly defined as every people's inherent right to freely determine their political status and pursue their economic, social and cultural development (UNDRIP 2007, 8). "People" in this context generally refers to a self-identified population with the following characteristics: a common historical tradition, a distinctive cultural group, a shared language, a shared religion, and a traditional territorial connection (Magnarella 2002, 31). Given that self-determination is a key concept underpinning this thesis, in this section I explore the idea of self-determination in greater depth. Firstly, I conceptually "map" self-determination by laying out its historical origins, theoretical foundations, and modern applications. Secondly, I elaborate on the connections between Indigenous education, self-determination, and sovereignty by drawing on the work of Indigenous education scholars. Thirdly, I distinguish between the idea of self-determination as defined and presented within this thesis, and the self-determination theory (SDT) developed by educational psychologists. Lastly, I differentiate between self-determination and self-government and expand on how they are related.

4.2 Historical Origins and Modern Applications

The concept of self-determination is thought to have originated as a political nationalistic ideology during the American and French revolutions in the eighteenth century (Castellino 2000, 11; Heater 1994, 1-4; Keitner 2000; Kolla 2013). Both revolutions emphasized the importance of the will of "the people" and were premised on the belief that it is the consent of the governed which makes a government legitimate (Castellino 2000, 11). In the post-World War 1 era, U.S.

President Woodrow Wilson, drawing on contemporary discourses of democracy and nationalism, re-popularized the idea of self-determination as the right of nations to create independent governments and states (Castellino 2000, 13; Heater 1994, 15-27). In the modern context, self-determination is mobilized beyond the scope of nation-states to include transnational communities and especially Indigenous and other minority groups who desire to be politically, economically, culturally, and socially self-determining (Muehlebach 2003).

Current understandings of self-determination have been heavily influenced by the United Nations (UN), an intergovernmental organization established with the aim of maintaining international peace and security. When the UN was formed in 1945, self-determination became politicized and publicized at the international level via the Charter of the United Nations, which was adopted unanimously as the organization's foundational treaty. The Charter specifically enshrines self-determination as a right of all people (see Article 1). In 1976, an amendment to the Charter further established self-determination as a principle of international law meant to guide state to state relations and the treatment of individuals within state boundaries (see Article 1). Over the past several decades, the UN has further strengthened the link between self-determination and Indigenous rights. In 1960, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) passed the "Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples" Resolution to affirm independence for those under colonial rule and establish the importance of self-determination for colonized peoples (see paragraph 2 of article 1514). More recently, the UNGA passed the highly influential United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in 2007. UNDRIP is a legally non-binding Resolution recognizing and delineating the rights of Indigenous peoples globally and is meant to serve as a guidepost for international

and domestic policy and law (UN 2007). Articles 2 and 3 of UNDRIP (UN 2007) explicitly outline Indigenous peoples' right to self-determination:

> Article 3
>
> Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.
>
> Article 4
>
> Indigenous peoples, in exercising their right to self-determination, have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous functions (8).

The full declaration contains forty-five articles defining all aspects of Indigenous self-determination, including the right to traditional lands and resources, the right to practice and revitalize cultural traditions and customs, the right to establish and control education, and language rights (United Nations 2007). Canada officially endorsed UNDRIP (UN 2007) in 2016 after initially voting against the passing of the declaration in 2007. Since 2016, UNDRIP (UN 2007) has not been applied to its full legal effect in Canada given the federal government's position that the declaration lies in opposition to standing constitutional rights and treaty arrangements (Coates and Holroyd 2014, 8). Nevertheless, UNDRIP (UN 2007) has played a major role in legitimizing and shaping conversations around Indigenous rights and self-determination in Canada and beyond (Coates and Holroyd 2014, 8). For example, a number of national and international Indigenous-led organizations have cited the declaration and its position on self-determination as a source of authority, including the ICC via their 2009 *A Circumpolar*

Inuit Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic (see article 1.4) and the ITK, who have called on the Government of Canada to implement UNDRIP (UN 2007) through appropriate, federal legislation (ITK 2022).

Self-determination is undoubtedly a powerful conceptual tool for Indigenous groups in a variety of political and social spheres (Muehlebach 2003, 243). However, it is critical to recognize the diversity of voices and needs within these spheres to avoid adopting a unitary view regarding Indigenous views of self-determination or how processes of self-determination might unfold "on the ground" for particular individuals and groups. For example, Indigenous self-determination is expressed and contested very differently in the contexts of Greenland Home Rule, and later Self-Rule (see Nuttall 2008), Māori law in New Zealand (see Jones 2016) and, as will be discussed in this thesis, education in Nunavut. Furthermore, while self-determination is often applied within the context of global human rights, the pursuit of self-determination should not be understood as a mere "deterritorialized" project (Muehlebach 2003, 244). Rather, it is directly linked to the local efforts of Indigenous groups who are seeking the "legal enshrinement" of land and resource rights in their traditional homelands (Muehlebach 2003, 244). These efforts also extend beyond "rights discourses" necessitating "state affirmation and recognition" to include daily practices of place-based Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing (Corntassel 2012, 89). Both justice and (re)connection with one's culture and community may therefore be thought of as crucial for advancing self-determination (Corntassel 2012, 94-7).

Self-determination may also be understood as an important framework for challenging the legacies of colonialism and fostering reconciliation (Pihama and Lee-Morgan 2019, Battiste 2009). In Canada, reconciliation is an ongoing process to establish and maintain a cooperative relationship "based on principles of justice, democracy, respect for human rights, non-

discrimination and good faith" between Indigenous peoples and the state (Gunn 2015, 239). The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), which was created as a result of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) in 2008, established UNDRIP (UN 2007) as the framework for renewing relationships between Indigenous peoples and Canada in their 2015 multi-volume report documenting the history and legacy of the Canadian residential school system (2015). This report includes 94 legislative recommendations or "calls to action" to redress the legacy of residential schools and promote reconciliation in Canada (2015), including the development of culturally appropriate curricula in consultation and collaboration with Indigenous communities, and support for community-controlled culture and language revitalization projects (2015). Today, however, the TRC's calls to action (2015) remain largely unfulfilled.

4.3 Indigenous Education, Self-Determination, and Sovereignty

Influential international and national frameworks such as UNDRIP (UN 2007) and the TRC (2015) have drawn important links between education and self-determination by emphasizing Indigenous peoples' right to control their education as a necessary component for advancing self-determination. This link is further emphasized through the work of many Indigenous education scholars (Battiste 2009, 5; Angelina Castagno and Brayboy 2008, 949; Lee 2015). For example, leading Canadian scholar Marie Battiste (2009) asserts that the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in education contexts may be broadly thought of as a form of "intellectual self-determination" that represents a major movement towards dismantling ongoing dominant Eurocentric prejudices and colonial attitudes that marginalize Indigenous knowledge systems on a global scale. Scholars such as Battiste underscore the significance of including Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing into education systems not only for supporting individual

students' success (Lee 2015, 10), but also for advancing the rights of Indigenous peoples on a larger scale. In practice, however, it is still rare that Indigenous knowledge, languages, values, and traditions are included in formal curriculum, or that Indigenous communities experience full engagement with local schools (McKinley and Smith 2019). Globally, Indigenous peoples are challenging this reality and seeking to shape education policy and practice to help advance their aspirations for self-determination and revitalize and strengthen their cultures, languages, families, and communities (McKinley and Smith 2019). These efforts have been especially documented in the United States, New Zealand, and Australia in recent years (Dodson and Miru 2021; Horning and Baumbrough 2020; McCarty et al. 2021, Weinstein 2014).

The idea of Indigenous sovereignty often overlaps with conversations about Indigenous education and self-determination, particularly within literature emerging from the United States (Anthony-Stevens et al. 2017; Bishop 2022; Bishop 2021; Marshall 2018; McCarty et al. 2021; McCarty and Lee 2022). Indigenous sovereignty is not a main focus of my thesis, but given its conceptual proximity to self-determination it is important to discuss how it is defined and framed within broader discussions on Indigenous education. Like self-determination, the term sovereignty is foundational to international law and is concerned with people's rights to control their legal, social, economic, political, and cultural activities (Shrinkhal 2021, 71). Although self-determination and sovereignty are sometimes used interchangeably (Bishop 2022, 133), the latter is often more narrowly positioned as mode of challenging the exclusive "political and moral authority of States" over populations (Bishop 2022, 135; Shrinkhal 2021, 71-3). For example, when reflecting on the enduring struggles of Indigenous peoples' experiences of the formal education system in the United States, Vanessa Anthony-Stevens et al. (2017) argue that Indigenous peoples have negotiated and resisted local and federal education language policy

since the period of colonization to "uphold their sovereignty" (20) and resist the stolen legal authority of the state. As such, Indigenous sovereignty has been identified by some as a tool for or an expression of self-determination (McCarty and Lee 2022; Nîtôtemtik 2020).

4.4 Self-Determination Theory

In this thesis, I define self-determination as every people's right to be politically, economically, socially, and culturally self-determining. This definition situates self-determination within a human and Indigenous rights framework and is aligned with the idea of self-determination as presented in the Charter of the United Nations (1945) and UNDRIP (UN 2007). Outside of this context, however, the term "self-determination" has also been adopted and utilized by educational psychologists via self-determination theory (SDT). SDT appears frequently in searches for scholarly literature on "self-determination" (see Chirkov 2009; Deci et al. 2017; Niemiec and Ryan 2009; Reeve 2012). Therefore, to eliminate any confusion or conflation between these two conceptions of self-determination, in this section I provide a brief overview of SDT.

SDT was developed by psychologists Edward Deci and Richard Ryan as a macro theory for understanding human motivation and personality in their 1985 book *Self-Determination and Intrinsic Motivation in Human Behaviour*. SDT is generally employed by researchers to emphasize the central, universal role of self-determined motivation and autonomy in students' education and learning (Chirkov 2009, Deci et al. 1991 and Niemiec and Ryan 2009). From this perspective, self-determination is a behavioral state in which a "person perceives that the locus of causality [of their actions] is internal to his or herself" (Deci et al. 1991, 327). Educational psychologists assert that self-determination stems from a universal, "basic psychological need to experience self-governance and ownership of one's actions" (Chirkov 2009, 254). Given this

basic psychological need, proponents of SDT argue that teachers should adopt in-classroom practices that support students' autonomy and agency; for example, by asking students to learn material for their own use versus asking students to learn material to be tested (Deci et al. 1991, 332). Significantly, SDT is focused on student behaviours and learning processes in individuals rather than groups, further distinguishing it from the idea of self-determination as the inherent right of a collective, cultural "self," community, or nation.

4.5 Self-Determination vs. Self-Government

Before continuing, it is also imperative to differentiate between self-determination and self-government, which are often referenced in tandem (see Cornell 2015; Imai 2008, Kuokkanen 2017; Tomiak 2010). Put simply, self-governance can be a means of exercising self-determination in practice (Cornell 2015; Imai 2008, 11; Kuokkanen 2017, 191), but the two are not inherently linked. While self-determination is recognized as a universal right, self-governance actively grants a particular group law-making authority and decision-making power in a variety of social, cultural, economic, and political domains (Government of Canada 2022c). Within Indigenous self-government movements such as those taking place in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States (Imai 2008), these domains tend to include lands and other natural resources in Indigenous homelands, internal community affairs, processes of economic development, and cultural properties and cultural heritage management (Cornell 2015; Government of Canada 2022c). In Canada, there are currently 25 self-government agreements involving 43 Indigenous communities, bands, and nations in Canada, including the Haida Nation and Westbank First Nation in British Columbia, and the Carcross/Tagish First Nation and Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation in the Yukon (Government of Canada 2022c). Approximately 50 more agreements are being negotiated (Government of Canada 2022c). Notably, true self-government

which affords this kind of law-making authority and decision-making power differs from "de facto" self-government, the latter of which exists in Nunavut given the territory's Inuit majority population. As discussed in Chapter Two, the NLCA (1993) was established to protect Inuit land, water, and ice ownership, as well as harvesting rights, but a self-government agreement was never negotiated between Nunavut and the Government of Canada.

Indigenous self-government structures have been shown to increase social and economic prosperity in communities, including greater educational outcomes, by enabling leaders to better address the specific needs and aims of community members in culturally relevant and appropriate ways (Imai 2008, 6-7; Sefa Dei and Restoule 2019). However, self-determination negotiations should not be viewed as a straightforward or infallible method of advancing self-determination. For example, not all Indigenous peoples live within a delineated territory for which self-government may be applied, therefore limiting these individuals' abilities to pursue self-determination in a practical sense (Reinders 2019, 9). Moreover, the process of successfully negotiating a self-government agreement is generally complex and lengthy, requiring the input and coordination of many actors at the community, regional, and national levels. For example, while self-government is recognized an inherent, existing Aboriginal right in Canada (see section 35 of The Constitution Act, 1982), self-government agreements are still developed within the country's constitutional framework and Indigenous laws are formed in consideration of national laws, provincial laws, and general laws including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Canadian Human Rights Act (Government of Canada 2022c).

Chapter Five

Anthropological Perspectives

5.1 Anthropological Contributions

5.1.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I introduce and trace the history of the anthropology of education as a distinct subfield of socio-cultural and linguistic anthropology. In addition, I summarize the current body of literature within this subfield by identifying key themes and approaches within the literature which are of particular relevance to my research. I further consider what anthropology can uniquely contribute to the study of education and self-determination by outlining the benefits of a holistic approach, thick description, and an overarching focus on "culture." Lastly, I outline the theoretical framework for my research by exploring decolonial theory, critical theory, and their value. Laying this foundation and cultivating an understanding of how previous anthropologists have contributed to the study of education is crucial if I am going to, as my thesis title indicates, work towards developing an anthropology of education in Nunavut.

5.1.2 The Anthropology of Education

Anthropologists of education seek to examine and analyze educational and education-related processes and phenomena, as well as consider the roles, relationships, and experiences of key stakeholders involved in these processes and phenomena (i.e., students, children, adults, parents, policymakers, teachers, administrators). "Education" in this context refers to the ways in which concepts, practices, and values are formally and informally transmitted and received amongst individuals and groups across a range of settings including, but not limited to, schools,

homes, online platforms, and through interactions with friends, family, colleagues, and strangers (Wortham and Reyes 2012, 137). "Formal" ways of learning generally occur via structured and institutionalized curriculum and pedagogy whereas "informal" ways of learning generally occur outside of structured and institutionalized curriculum and pedagogy (Marsick and Volpe 1999, 4). To clarify, "curriculum" refers to systematically and intentionally planned learning outcomes and associated learning experiences (UNESCO 2022) while "pedagogy" refers to the practice and method of teaching (UNESCO 2022). An example of formal learning might be an elementary school teacher providing a math lesson during which students are taught, tested, and assessed based on the lesson's pre-established outcomes and goals. An example of informal learning might be child playing a self-directed video game requiring the use of math and developing math skills as a result. Many forms of education, including both formal and informal ways of learning, have been studied by anthropologists following the establishment of the discipline in the late nineteenth century.

The foundations for an "anthropology of education" emerged in the early twentieth century in the United States (Anderson-Levitt 2012, 11), particularly under the influence of anthropologist Margaret Mead, who explored learning behaviours and child-rearing practices in cross-cultural contexts (see Mead 1928; Mead 1930). Later, anthropologists George Spindler, Solon Kimball, Dell Hymes, and Jean Lave contributed greatly to the establishment of the anthropology of education through their ethnographic and scholarly work in a range of contexts (Hymes 1980; Hymes 1980; Kimball 1974; Kimball and McClellan 1962; Lave and Wenger 1991). Spindler, who is widely recognized as the founder of the subfield (McDermott 2008, 117), published extensively in the mid to late twentieth century on the value of an anthropological approach for educational research, as well as processes of cultural transmission and acculturation

in schools (Spindler 1955; Spindler 1963; Spindler 1982; Spindler and Spindler 1987). Outside of the United States, countries including Brazil, Argentina, and Japan began to produce their own anthropological and ethnographic literature on education around the 1970s (Anderson-Levitt 2012, 12). The anthropology of education therefore umbrellas many different "traditions" globally, but its inception can be traced to the United States. It is also important to note that although anthropologists of education generally converge in their tendencies to emphasize social and cultural context in educational processes (more on this in the following section), they employ a range of methodologies that are not limited to traditional ethnographic practices such as participant observation and interviews with participants. For example, anthropologists of education also utilize policy research, participatory action research, and teacher research, among other qualitative methods (Henze 2020).

5.1.3 Literature Review: Key Themes and Approaches

The anthropology of education is a diverse and valuable body of literature ranging from studies on the experiences of Syrian refugee youth (Cohen 2021), hip hop pedagogy in Denmark (Ringsager and Madsen 2022), elite private schools in Ecuador (Bittencourt 2021), and technoscience education in India (Mathew 2021), to name a few recent publications from *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, the foremost peer reviewed journal in the subfield. This literature seeks to deepen our understandings of how education both shapes and is shaped by socio-cultural contexts, increasingly with a lens of activism and researcher engagement meant to help change education conditions through collaboration with relevant stakeholders (Henze 2022). As it is outside the scope of this thesis to provide a comprehensive review of all areas of study within the anthropology of education, in this section I seek to identify and expand upon a select few areas which are especially relevant to my research on education and self-determination in

Nunavut. This includes literature on education and self-determination, education policy, linguistics and education, and Indigenous education (not to be confused with section 5.2, which will explore the contributions of Indigenous education researchers outside the field of anthropology).

Within the anthropology of education, studies focused specifically on self-determination specifically. One notable exception is the research undertaken by Kathryn Manuelito. Manuelito carried out ethnographic studies from 1999 to 2001 on community-based education in a Navajo community-controlled school. This research was carried out in the aftermath of the 1975 Indian Self-Determination and Educational Assistance Act and the introduction of other federal education policies seeking to strengthen Indigenous-state relations, re-establish community-controlled schools on reserves, and challenge previous public policies in the United States which sought to marginalize and/or eliminate Ramah Navajo and other Indigenous groups' languages and cultures through formal education (Manuelito 2005, 73) Manuelito employed participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis techniques to explore the idea of self-determination and its relationship to education as defined and practiced by the Ramah Navajo community (Manuelito 2005). After interviewing 36 community members and conducting 4 focus groups, Manuelito discovered that while community members viewed education as an essential part of self-determination, they also defined self-determination in a manner contrary to predominant Anglo-American conceptions (81). From a Ramah Navajo perspective, self-determination was comprised of four ongoing, communal processes: community-based planning, maintaining an awareness of self, being proactive, and persevering (Manuelito 2005, 80). This description of self-determination is deeply situated in the social and cultural context of the Ramah Navajo people and therefore departs from UNDRIP's broad formulation of self-

determination in important ways. Manuelito's research especially establishes for me the imperativeness of being sensitive to the complex and diverse ways in which different individuals and groups may perceive heavily popularized and politicized concepts such as "self-determination."

Indigenous education represents a growing area of research within the anthropology of education, particularly in the United States and Canada but also expanding to other areas including New Zealand and parts of Latin America (Anderson-Levitt 2011, 17; Doerr 2008; Harrison 2005; Rockwell and Gomes 2009; Steele 2018; Ossola 2017; Virtanen 2022). Within this literature, decolonization emerges as a dominant theme in various contexts. For example, scholars have examined efforts to decolonize education in local, global, and translocal spaces, including efforts to revitalize and integrate Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing within school curriculum and pedagogy to improve student wellbeing and learning experiences (Banks 2010; Barnhardt and Kawagley 2005; Huaman 2020; Murillo 2009). Scholars have additionally explored strategies to decolonize research methodologies in education studies by re-centering the interests of Indigenous peoples, fostering reciprocity between researchers and communities, and unsettling colonial knowledge regimes (Calderon 2016; McGregor and Marker; Smith 2008).

Exploring education through a decolonial, or postcolonial (Stambach and Ngwane 2011), lens (for a review of the differences and similarities between decoloniality and postcoloniality, see Bhambra 2014) allows anthropologists of education to identify and interrogate matrixes of power and relations of in/exclusion to frame their discussions. This approach, I argue, is critical for understanding processes of self-determination, as well. From this perspective, education institutions are not perceived as passive or objective sites for knowledge transmission and reception; rather, education institutions are revealed to be directly moulded by current

individuals and groups in power and what these individuals and groups view as acceptable and necessary. In turn, anthropologists focusing on Indigenous education play an important role in helping to locate and unlearn the legacies of European/Western imperialism, colonialism, and Modernity within education systems.

Given the power of policies to define reality, organize behaviour, and allocate resources (Levinson et al. 2020, 24), educational policy represents a critical and integral area of anthropological enquiry as I navigate my own research. Although educational policy is a relatively novel area of study within the anthropology of education, what scholars have published on the subject offers valuable insights. For instance, scholars have analyzed policy formation and implementation as sites of cultural production and social practices of power that entangle wide networks of actors (Brown 2010; Groff 2018; Hamann and Rosen 2011, 465-466; McCarty et al. 2011). Scholars have further considered how policy "problems" and "solutions" are socioculturally constructed (Hamman and Rosen 2011) and explored how the meanings of education policies may shift as they are negotiated between policymakers and enacted "on the ground" in schools and classrooms (Castagno and McCarty 2018). For example, a 2013 study by Kasper Juffermans and Kirstin Van Camp emphasizes the importance of studying the local perspectives of teachers, students, and parents regarding shifting education policy in The Gambia. Through their research, Juffermans and Camp (2013) reveal that although official language education policy in The Gambia seeks to uphold multiculturalism and multilingualism, in practice English continues to be the primary medium of instruction in schools, partly because there is no consensus among key stakeholders on what local languages in communities should be "chosen" to integrate into school learning.

As the above example demonstrates, adopting an anthropological lens on education policy can help link larger scale law and governance discourses with local or community-level processes of organization and control and highlight the convergences, divergences, and complexities which exist between them (Levinson et al. 2020, 25). Scholars have also expanded beyond "formal" education policies to examine how certain, "informal" policies may exist in an unwritten form that stems from ongoing institutional memory and practice, although this remains a much smaller area of research (Castagno and McCarty 2018, 27). Ultimately, although anthropologists may not be equipped to understand "the specific institutional and organizational dynamics" and complexities surrounding policy (Levinson et al. 2020, 26), they can contribute to understanding policy in the context of how it is negotiated by actors and connected to socially and culturally embedded practices of power and resistance.

The important role of language is also strongly emphasized within the anthropology of education, particularly in the context of students' experiences and the broader impacts of language programs, language revitalization, and concerns with navigating bilingualism and multilingualism in education settings such as schools (Guerrettaz 2015; Helmer 2013; Hornberger and Dueñas 2018; Mökkönen 2013; Morgan 2008). The intrinsic link between language and culture (see Boas 1963; Hymes 1964; Sapir 1921; Whorf 1956) offers anthropologists a firm foundation to analyze the linguistic mediation of educational instruction and programming as a site of cultural production, transmission, and contestation. This area of research intersects heavily with the topic of Indigenous education. Scholars have specifically drawn attention to the extent to and ways in which education programs, policies, and practices can affect the maintenance and revitalization of Indigenous languages in communities (Anthony-Stevens and Buitron 2022; Hermes 2008; Limerick 2020; Sims 2008; Suina 2008). Such research

points to the importance of including Indigenous languages in learning environments to foster the transfer of cultural knowledge, tradition, and values.

Although there are many other important areas of research within the anthropology of education, the key themes and approaches I have outlined in this section are particularly valuable for developing an anthropology of self-determination and education in Nunavut, a subject of study which is closely tied to broader issues within the realms of Indigenous education and decolonization, education policy, and language use.

5.1.4 The Value of an Anthropological Approach

Drawing on the work of anthropologist Amy Zaharlick (1992) as a source of inspiration, in this section I will explore how the study of education benefits from an anthropological approach in three distinct ways: through a holistic perspective, thick description, and an emphasis on culture. While the contributions of anthropology certainly extend beyond these three themes, in the context of my own research, I argue, they represent especially valuable tools with which to analyze self-determination and education in Nunavut.

A holistic perspective may be described as a "big picture" approach which takes into consideration and recognizes that phenomenon have "meaning, function, and relevance" only in relation to the "whole;" for instance, socio-cultural contexts and relationships and interactions (Bubandt and Otto 2010, 1; Bukor 2015, 306; Merriam-Webster 2022). The tendency towards holism in anthropology can be found in the works of early, influential anthropologists such as Claude Lévis-Strauss and Clifford Geertz, particularly through their work on cultural decoding and cultural webs of significance, respectively (Parkin and Ulijaszek 2007, 3). Through a holistic approach, anthropologists seek to employ an in-depth and integrated understanding of "human activities, behaviour, and values within a broad socio-cultural context" (Zaharlick 1992, 117). In

other words, from this perspective individuals and events are not viewed as isolated points of analysis but are rather recognized as embedded within wider sociocultural contexts and webs of relationships and meaning. Regarding education, this holistic approach in useful given that schools, for example, are influenced by a myriad of shifting "social, political, economic, and cultural forces (Zaharlick 1992, 122). Moreover, given that there are many actors from multiple institutional and social levels engaged in education processes (i.e., students, parents, teachers, community members, policymakers, curriculum developers, government members), incorporating a holistic approach allows anthropologists to trace mutual interactions, power relations, and converging and diverging narratives more readily between multiple actors across time and space, thereby better revealing the complexities surrounding education topics.

Thick description, a form of cultural analysis heavily popularized within anthropology by Clifford Geertz in his 1973 book *The Interpretation of Cultures*, also serves as a valuable framework for studying educational phenomena. Thick description generally involves [the researcher] developing "densely textured descriptions and explanations of social acts and activities" in an effort to reveal "the layers of cultural significance underlying them" (Harrison 2013, 860). As such, thick description usually translates into a style of writing which provides exceptional depth and clarity to a particular topic of study. Conversely, "thin description" results in a "superficial account" which does not produce as rich an analysis (both in a descriptive and interpretive sense) of the emotions, thoughts, and perceptions of "individuals and groups in the context[s] of their culture[s]" (Ponterotto 2006, 541). Joseph Ponterotto (2006) proposes the following definition:

> "Thick description refers to the researcher's task of both describing and interpreting observed social action (or behavior) within its particular context. The context can be

> within a smaller unit (such as a couple, a family, a work environment) or within a larger unit (such as one's village, a community, or general culture). Thick description accurately describes observed social actions and assigns purpose and intentionality to these actions, by way of the researcher's understanding and clear description of the context under which the social actions took place. Thick description captures the thoughts and feelings of participants as well as the often complex web of relationships among them. Thick description leads to thick interpretation, which in turns leads to thick meaning of the research findings for the researchers and participants themselves, and for the report's intended readership. Thick meaning of findings leads readers to a sense of verisimilitude, wherein they can cognitively and emotionally "place" themselves within the research context." (543).

The complex meanings and significance uncovered through thick description can help provide more nuanced and detailed accounts of specific educational case studies/phenomena. For example, in the context of my own research, I seek to unpack the complex contexts and meanings which people place on self-determination and education in Nunavut by listening to and contextualizing participant's stories, rather than presenting the topic of self-determination and education in a reductionist manner (i.e., by simply observing current events and reporting on these). It is important to understand, however, that the descriptions and interpretations offered by anthropologists through thick description are not unbiased or wholly "objective." We know that such an objective stance is not possible within research (Spencer 1989, 147). Therefore, anthropologists should always be careful when (re)representing the stories of those they are working with, as well as explicitly explain their positionality and how this can impact their interpretations of the research.

One of the foundational aspects of anthropology is the discipline's concern with "culture" (Zaharlick 117, 1992), which may be broadly understood as the concepts, beliefs, and principles of action and organization attributed to members of a society or group (Wolcott 2012, 106). A focus on culture is critical in education studies for several different reasons. Firstly, cultural values and traditions are produced and transmitted within learning environments and education settings such as schools (Spindle 1963, 50), and considerations of what cultural values and traditions are in/excluded within these settings has important implications for the development of education policy, curriculum, and pedagogy. Moreover, the idea of "cultural relativism" is also valuable for educational research. "Cultural relativism" is a prevalent concept within anthropology which purports that what is considered "normal" or "right" is culturally dependant; therefore, we should not judge one group against the standards of another (Zaharlick 117, 1992). In the context of education, a relativistic view can help foster cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity by encouraging the understanding and valuing of different cultural beliefs, principles, and practices.

Anthropological contributions to education studies are also valuable in light of growing discussions surrounding the importance of and methods for supporting culturally relevant or culturally responsive education (CRE) (Brown et al. 2018; Ellerbrock et al. 2016; Hayashi et al. 2022; Kayaalp 2019; Kotluk and Kocakaya 2020; Menash 2021; Palmer et al. 2021; Smith 2022). CRE may be defined as curricula or pedagogy that "empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (Aronson and Laughter 2016, 165). CRE has been shown to contribute to improved student engagement and increased family involvement in students' learning (Sutherland and

Henning 2009, 177), therefore making it a key area of study for education scholars. Through its focus on cultural context, anthropology is well suited to contribute to these discussions, as well.

Ultimately, incorporating anthropology's fundamentally holistic approach, tendency towards thick description, and emphasis on culture into educational research, I seek to contribute to an in-depth and nuanced exploration of self-determination and education in Nunavut which highlights the varied perspectives, beliefs, and stories of those who are involved in and affected by existing and/or historical educational policies, programming, and practices. In turn, this anthropological contribution can complement existing qualitative and quantitative studies by education and other scholars by serving to help identify key areas of need, concern, and importance within the context of education in Nunavut.

5.2 Theoretical Frameworks

5.2.1 Introduction

Given that qualitative and anthropological research is not unified by any one methodological or theoretical approach, I have adopted several approaches which I believe are most appropriate for analyzing self-determination and education in Nunavut. In particular, I am informed by decolonial theory and critical theory, and in this section I explore both of these theoretical frameworks in greater depth.

5.2.2 Decolonial Theory

The "decolonial project" or "decolonial turn" as it is sometimes referred to by scholars is rooted in the Latin American context beginning as early as the fifteenth century (Zavala 2016). The decolonial project began with the aim of challenging "Eurocentric interpretations of…history, knowledge, power, and being" associated with European/Western imperialism, Modernity, and colonialism in an effort to create space for different cultural, political and social narratives, experiences, and memories (Zavala 2016, 1; Fúnez-Flores 2022, 26). Decolonial

theory therefore rejects the belief that these "Eurocentric interpretations" are an objective or neutral way to interpret or know the world and seeks to centre historically disregarded and marginalized forms of Indigenous agency and Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing (Nakata et al. 2018, 123). However, rather than opposing "Western" and "Indigenous" narratives within a reductive, fixed binary, decolonial theory (ideally) considers how these narratives intersect and interact in a "cultural interface" and also acknowledges the value and complexities of Indigenous knowledges, meanings, and practices on their own terms, not just as a counter-response to colonialism (Nakata et al. 2018, 130). This "cultural interface" or intercultural dialogue (Rodríguez and Inturias 2018, 93) is important to consider in relation to education and especially schools which are often multicultural and multilingual settings. Decolonial theory therefore represents a valuable way to explore the negotiation of multiple narratives and cultural differences in education contexts in light of hegemonic, institutional, and colonial power influences.

5.2.3 Critical Theory

Critical theory emerged in the early twentieth century in the post-World War I German context by members of the Frankfurt School of social theory and critical philosophy associated with the Institute of Social Research at the University of Frankfurt, Germany (Bonham 2005). While early theorists such as Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, and Herbert Marcuse did not share completely unified positions, they all contributed to important conversations about the roles of injustice and subjugation in the lived world (Kincheloe and McLaren 2011, 286). Critical theory today remains rooted in issues of power and justice and serves as a tool for scholars to identify, question, and critique social constructions of power and their influence on individuals and populations (Albury 2015, 247). Critical theory considers how diverse social structures and

categories are harnessed to shape reality, including the economy, race, class, gender, ideologies, discourses, education, religion, and other cultural dynamics (Albury 2015, 257; Kincheloe and McLaren 2011, 288). In practice, critical theory often involves uncovering the oppressive aspects of social reality and "competing differences between groups and individuals in a society" (Kincheloe and McLaren 2011, 288-300). In turn, critical theorists seek to confront injustices and empower individuals who experience those injustices (Kincheloe and McLaren 2011, 288-300).

Critical theory intersects with and complements decolonial theory in several aspects, particularly through its emphasis on power and culture dynamics and hegemonies. While both critical theory and decolonial frameworks do not ignore the importance of human agency or the ways in which colonized peoples, for example, play a role in contesting and transforming colonial narratives, these frameworks do serve to uncover the realities and legacies of colonialism and expressions of power in society. In the context of exploring self-determination and education in Nunavut, both theories are beneficial because unpacking historical and contemporary processes of educational self-determination in the territory are deeply concerned with questions of cultural discrimination and issues of power differences, in/justice, colonialism, and decoloniality.

Chapter Six

Storytelling as Methodology: Listening, Reading, Weaving

6.1 Introduction to Narrative Inquiry

My research methodology is largely informed by narrative inquiry, a qualitative research approach which emphasizes narrative as key to representing and understanding people's experiences (Clandinin and Connelly 2000, 18). Narrative inquiry is rooted in the notion that we tend to make sense of our experiences using narrative structures and therefore lead "storied lives" (Bell 2002, 207; Savin-Baden and Niekerk 2007, 461). According to Jean Clandinin and Michael Connelly (2000), there are five distinct components of narrative inquiry which constitute a "three-dimensional narrative inquiry space" for researchers to operate within. These include inward, outward, backward, forward, and situated within place (49). "Inward" refers to the process of inquiring about people's internal conditions "feelings, hopes, aesthetic reactions, and moral dispositions" (Clandinin and Connelly 2000, 50). "Outward" refers to the process of inquiring about people's existential conditions or the environment (Clandinin and Connelly 2000, 50). "Backward" and "forward" refers to the process of inquiry about people's temporality: past, present, and future (Clandinin and Connelly 2000, 50). Lastly, "situated within place" refers to the process of inquiry about people's specific situational and personal contexts (Clandinin and Connelly 2000, 50). Taken together, these five processes allow researchers to glean the underlying assumptions and insights within stories (Bell 2002, 208) and thereby unpack rich layers of understanding of particular phenomena.

When I began to interview participants and review documents written by historical figures during my own research, stories emerged as a dominant way in which the individuals

recount their experiences. Thus, when researching qualitative research methodologies narrative inquiry emerged as a natural and appropriate fit. In practice, I have applied narrative inquiry in my own research by conducting, interpreting, and describing my research with special attention to the important role of storytelling and the narrative inquiry space outlined by Clandinin and Connelly (2000). For example, when carrying out interviews this meant being careful to actively listen to the stories of the individuals I spoke with and try to understand how they reflect on the past, analyze their personal and broader political and social circumstances in the present (this often involved the sharing of stories), and envision the future regarding education and self-determination in Nunavut.

There are important ethical implications to consider with connection to narrative inquiry. Primarily, as the researcher I am ultimately responsible for whose stories are included and (re)represented in the research findings and outputs (Savin-Baden and Niekerk 2007, 467). In response to this reality, I have taken steps throughout the stages of my research to help ensure that I am, to the best of my ability, only sharing the stories that participants wish to share, and in a way that participants wish [those stories] to be heard. For example, in the weeks following each interview I provided participants with a copy of their transcribed interview to see if there was anything they wished to add, subtract, or change. In some cases, participants wished to alter a specific quotation or reference. Moreover, if while analyzing the interview material I was unsure of what a participant meant, I contacted them to receive clarification in an effort to reduce the risk of me transposing my interpretations onto their descriptions. Through this process, the co-editing of participant's stories emerged as a crucial element of the research process and my own narrative inquiry. As the sharing of stories and re(representation) of stories is a deeply personal

and powerful endeavour, I found the relational aspect of carrying out this research both meaningful and imperative.

6.2 Reframing the Field

An important aspect of my research journey has been challenging my assumptions about fieldwork. This has resulted in me "reframing the [anthropological] field," to quote Linda Rogers and Beth Swadeners's 1999 article of the same title. Largely due to the Covid-19 pandemic, which required me to conduct my research remotely when I had initially planned to travel to one community in Nunavut to carry out interviews with relevant stakeholders and conduct participant observation in schools, I learned that the "field" extends beyond specific geographic locations to encompass multi-sited praxis and less traditional research activities such as online ethnography, interviews over Zoom, and archival work. Becoming more flexible and expanding my conceptions of meaningful fieldwork ultimately benefited my research in important ways. Carrying out archival research and incorporating a historical perspective into my analysis was something I never anticipated doing when I first began my master's degree, yet it has contributed to the richness of my analysis. Moreover, conducting remote interviews allowed me to interview participants from different parts of Nunavut and Toronto and with whom I may never have had the opportunity to speak with had I situated my research in one geographically bounded community. Although I do not discount the importance of in-person connection in research - indeed, the pandemic revealed to many of us the critical importance of such connection - in the context of my research questions it was valuable to gain insights from a broad range of individuals from diverse institutional and educational backgrounds.

6.3 Archival Research

I carried out remote archival research at the PWNHC in Yellowknife in addition to reviewing 6 archived CBC television and radiobroadcasts available online. I examined approximately 583 pages of primary source archival material from the PWNHC dating from a period ranging from the 1960s to the 1980s. I chose to focus my analysis on the late twentieth century because efforts for Inuit control of education in the eastern Arctic greatly increased in the decades leading up to the creation of Nunavut and, as a result, more archival material relating to self-determination and education from this time period is available. The material I reviewed from the PWNHC included a diverse number of reports and correspondences from government officials, teachers, and members of various education committees and initiatives. These documents mainly centered around discussions and debates about the poor state of education in the NWT and how it could and/or should be improved. The archived CBC television and radiobroadcasts I analyzed largely consisted of forums of Inuit teachers, parents, students, and members of various communities in Nunavut who were invited by CBC hosts to share their thoughts and perspectives on the impact of formal education in Nunavut, the current state of the territory's education system, and key areas for concern and change.

I accessed the CBC archives for free online. However, I paid a fee to have specific documents from the PWNCH sent to me via email for a temporary viewing period. In both cases, I identified potentially relevant archival material by searching the archives' online databases and filtering results through the use of key words such as "education" and "self-determination." I then chose to review archival materials which represented the voices and opinions of a diverse range of relevant stakeholders in Nunavut's education system: teachers, parents, students, community members, government officials, and members of special committees and other education initiatives of the time. I gave special attention to those archival documents which

included the perspectives of Inuit, as I believe highlighting these perspectives in my research is crucial given that self-determination and education processes in Nunavut is a matter primarily affecting Inuit.

Although it was beyond the scope of my research to perform a more comprehensive archival study of education and self-determination in Nunavut, the material I did access was extremely valuable as it offered insight into the beliefs, stories, struggles, and lived experiences of historical figures who were directly impacted by and involved in education processes and practices at a foundational moment in the history of education in the Eastern Arctic. Developing an understanding of this historical context is important because all current (and future) narratives about self-determination and education are necessarily rooted in and informed by narratives and events in the past (Moore et al. 2017, 4). Working in the archival space, which serves as a "mediator" bridging time, place, and people (Zeitlyn 2012, 466) therefore contributed an additional, rich later of understanding to my overall research that will be explored in greater depth in Chapter Seven.

Participating in archival research raised some important ethical considerations for which I did not fully anticipate beforehand. For example, one of the ways in which archival research methods differ from interviews which particularly stood out to me is that the former constitutes a "one way conversation." While I was able to communicate with participants before, during, and after interviews, this is not the case with historical figures and others whose voices and words are recorded in the archive. Therefore, wherever appropriate in the following chapter, I have been transparent about my assumptions and thought processes when reflecting on the experiences, beliefs, and stories of individuals presented in archival material. Another ethical consideration I had to contend with is the fact that some of the archival material I reviewed as part of this

research dealt with sensitive histories and topics, including the removal of Inuit children to attend residential schools. As I was unable to seek informed consent to share the stories of historical figures as I did with interviewees, I had to carefully consider what archival accounts were most appropriate and valid for me to share in this thesis. In addition, I have anonymized all names of these historical figures (as well as interviewees) to ensure confidentiality for those whose stories are shared herein.

6.4 Semi-Structured Interviews

In addition to archival research, I carried out 8 semi-structured interviews with Nunavut educators and education specialists, including 2 government employees in the area of education program development, 2 elementary school teachers, 1 secondary school teacher, 1 NTI member (senior education advisor), 1 education scholar, and 1 early childhood educator. 6 interviewees identified as Inuit (1 NTI member, 2 government employees in program development, 2 teachers, and 1 early childhood educator), while 2 identified as non-Inuit (1 teacher and 1 education scholar). I conducted these interviews remotely from my home in Edmonton from September 2022 to December 2022. I chose not to interview students or parents due to the remote nature of my work and the associated difficulty with building relationships with parental figures and navigating community and university ethics processes with research involving children.

Prior to beginning the interview stage of my research, I developed an ongoing list of potential interviewees to contact based off of staff directories publicly available on the Government of Nunavut, ITK, NTI, and other relevant websites. I then adopted an attitude of studying "up," "down," "sideways," and "through" simultaneously (Bowman 2009, 8; Nader 1972) and reached out to individuals from a range of school, community, institutional, and organizational levels who are directly involved in or have previously taken part in education

related projects and initiatives in Nunavut. I "cold contacted" these individuals via email to introduce myself and my research and to see if they would be interested in participating in the research and/or learning more about the research through an online meeting or phone call. Five individuals initially responded and expressed their interest in being interviewed. I then provided more detail to participants regarding the scope and purpose of my research and proposed a date to meet remotely via zoom and carry out the interview. The remainder of research participants I interviewed (three) were individuals I was put into contact with by previous interviewees. I encouraged this form of networking by asking if interviewees knew of anyone else who might be interested in talking to me at the end of each interview. I found this approach to be particularly beneficial for carrying out remote research because individuals were more likely to respond to me if I shared a mutual connection with them. In turn, sharing a mutual connection enabled me to develop more meaningful relationships, trust, and rapport with participants.

Prior to each interview, I developed a set of general interview questions based on the broad questions included in the participant consent forms but more targeted towards each participant's professional role(s) and experience(s). At the beginning of each interview, I emailed participants the consent form (as well as the prepared list of questions) to read and sign and answered any questions or concerns they had regarding the form, interview structure, or research more broadly. The interviews I conducted were semi-structured, meaning I had a list of interview questions to pose to the participant but also allowed for the natural flow of conversation and priorities/interests of participants to guide the overall interview. For this reason, interviews ranged from a half hour to an hour long and sometimes addressed topics outside the scope of the specific research questions I prepared ahead of time. Employing a semi-structured interview format allowed me to establish focus and consistency within and between interviews, but it also

(importantly) created room for participants to discuss the issues they felt most strongly about regarding education and self-determination in Nunavut. This less formal approach to interviewing enabled rich conversations to unfold and limited my own ability to obscure or dictate key areas of concern for participants.

While it would have been interesting to interview more participants, due to time constraints and the multi-method nature of my research, which included working through the significant archival material mentioned above, I limited my sample size to 8. I believe that including a smaller group of participants in this research was also helpful because it ultimately allowed me to carry out longer, more in-depth interviews, and enabled me to build stronger relationships with participants which in turn led to more natural conversations and arguably richer material to draw from.

6.5 Interpreting Themes

After conducting interviews and archival research, I transcribed interviews word for word (only making alterations to remove filler words such as "uh" or "um") and interpreted all archival field notes and transcribed interview material through inductive thematic coding methods. Thematic coding is a common form of qualitative analysis (Liamputtong 2009, 134) which involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting major patterns or themes within research material (Bree and Gallagher 2016, 2813). These emergent themes include semantic or "surface" meanings, as well as latent or "underlying" meanings, making thematic coding a valuable method of organizing and unpacking descriptive and complex datasets (Bree and Gallagher 2016, 2813). To begin the process of thematic coding, I initially reviewed and re-reviewed all of my archival and interview material separately and identified recurring and key concepts, ideas, and views using manual colour coding of text. Emulating Patrick Ngulube's methodology and

analysis (2015: 12), I asked myself the following kinds of questions during this stage on the analysis: What phenomena are mentioned? Which actors are involved? Which aspects of the phenomena are not mentioned or addressed? What reasons are given? I continued by mapping the key points I identified into major thematic categories and reflected on the material over the course of several weeks, during which time I synthesized and interpreted the historical and interview material together. In Chapter Seven, I explore these major themes in greater detail by considering how they relate to my research questions and provide accompanying quotations from the interviews and archival documents.

Although I have aimed to not make any pre-conceived assumptions about the themes which might emerge from this research, my interpretations are still partially influenced by me in terms of the choices I have made (i.e., what I include in field notes, who I identify as potential interviewees) and the ways in which I have weaved together the stories, experiences, and perspectives revealed through the research material and expounded themes into my own form of "storytelling" (Bönisch-Brednich 2018). To this end, I do not claim that my method of "interpreting themes" is an objective or scientific endeavour; rather, it constitutes a critical yet creative process of constructing "narrative out of narratives" to which I am ultimately held accountable (Bönisch-Brednich 2018).

6.6 Plans for Research Dissemination and Implementation

One of the major outputs of this research will be the publication of this master's thesis as well as several academic articles in the future. I also plan to produce a report (in English and Inuktitut) detailing my findings that can be distributed to research participants, the Nunavut Department of Education, NTI, ITK, and any other interested organizations in Nunavut. I am currently also considering other potential avenues of public research dissemination and

application in collaboration with the NTI, who continue to kindly offer me their support and guidance.

Chapter Seven

Results and Discussion

7.1 Towards an IQ Framework in Education in Nunavut: Reality and Prospects

In this chapter, I discuss the results of my research by outlining and reflecting on the prominent themes, perspectives, key barriers, and areas of concern that emerged through the interviews and archival analyses I carried out. I titled this section "Reality and Prospects" to reflect the simultaneous act of critically assessing the present and envisioning the future that arose as a dominant narrative framework for interviewees (and myself) when considering education and self-determination in Nunavut. While the stories, opinions, and experiences referenced in this chapter do not represent a comprehensive portrait of education and self-determination in the territory, they do constitute a partial snapshot that incorporates the various viewpoints of relevant, historical and contemporary stakeholders in Nunavut's education system. My intention is that this "snapshot" will provoke and inform further conversations around education and self-determination in Nunavut in the public, scholarly, and governmental spheres, as well as help to centre the voices of Inuit on this topic, which I believe is crucial moving forward.

7.1.1 Perspectives on Self-Determination

The interview and archival excerpts provided in this section reveal the multidimensional and complex ways in which educators and education specialists in Nunavut conceptualize self-determination, not as merely a "political" issue but a "lived" practice with real implications that are fundamentally tied to notions of Inuit identity, culture, purpose, responsibility, and action. When I initially spoke to interviewees about what self-determination meant to them in the

context of education in Nunavut, most individuals began by framing their responses within a personal and often familial context. Here, NTI's senior education advisor comments on the absence of choice within Nunavut's current education system and draws on their struggles as a parent to emphasize the impacts of this lack of choice. In addition, they explain how the current state of education in Nunavut not only fails to support Inuit self-determination but also fails to uphold the tenets of why the territory was initially formed:

> "…We're not really achieving why we created Nunavut in the first place if I don't have a choice whether to put my boys into an education system that will support to use Inuktitut and learn in the Inuit cultural context… I tried very hard since they were born to support their Inuktitut by putting them in an immersion early child care sector, so it was all Inuktitut immersion childcare. And at the same time, I was going to school part time through my work to revitalize my own Inuktitut…we did that for years, and then it came to the point where I didn't have a choice. Anyways, so the whole point of self-determination is that we have the opportunity to self-determine what language and culture basically we want to live within, within our institutions. Institutions are meant to support Inuit goals and priorities and so, if that doesn't necessarily exist today then we're not really achieving self-determination. And I can really see that its possible, but I can see so many of the different barriers and challenges that exist to making that a reality, including my own inability to speak Inuktitut. And that really worries me, that in one single generation, that language is significantly lost. And so, how do we act now urgently to make sure that that doesn't continue, that by the time I'm gone and my boys have their own kids, that it might not be a possibility for them, you know? And that's pretty scary. So, self-determination is a pretty important pursuit…I think it's urgent now because of that fact and I think it can quickly not become a possibility as it relates to language and education specifically."

Another respondent, a former education program developer and employee with the Government of Nunavut's Department of Education, discusses the difficulties associated with transmitting IQ to Inuit youth today and affirms the important role that education must play in this process. In addition, they offer their perspective on self-determination in relation to notions of equality:

> "I grew up living on the land with my parents for most of my life, hunting, fishing with my family. It is a healing way of life. That is not the way it is for many of our youth now…they don't always have a sense of who they are. And we have a

> history of colonialism that we are still moving forward from but I believe we are also a resilient people and when we have control over our lives you see the benefits…It was a real challenge for me trying to help prepare the new IQ curriculum, but my passion has always been to try and make Inuit culture and heritage part of our education. Educating our children properly, whether it is at school or in the home, is so important. And this leads into self-determination, which is about not being treated differently in terms of being able to shape our destiny and those of our children and their children in this way…and more progress needs to be made, definitely. And I mean, it took so long to negotiate the formation of Nunavut. What, over twenty years? And there is a long way to go still. There needs to be an understanding of our need to determine our own path as Inuit. What we think matters, what we say matters, and we need to have an equal say in things. Maybe more negotiations are needed, I'm not sure."

An elementary school teacher in Iqaluit, Nunavut places further emphasis on changes to education within Inuit communities and the importance of advancing self-determination not only by encouraging students' learning of IQ, but also fostering an interconnected, cross-cultural environment in schools. This teacher reflects on their own daily practices in the classroom as part of the discussion:

> "My philosophy on it [self-determination] is, let's aim for the best of both points of view [Inuit and "Western"]. It isn't one or the other. Let's work on teaching our Inuit youth about who they are, this is important. There does need to be room for this, as the centre of school teachings, even. But there is no denying the modern, Western, whatever you want to call it, education system is part of our world now too…Traditionally, Inuit teaching was done through demonstration on the land and storytelling. Children developed hunting skills by trying them firsthand. The land was the classroom. Now, some ways I try to involve Inuit knowledge, or IQ as it is often called, in the classroom is through circle time. We do circle time every day in the classroom and it's very important for the children. For example, my circle today was all about the dog team. Children know how to make a noise to the right, the left, and forward. I feel like the children feel good about themselves in the circle. Toys, arts, crafts, and pieces of bone and fur also offer interactive cultural experiences…Certainly schools needs to play a role in helping pass on this knowledge and the language. There's a real need there."

The belief in the need to cultivate an education system which supports Inuit while also being able to operate in the modern, "Western" education system, as expressed in the above quote, is also a theme which frequently emerged in my archival research. For example, in the

1982 CBC television broadcast titled "Inside the Cultural Chasm at N.W.T. Schools," as well as the 1987 CBC television broadcast titled "Finding a Balance on Baffin Island," Inuit and non-Inuit teachers, principals, parents, high school students, government administrators, and Inuit Elders emphasize the need for Inuit cultural knowledge and languages to be better incorporated into the education system, and for "Western" and Inuit culture to be bridged through classroom teachings (CBC 1982; 1987). As one Inuit parent stated during the 1982 broadcast forum, "parents want children to be able to survive in the modern world, but at the same time don't want to see the school system remove Inuit language and culture in the process" (CBC). In a similar vein, the 1987 broadcast host referred to the Gordon Robertson Educational Centre as a place to "keep the [Inuit] kids in balance" between the traditional and modern world, asserting that "today's modern Inuit are caught between modern technology and a hundred generations on the land" (CBC). During one segment of broadcast, the host spoke with several Inuit high school students, including one who identified themselves as "half white, half Inuit," and discussed their feelings of being pulled in two different directions (CBC 1987).

The tendency to try and conceptualize a middle-ground or maintain a balance between Inuit and "Western" ways of knowing, being, and doing through curriculum and pedagogy is a historically prominent underlying narrative within conversations surrounding Inuit education and the advancement of self-determination in the Eastern Arctic. It appears that, at least for several of the participants I spoke with, it remains an important issue today. As Frank Darnell (1987: 40) observes in his essay "Education and the Circumpolar Nativistic Movement: Twenty Years of Change for the Better," achieving this balance between two cultures in an education system is difficult because "schools are expected to offer programs that stress local resources, values, and culture while simultaneously they are expected to offer programs that will enable students to

cope with the reality of the modern world". One hopes that it is Inuit who will have the opportunity to lead the continued search for answers to this question in the future.

In sum, the individuals I interviewed tended to connect the idea of self-determination to notions of equality between Inuit and non-Inuit, the importance of having choice within Nunavut's current education system (i.e., regarding language learning), and the value and necessity of incorporating IQ while fostering "cultural bridging" in schools to ensure Inuit needs and goals are met in the modern, "Western" education system. More specifically, three of eight respondents referenced the importance of "choice" when discussing educational self-determination. Two of eight respondents emphasized "equality" for Inuit as central to their perceptions of self-determination and education. Lastly, the idea of cultural bridging or learning to "walk in two worlds" emerged as a theme for three of eight respondents. The topic of self-determination also evoked strong emotions in many participants, including frustration, perplexity, and a sense of urgency and desire for change within Nunavut's current education system. Moreover, while participants conceptualized and described self-determination in varying ways, they all perceived that the advancement of educational self-determination in Nunavut required supporting and incorporating Inuit language, culture, values, and traditions into schooling. To this end, all participants indicated that more should be done to progress self-determination in education in Nunavut, especially in the context of supporting Inuktut language development and IQ learning in classrooms.

7.1.2 Key Barriers and Areas of Concern

7.1.2.1 Policy Development and Implementation

While carrying out interviews and archival research, the question of what kinds of barriers prohibit the advancement of educational self-determination in Nunavut emerged as a

primary point of interest and discussion. In this section, I outline the key barriers and areas of concern identified by interviewees and revealed through archival materials. Thematically categorized, these include issues related to policy development and implementation, the central role of language, and socio-cultural and economic barriers.

Two of eight participants emphasized what they felt to be critical issues and inadequacies within education policy development and implementation in Nunavut as constraining factors to the inclusion of an IQ framework in schools and, ultimately, Inuit self-determination. In the following two quotes, for example, NTI's senior education advisor discusses the impact of Nunavut's transient workforce for education policy development and progress, as well as the lack of Inuit in prominent positions within education decision-making processes in the territory:

> "Nunavut has such a transient workforce. We have a lot of people coming in to work with the government and not here for a very long time and then they leave again, and it impacts the progress around the kind of strategic big picture stuff that impacts policy in the short term…It is probably one of the biggest gaps and biggest challenges, I suppose, in actually being here and being from here, is having to work with people who are not here for a very long time but they are in very prominent positions and have decision making authority. Trying to get people to understand the local experience and perspectives, especially as Inuit in terms of self-determination as a result of Nunavut's education system not being completely fluent in Inuktitut. It is one of the biggest challenges for sure."

> "In the context of curriculum development, for example…I'm very interested in…how they're developing curriculum, how they've developed a curriculum from the creation of Nunavut to now, versus what they are doing now and how they intend on moving forward? And that again, is a very kind of detailed process, and it's hard looking from the outside in, to understand really what that process is, but I think what I really want to know is that Inuit are involved in that process. And from what I can observe, it seems very limited and it seems like it's from kind of an established western way of developing curriculum…starting from English, and then developing the curriculum and then translating into Inuktitut. Whereas, what would it look like if Inuit were to create curriculum?...What would it look like if Inuit were to organize curriculum and resources and learning outcomes, and how would they deliver it? So, we often don't see that. We often don't see anything starting from Inuit and Inuit perspectives and I'm not sure why. I don't understand why, if its because the system requires pre-requisite

> requirements to be able to even do that work, but to the detriment of what we are trying to achieve in terms of self-determination."

In the excerpt below, a secondary school teacher describes their inherent difficulties as a non-Inuit or "qallunaat" educator trying to teach "Inuit ways" in Nunavut and explains how the premise of self-determination does not always translate well in the classroom due to a lack of supports, resulting in a gap between policy and practice:

> "As a qallunaat educator, it is not easy trying to teach Inuit ways…yes there are certain things, certain policies or procedures I guess you would call them, we are taught before we get into the classroom that are supposed to help us, but in the end, when you are standing in front of 20 students in a room – it is up to you. If there were more development of resources for us, that would really help the students. And when you speak about self-determination, it's a great concept but in reality there are only so many of us who are really qualified in that sense of the word to teach IQ …especially without knowing the language. There are some things we can do, but it's not really a consistent, big part of the everyday teachings…A few years ago, my class was involved in a land camp run with the community members and Elders. This was a real highlight for the students. It would be great to have more opportunities available like this…So, yeah, sometimes it's hard."

The process of education policy development and implementation is an exceedingly complex process that involves the participation of many diverse actors from various government, school, community, and other social spheres and institutional levels. When discrepancies and discontinuities arise within this process, as they have in Nunavut, equally complex and diverse solutions are likely necessary, as well as the input of key stakeholders. The interviewees I spoke with understand that if Inuit self-determination is to be supported in Nunavut's education system on a practical level, education policy in the territory must be further interrogated and adapted at each stage of development and implementation.

7.1.2.2 The Central Role of Language

Notably, language surfaced as an especially dominant theme throughout my research.

All of the participants I interviewed recognized the use and teaching of Inuktitut in schools as central to advancing educational self-determination in Nunavut, often by drawing attention to the important and intrinsic links between language and culture, identity, and family. The following quotes from an early childhood educator, an elementary school teacher, and NTI's senior education advisor, respectively, offer further insight:

> "In residential schools we [Inuit] were taught that we were savages, lower than people. And as a part of that we weren't allowed to talk our language, and so a lot of us didn't end up passing on Inuktut to our children. I have always understood how important language was, and I am grateful children no longer have to go through that, but that chain with the language is still broken in many families…Now in the context of the early immersion environment in Nunavut, I am always worried about the limited funding we have to carry on these programs and train staff. There are so many staff shortages here. We are often, I would say, even short-staffed by 50%, which is not sustainable. So all of this needs to somehow change long-term too. Maybe if more people began to see the value and necessity of teaching our children in their own language, the change could happen. It is what should have always been, but we need to get out of the mindset of the past to address the issues of Inuit today."

> "Growing up my grandmother taught me so much about being Inuit. I would always be sitting next to her while she was sewing and she really wanted us children to be able to speak only in Inuktitut. She taught me how Inuktitut is part of who we are. So she is the one who did that…now it feels like our language is slipping away. Elders are passing on and we want to keep our culture. People my age aren't speaking it as much now, so their kids won't hear it and so on. Now, when students enter junior high, they are almost fully taught in English. And in high school, there isn't a strong language program…Now I think about my nieces and nephews and them going through this system…I want them to graduate and have a clear vision for their life, and I want them to know who they are."

> "I would probably start from a personal perspective having been born and raised here in Nunavut and having the inability or lack of confidence based on my inability to converse in Inuktitut with our majority population, with elders…it's really devastating that I can't converse with Inuit elders. I didn't know my grandparents, but they were unilingual and if I had known them I wouldn't really be able to communicate at the same level with them as I would want to. And that has impacted me greatly, and so now in the context of my own family, like I have two young boys, I don't have a choice of whether to put them, I don't have a choice within our current education system for them to either learn English or Inuktitut…they have to learn English, whereas…the whole point of creating Nunavut was to protect our language and culture."

In addition to interviews, language was a prominent theme within the archival material I analyzed. Based on this material, it is clear that Inuit have been advocating for the inclusion of Inuktitut in schools in the Eastern Arctic for many decades. In the 1982 CBC broadcast forum previously mentioned, for example, repeated references are made to the importance of including and teaching Inuktitut to students in schools. Consider the following participant responses from a segment of the broadcast wherein the host asks what the participants would like to see changed about the current education system:

> "It is common sense that the child should learn their own mother tongue before starting to learn another language, therefore Inuktitut should be taught in schools."
>
> "I am fairly concerned about the language problem because this should be on the shoulders of the whole Canadian society, not just Inuit peoples. In every other country the original languages are part of the people, Canada and the United States are the only places where the original languages are not even considered important enough to be recorded."
>
> "People don't understand that Inuit are not talking about language to the detriment of math, science, reading etcetera. It's not an either or system. It is geared towards bilingual education."
>
> "I want to see some of the money from resource extraction diverted back so schools can afford to teach native language in schools, to have both kinds of education. The Canadian government gives us adequate resources for an English education now of the same standards in the rest of the country, but if the minority language was French in the NWT we would have far more resources than we are getting now, and that is a big issue that we are getting people to recognize."

The "language problem" addressed by these forum participants remains an important and ongoing part of discussions around education and self-determination in Nunavut today. This is perhaps unsurprising considering that the minimum bilingual education goals outlined in the 2008 *Nunavut Education Act* have not been fulfilled. As of 2016, for example, only 11 schools in Nunavut had the capacity to deliver Inuktitut-medium education from kindergarten to Grade 3 (Skutnabb-Kangas et al. 2019, 26). 7 schools had the capacity to deliver this education up to grade

4, 1 school had the capacity to deliver this education up to grade 5.40, and the remaining schools did not have capacity to deliver the minimum kindergarten to Grade 3 Inuktitut-medium education required by the *Education Act* (Skutnabb-Kangas et al. 2019, 26). As some interviewees noted, issues such as limited funding, resources, and staff shortages, especially of Inuit and Inuktitut speaking teachers, contributes to the inability of schools to meet these goals. Such complex issues call for urgent and major reform, funding, and, as Skutnabb-Kangas et. al (2019) contend, a political will often appears lacking in the territory (34-5).

Given that the survival of the Inuktut language is becoming increasingly at risk (Skutnabb-Kangas et. al 2019, 7), and in light of the reality that Inuktitut is either absent from or replaced entirely with English up to a certain grade level in Nunavut, it is no wonder that so many are concerned, with Tove Skutnabb-Kangas et. al (2019) going to far as to label Nunavut's education system as "criminally inadequate" in a recent report commissioned by the NTI. One thing is certain—if language is central to the pursuit of Inuit self-determination in education in Nunavut, then great change is necessary.

7.1.2.3 Socio-Cultural and Economic Barriers

Interviewees also pointed to various socio-cultural and economic factors as key barriers to supporting educational self-determination in Nunavut. Three participants referenced the imperativeness of addressing current struggles faced by Inuit in their communities in order for youth to be able to benefit from or fully participate in an IQ education framework. The following comments from a former education program developer and employee with the Government of Nunavut's Department of Education and 2 elementary school teachers, respectively, seek to highlight this broader social context:

> "Our kids aren't getting through school. They often drop out in grade 8, 9, 10 or younger because of different reasons. The government has always provided

> education and the education came from the south and then the children were sent to residential schools and some never came home. So education wasn't always seen as a good thing among our people, the academic side of education, because we taught our own children in our own culture, the way we teach our young which is based on oral history. And we depend very much on our elders because of that. So, the system…there now has never been embraced by the people, by the parents. They aren't involved…We want people to take ownership of the system that is there for them to educate our children. Through the land claim agreement, we now have the tools to make local decisions as Inuit. And that is the biggest benefit. But the problem is strengthening our culture while meeting modern day challenges. There are many problems like the poverty rates or some students not having strong supports at home that make it difficult, the whole idea of self-determination, in my opinion. The question is then…how can we get past these things to reach that goal?"
>
> "Well, the problem of there not being enough Inuit teachers…For one thing you have to leave to get your teacher education. I had to take my daughter to Regina when I decided to become a teacher since they don't offer the full education here. A lot of people can't just up and leave like this, you know, leave their families, their responsibilities…Maybe in there were more options in their own communities, more would be able to…it would be a good thing for the students since it's hard on them to have teachers coming and going so much."
>
> "I think the way forward of self-determination, for control over education and other areas of Inuit lives is important but the reality I see is that there are so many day to day issues in Nunavut that are stopping that, things like access to food, or good housing, or family problems…We need programs and solutions that meet people where they are at, in their own communities. To be looking at the root causes of these things…maybe getting more mental health supports for students so they have ways to cope, for one thing. Then some students aren't coming to class at all because the attendance can be pretty poor. So it will take time, I think."

As the above quotes reveal, advancing self-determination and education in Nunavut is not a straightforward issue. In addition to concerns regarding poverty, housing and food access, student dropout rates, poor attendance, teacher turnover, and limited opportunities for teacher education in the Nunavut, education scholars have further identified the high cost of living (Walton 2013, 3), parents' attitudes towards schooling (Melanie O'Gorman and Manish Pandey 2014), and persistent colonial power relations and "homogenizing ideologies" (Shelley Tulloch et al. 2016) as contributing or

compounding socio-cultural and economic factors hindering the implementation of an IQ education framework in the territory. “Homogenizing ideologies” refer to those which seek to erase or undermine cultural differences and values versus fostering cross-cultural awareness, inclusion, and sensitivity; for example, Anglocentric ideologies which cause educators to gatekeep the implementation of bilingual education policies (Shelley Tulloch et al. 2016, 191). In developing a holistic view of self-determination and education in Nunavut, it is therefore important to understand that enacting the self-determined right to include Inuit ways of knowing, being, and doing in schooling also depends on knowing that “policy alone is not enough” (Shelley Tulloch et al. 2016, 190). To echo my sentiments the previous two sections, complex and diverse solutions must be considered and developed.

7.1.3 Ongoing Developments and Initiatives: Bill 25 and the NTI Lawsuit

The educators and education specialists I spoke with express how they have good reason to be concerned about the current and future state of education in Nunavut and its capacity to support Inuit self-determination. Ongoing developments and initiatives in the territory further warrant these concerns. In 2020, for instance, the territorial government passed an amendment to the 2008 *Nunavut Education Act* called Bill 25 following the passing of the 2019 deadline to implement a fully bilingual education system in the territory as initially mandated in the *Education Act*. Bill 25 requires that Inuktitut only be offered as a language course in schools, rather than be a primary language of instruction across all subject matter and grade levels. Bill 25 also pushed the deadline for the implementation of this language course to 2026 for grade four, and 2039 for grade twelve, which many view as much too late given the ongoing annual declines in the number of Inuktut-speaking individuals in Nunavut (Murray 2021). As a result, several

organizations and groups in Nunavut have opposed Bill 25, including the NTI and Coalition of Nunavut District Education Authorities (Tranter 2019).

The NTI began efforts to sue the territorial government in October 2021 based on linguistic and ethnic discrimination in the territory's education system, referring to equality rights outlined in section 15 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* as a basis for the lawsuit (Murray 2021):

> 15. (1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability (Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms 1982)

Figure 4. *Nunavut MLAs unanimously pass Bill 25* (Deuling 2020)

The Government of Nunavut called on NTI's lawsuit to be thrown out in April 2022, arguing that section 15 of the *Charter* does not apply to language rights (Nunatsiaq News 2022).

Presiding judge Paul Bychok at the Nunavut Court of Justice in Iqaluit has yet to decide on whether the lawsuit will indeed be dismissed and, given the complexity of the case, is presently unable to provide a timeline for when he will make his decision (Nunatsiaq News 2022). In the meantime, the NTI is also negotiating with the territorial government to form a new education agreement, are working to develop new programs and legal frameworks to support educational self-determination and Inuit educators in the territory, and are discussing potential avenues to pursue self-government in Nunavut to advance Inuit self-determination in education and other sectors (personal communication NTI senior education advisor, March 14, 2022; see Appendix D).

The topic of self-determination and education in Nunavut has historically and continuously been a focal point and cause for political and social tension in the territory. This is certain to continue as more calls to action for Inuit control over education in the territory are made by the NTI, other Inuit-led organizations, key stakeholders, and the public. As Inuit and non-Inuit do not represent cohesive ideological collectives, the conversation which unfolds will not be simple or easy. However, it is necessary to highlight Inuit voices, perspectives, and ambitions within this conversation, as it is Inuit youth who will be most affected by future decisions and changes. What is still unclear is what exactly what these decisions and changes will be, and the legal, socio-cultural, economic, and political implications to follow.

Chapter Eight

Conclusion: Future Directions and Themes

8.1 Summary of Research and Findings

To summarize, the purpose of this research has been to better understand historical and ongoing narratives regarding self-determination and education in Nunavut. More precisely, I have incorporated archival material and relevant literature to map processes of educational change in the Eastern Arctic that have constituted a shift from "settlement to self-determination." In addition, I have sought to uncover the current meanings of, perspectives on, and initiatives surrounding self-determination and education in Nunavut by carrying out interviews with relevant stakeholders, including educators and education specialists. The main contribution of this research is perhaps the inclusion of the voices and perspectives of Inuit educators, government and non-profit employees who are on the "front-lines" of Nunavut's education system, whether that be in the setting of a classroom, government office, or negotiation table. Their varied stories, experiences, and perspectives reveal some of the multifaceted ways in which self-determination is conceived in Nunavut, underline several key issues and concerns associated with the current state of self-determination and education in the territory, and help to illustrate views on how educational self-determination in Nunavut can and/or should be supported in the future.

Several underlying themes emerged through this research. Firstly, while self-determination was conceptualized in diverse ways by the individuals I interviewed based on their lived experiences, occupations, and other factors, they all understood self-determination in the context of education in Nunavut as involving and requiring the integration of Inuit ways of

knowing, being, and doing into schooling. Significantly, participants did not view this integration as a removed or purely political effort. They rather framed the importance of this effort by drawing on their personal stories, familial contexts, and struggles to underscore the real and practical impacts (both negative and positive) of education policy and practice in the territory. Based on the interviews I conducted, it is clear that more changes need to occur within Nunavut's current education system if Inuit self-determination is to be supported. Namely, participants indicated that there needs to be a greater emphasis on addressing issues with education policy development and implementation in the territory, such as the lack of Inuit in prominent decision-making roles and the gap between policy and practice in terms of teacher expectations, supports, and resources.

In addition, language emerged as a primary area of concern and participants advocated for greater inclusion and teaching of Inuktitut in schools. This focus on language parallels historical narratives and reflects the limited progress made on behalf of the Government of Nunavut in the context of the 2008 *Nunavut Education Act*. Lastly, this research emphasizes that for self-determination and education in Nunavut to be supported, the socio-cultural and economic barriers affecting Inuit communities, such as access to good housing, poverty, and limited opportunities for teacher education in the territory must be addressed through diverse, complex, and major reforms and solutions if students are to reap the benefits of an IQ education framework. Significantly, many participants I spoke with noted their hope and will for a potential future education system in Nunavut which is more supportive of Inuit and Inuit self-determination. This should remind us not to undermine the resilience, agency, or ability of Inuit and allies to impact and shape the future of education in the territory.

Reflecting on processes of self-determination and education in Nunavut evokes fundamental questions about who exerts (and should exert) power and control over education in the territory, and how cultural and linguistic discrimination might operate in Nunavut's education system if such a system still mainly exists to serve "Western" oriented frameworks. At present, it appears that while institutions in Nunavut were created with the intention of responding to the needs and aspirations of the Inuit majority population, in the context of education this mission has fallen short. The words spoken by the chairman of the 1984 Nunavut Constitutional Forum remain relevant today:

> "In every community meeting our people expressed the insistence, over and over, that a Nunavut government not be like the governments they have known in the past. It must not be a force to jolt and disrupt northern lives, stuffing them into the mould of a southern industrial society with values, languages and assumptions of an alien and unwanted southern lifestyle. It must not only respect the traditions and customs of the Inuit, but must ensure that the jobs in the public service were as much as possible available to northern people who spoke the language and understood the communities of the north. It must also provide job opportunity for a population growing fast and with too many un and under-employed young people. This would require a special training effort, including the earliest possible establishment of a college reflecting northern society and dedicated to meeting northern needs. We are looking at various proposals for dealing with these problems, but I must not pretend they are easy to solve all at once." (Magnet, 1990, 123)

Advancing educational self-determination in Nunavut, and even self-determination more broadly, may require more than a reliance on the territory's current "de facto" Inuit self-government and should account for the needs and suggestions of Inuit teachers, policymakers, parents, students, and other key stakeholders and organizations. Given the impacts and legacies of colonial education policies and practices in Nunavut, ongoing processes of decolonization and reconciliation are also at stake in the context of future efforts to advance educational self-determination in the territory. All of these considerations underscore the many layers of meaning, complexity, and significance associated with this subject and area of research.

8.2 Circumpolar Context

8.2.1 Introduction

The topic of self-determination and Indigenous education is an increasingly pressing issue not only in Nunavut, but also across the broader circumpolar and international landscape. I believe it is therefore pertinent at this stage to provide a survey outlining processes of "settlement to self-determination" in education across several circumpolar nations, countries, and territories to establish a foundation for considering how illustrative or instructive Nunavut is within this context. While this survey does not provide a complete overview of education in the circumpolar North, nor does it comprehensively capture the varied preferences and aspirations of specific Indigenous groups and communities regarding education and self-determination, it does offer a valuable, more layered lens through which education in Nunavut can be further analyzed. The "North America" section of this survey will focus on the Yukon Territory and Alaska as case studies. The "Scandinavia and the Nordic Region" section will focus on Norway and Greenland as case studies. The final section includes a case study of Russia.

8.2.2 North America

8.2.2.1 Alaska

Over the past several decades, Alaska Native peoples have sought greater local control over their children's education as a response, at least in part, to the historical hegemony of colonial forms of schooling in Alaska since the arrival of early explorers, traders, missionaries, and teachers to the state. Following the purchase of Alaska by the United States from the Russian Empire in 1867, control of education in the state was transferred from missions to the territorial government. The Uniform School Act of 1917 established a Territorial Department of Education and led to the implementation of a formal, statewide "Western" system of education in Alaska

which was neither culturally nor linguistically relevant for Alaska Native students. The passage of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) in 1971 established, among other provisions, 12 in-state regional corporations that enrolled Alaska Native stakeholders and managed settlement funds and land allotments (Villegas 2009, 38). In the context of education, the ANCSA prompted significant education reforms by allowing tribal members represented by those corporations opportunities for some control over local education (Williamson and Vizina 2017, 49). The 1975, the passing of the federal Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act increased this level of control by granting community jurisdiction over Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) operated day schools in such matters as teacher hiring and firing and curriculum design (Barnhardt 2001, 18).

Over the past several decades, education policy in Alaska has centered on developing a "pedagogy of place" that emphasizes teaching "through" local culture (Barnhardt 2008, 113). The Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative (AKRSI), for example, was created in 1994 under the Alaska Native/Rural Education Consortium and represents more than fifty organizations involved in education operations in rural Alaska. The AKRSI is provided through the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) cooperation and the University of Alaska and is funded by the National Science Foundation. This education initiative seeks to improve student achievement scores and reduce dropout rates in rural schools by systematically documenting the Indigenous knowledge systems of Alaska Native peoples and integrating these systems into all aspects of the state's current formal education system. This integration is intended to produce a holistic form of place-based, culturally responsive schooling for students that is grounded in their local communities.

The Alaska Native Knowledge Network (ANKN) is a partner to the AKRSI and supports the exchange of teaching resources among educators throughout Alaska. The ANKN sponsors, for instance, the Alaska Native Science Camps and Fairs, which provides opportunities for students to work with Elders and learn about the use and value of science in their local communities and environments, as well as recognize the accumulated knowledge of Elders who have been living on the land for many generations (Barnhardt 2008, 123). The ANKN has also created a database to "identify, review, and catalog appropriate national and Alaska-based curriculum resources suitable for Indigenous settings," and has made this database available to educators throughout the state (Barnhardt 2008, 123).

Some of the principal challenges facing AKRSI and ANKN objectives include a lack of Native staff in Alaskan schools, high rates of teacher turnover, which averages thirty to forty percent annually, and limited parental involvement in children's education in some areas (Barnhardt and Kawagley 2004, 61; Williamson and Kawagley 2017, 62). Despite these barriers, education reforms in Alaska have resulted in increased student achievement scores, decreased dropout rates, and an increase in the number of Native students attending college, as well as those choosing to pursue studies in the fields of science, math, and engineering (Barnhardt and Kawagley 2004, 63). Furthermore, Alaska's Department of Education now requires all teachers to acquire some training in cross-cultural communication or multicultural education and sponsors an annual Bilingual/Multicultural Education/Equity Conference for educators in the state (Williamson and Vizina 2017, 56). Most recently, the Alaskan government has additionally begun funding a digital teaching initiative that involves aboriginal language instruction through videoconferencing (William and Vizina 2017, 56). These education initiatives were developed to engage and empower Alaska Native students, foster reconciliation, and advance Indigenous

educational self-determination in the state. It is important to be mindful, however, of the ongoing socio-economic challenges and legacies of colonialism that continue to impact many Alaska Native youth, and which can negatively shape their experiences in the education system.

8.2.2.2 Yukon Territory

Historically, education policies and practices in the Yukon Territory were developed through a colonial, paternalistic lens beginning with the creation of mission and residential schools in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the territory to assimilate Yukon First Nations. Following the establishment of Yukon First Nations education as a federal responsibility in the mid twentieth century, a formal, southern-imported education system was established in the territory. This education system left teachers unprepared for teaching in a northern environment and did not provide First Nations students with high quality, culturally responsive schooling. However, recent political developments in the Yukon Territory concerning First Nations self-government agreements have had significant implications for public education and Indigenous educational self-determination in the territory.

Since the mid 1990s, Self-Government Agreements (SGAs) have been negotiated between eleven of the fourteen Yukon First Nations, the Government of Canada, and the Government of Yukon. As treaties were never negotiated between the Government of Canada and the Indigenous groups whose homelands encompass the Yukon Territory, these SGAs serve as modern land claims to ensure Yukon First Nations' rights to financial compensation, land, harvesting, heritage resources, and control over education and justice (Lewthwaite et al. 2015, 38). The initial formation of SGAs also coincided with the establishment of Yukon's first *Education Act* in 1993, which includes curriculum goals and competencies, as well as citizenship

goals that promote an understanding of Yukon First Nations histories, languages, cultures, rights, and values (Lewthwaite et al. 2019, 249).

Educational policies and practices can differ considerably between SGAs depending on the specific desires and needs of each Yukon First Nations group. The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation in Dawson City, Yukon, provides an illustrative example. When the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in signed their SGA in 1998, they were offered the choice to assume control of education completely independent of the Yukon Department of Education or share control of education with the department (Lewthwaite et al. 2015, 39). The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in decided to adopt the shared system of education during their SGA policy developments (Lewthwaite et al. 2015, 39). In practice, this means that the Yukon Department of Education continues to oversee the operation of education in the First Nation community, but all school operations, such as the "hiring of principals and teachers, as well as curriculum development and implementation," require First Nations consultation and guidance (Lewthwaite et al. 2019, 250).

Within the broader context of Canada, the large degree of flexibility that exists surrounding local decision-making processes for education among First Nations in the Yukon Territory is unique. However, the policies and promise of Indigenous-led education in the Yukon continues to be challenged by limited staff and teacher turnover, as well as issues regarding instructional time management in the classroom, since educators are required to implement both British Columbia's curriculum and locally developed programs and initiatives that reflect Yukon First Nations' worldviews and epistemologies (Eastumre 2017, 234; Blakesley 2012, 7). One important ongoing initiative aimed at addressing some of these challenges and which has been widely discussed in the literature on education in the Yukon Territory is Yukon Teacher Education Programs (YTEP). YTEP have been in development since the late twentieth century,

are community-based, and specifically intended to train teachers of Yukon First Nations ancestry (Eastumre 2017, 236). YTEP focus on training teachers in northern and First Nations content, and educational theory and curriculum development, including the design and delivery of First Nations curriculum subject matter (Eastumre 2017, 236).

In 2021, the Yukon government and the Chiefs Committee on Education (CCOE) finalized an agreement to establish a Yukon First Nations Board of Education under the territory's *Education Act*. The new education board will afford Yukon First Nations and their Citizens greater control over the administration, management and, eventually, operation of education programs for students in their communities. The agreement aims to address poor education outcomes and provide higher quality and culturally appropriate schooling for Yukon First Nations students (Government of Yukon 2021). Such agreements serve to advance Indigenous educational self-determination in the Yukon Territory, and support Yukon First Nations' political autonomy more broadly.

8.2.3 Scandinavia and the Nordic Region

8.2.3.1 Norway

Sámi are a culturally and linguistically diverse Indigenous people whose traditional homelands include parts of Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Russia. In Norway, Sámi peoples' cultures and languages have been historically marginalized through assimilative state policies. Formalized education in Norway began to take shape during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when mission schools were established and a select number of Sámi children were chosen to attend them (Lie 2003, 279). During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Norwegian government separated Sámi children from their families and forced them to attend boarding schools to promote a strict policy of "Norwegianization," a process that was

traumatizing for many children and disrupted the intergenerational transmission of important cultural knowledge and skills (Zsuzsanna 2016, 82) At boarding schools, Sámi children learned to speak, read, and write in the Norwegian language, and they were discouraged from speaking their native tongues (Zsuzsanna 2016, 82).

Broader political efforts to advance Sámi self-determination and language revitalization, in addition to the development of the Norwegian welfare state throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, led to major shifts in Norway's educational landscape. These efforts include, for instance, the passing of the 1987 Sami Act and the 1992 Sámi Language Act, as well as the formation of the Sámi Parliaments and the Saami Council to serve as consultative political bodies for issues related to Sámi people and to promote the rights and interests of Sámi in the four countries where they reside. The dialogue surrounding Norwegian public education policy transformed during this time from one of assimilation to one of equality and equity. The government began to expound a narrative of multilingual and multicultural schooling, and Sámi were eventually given the right to Sámi education in 1996 (Lie 2003, 281).

Today, Sámi children at the primary and secondary school levels who reside in Sámi administrative districts or living areas have the right to receive education in the Sámi languages utilizing the Sámi curriculum that was created in 1997 as distinct from the national Norwegian curriculum (Williamson and Vizina 2017, 54). Outside of these living areas, children may receive Sámi education if there are at least ten Sámi students within their municipality (William and Vizina 2017, 54). According to Norway's Education Act and Statute, Sámi also have a right to alternative teaching methods, such as internet-based or remote learning, if there are no teachers in their schools who can offer them instruction in Sámi languages (Aikio-Puoskari 2009, 288). Moreover, education policy in Norway mandates that all students, no matter where they

live, must be educated on the history and culture of Sámi people (Zsuzsanna 2016, 85). Recently, Norway also launched a five-year early childhood education pilot project called SaMOS or Sami manat odda searvelanjain, meaning "Sami children in new education rooms," in 2017 to develop more culturally and linguistically responsive curricula and pedagogy for Sámi children at the pre-school level (Quinn 2020). Such projects are especially critical given that all Sámi languages are currently classified as endangered by UNESCO (2022).

Although national education policy in Norway affirms the right of all Sámi to receive "Sámi education," it is important to recognize that little information is available on the how these policies are implemented "in practice," and how this implementation may further vary from school to school. Moreover, a shortage of qualified teachers and technical challenges associated with remote learning options in Norway means that the quality of education offered to students who choose to receive their education in Sámi languages, and particularly those who reside outside of the Sámi administrative districts, may not always meet the standards promised at the policy level (Næsborg-Anderson and Khalaf 2017, 105). Therefore, the nuanced implications of Norway's current (and future) education system for advancing Sámi educational self-determination is not easily discerned from available literature on the topic.

8.2.3.2 Greenland

The history of colonialism and achievement of self-government in Greenland via the establishment of Home Rule in 1979 and Self-Rule in 2009 has had unique implications for formal education in the country. The period of European colonization began in Greenland in the eighteenth century. At this time, Danish Mission Stations began to operate schools and local churches, although the number of Greenlandic Inuit students attending these schools was limited (Olsen and Tharp 2013, 98). After the passing of the School Act by the Danish Parliament in

1905, the Danish state took control over the education of Greenlanders and Danish became the dominant language of instruction in public schools (Næsborg-Anderson and Khalaf 2017, 81).

Following World War II and the integration of Greenland into the Kingdom of Denmark in 1953, Greenlandic Inuit experienced profound sociocultural changes and rapid modernization. Greenland's education system underwent an intensified process of "Danification" at this time, as the Danish curriculum was adopted in schools and teachers and teaching materials were transferred from Denmark to Greenland (Goldbach 2000, 264). The extent of these "Danification" efforts is exemplified by a "social experiment" undertaken by the Danish state in 1951, during which twenty-two Greenlandic children were removed from their homes and taken to Denmark to be re-educated and transformed into "model Danish citizens". These children experienced a devastating loss of cultural knowledge, skills, and language, and the majority never saw their families again. Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen has only recently apologized for the experiment in 2020 (BBC News 2020). Unlike the experiences of many other Indigenous groups, however, the Greenlandic language did not become threatened or endangered because of such assimilative public and educational policies (Wyatt 2013, 4). Today, the majority of Greenlandic Inuit speak Greenlandic, and it became the country's official language in 2009 when Self-Rule was instituted (IWGIA 2021).

A growing sense of national identity among Greenlanders in the mid to late twentieth century led to the introduction of Home Rule in 1979, which allowed them to gain sovereignty and administrative control over areas such as education, health, fisheries, and the environment. Educational reform efforts in Greenland from the 1970s to the 1990s saw few changes to the Danish-based education system aside from the re-introduction of Greenlandic as the primary language of instruction in schools (Wyatt 2011, 5). In 2002, however, a New School Act was

passed, and Greenlandic education leaders launched a comprehensive, nation-wide reform called *Atuarfitsialak* to improve Greenlandic students' linguistic competence (in Greenlandic, Danish, and English), strengthen Greenlandic culture and identity, and improve Greenland's labour market. *Atuarfitsialak* adopts the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence's (CREDE) Standards for Effective Pedagogy principles for teaching and learning, which emphasize culturally responsive schooling and have in the past been successfully applied in Native Hawaiian and Native American communities (Olsen and Tharp 2013, 103).

The introduction of *Atuarfitsialak* in Greenland may be instrumental in advancing Indigenous educational self-determination and further asserting Greenland's political autonomy and independence. Currently, however, there is limited literature available on the impacts of this new educational reform in practice. In addition, several barriers impeding the successful application of the reform have been identified by researchers, including the following: problems surrounding the effective implementation of CREDE standards in geographically isolated schools with little infrastructure or resources, a lack of collaboration between reform leaders and schools during *Atuarfitsialak*'s initial stages of development, gaps between Greenlandic cultural norms regarding child rearing and the expectations for parental involvement established by the new education reform, and tensions between Greenlandic and Danish reform leaders (Wyatt 2013, 11-12). Education in Greenland therefore appears to be undergoing a dramatic shift, the consequences of which remain to be seen in the context of Indigenous educational self-determination efforts.

8.2.4 Russia

Formal and Indigenous education in Russia has undergone significant shifts since the early twentieth century, especially beginning with the official formation of the Soviet Union in

1922. While church and monastery operated schools emerged as early as the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries during the formation of a centralized Russian state, and various education reforms were attempted under reigning monarchs leading up to the nineteenth century, it was not until after the October Revolution of 1917 that nationalized education was established in Russia. At this time, Indigenous peoples in the northern regions of Russia began to experience dramatic shifts to their way of life with the arrival of new settlers, including forced relocation and sedentrization (Ulturgasheva 2012, 14).

While early Soviet policy supported multiculturalism and granted all citizens the right to receive education in their native tongues, by the late 1930s education policies shifted to favour Russia as the primary language of instruction in schools (Zamyatin 2017, 187-188). Furthermore, in the 1960s boarding schools were established in Russia for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children. Indigenous students who attended these schools experienced cultural and linguistic dislocation, as they were separated from their families and communities for nine months of the year (Zamyatin 2017, 188). By the time of the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, many Indigenous groups had sustained profound language loss, an issue which has been perpetuated by post-Soviet government policy that strongly focuses on national identity building and cultural homogenization (Semenova et al. 2021, 3). Today, most Indigenous peoples in Russia speak Russian as their first and primary language, and many Indigenous languages are endangered (Zamyatin 2017, 190).

Before proceeding, it is important to note that there is a culturally and linguistically diverse range of Indigenous peoples inhabiting Russia. Forty-seven of these groups are legally recognized as Indigenous minority peoples or Indigenous small-numbered peoples of the North, Siberia, and the Far East. Legislation in Russia requires that for a group to be considered

Indigenous, their population numbers must not exceed a threshold of fifty thousand (Khanolainen et al. 2020, 2). Some Indigenous groups are therefore disqualified from legal recognition because of their larger population sizes. In addition, there are twenty-four titular nations in Russia who reside in autonomous areas representing their traditional homelands, and who are labelled as non-Russian ethnic groups by the government (Khanolainen et al. 2020, 2). Given this unique sociopolitical context, paired with the limited available literature published in English on educational practices in Indigenous communities in Russia, I can only provide a narrow perspective on education and self-determination processes in the country.

Indigenous peoples in Russia generally reside in smaller and geographically isolated locations and tend to receive low quality education services due to a lack of adequately trained teachers, limited up-to-date learning materials, and poor infrastructure, among other issues (Zamyatin 2017, 190). This is especially true for Indigenous peoples who maintain a nomadic or semi-nomadic lifestyle. Today, Russian continues to be the primary language of instruction at schools in many Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, although Indigenous languages are offered in some schools as compulsory, though more commonly optional, subjects if there is sufficient parental demand (Zamyatin 2017, 198). Indigenous youth in Russia therefore have limited opportunities to receive culturally or linguistically relevant education, and their levels of educational attainment remain much lower than the rest of the population (Zamyatin 2017, 201).

Some developments to improve the quality of education for Indigenous students and advance educational self-determination have, however, taken place in Russia in recent decades, particularly at the regional level. For example, the Republic of Yakutia, a three million square-kilometer Russian administrative area that is home to five small-numbered Indigenous groups (the Evenki, Evens, Dolgans, Yukagir, and Chukchi) passed a legislation in 2008 to establish a

nomadic school system, an educational model that has been unofficially practiced in the region for a century (Belianskaia 2016). Nomadic schools in Yakutia either meet students at settlements and trading points, or migrate with Indigenous communities, and they incorporate culturally relevant educational content, such as lessons on reindeer-herding, hunting, fishing, and driving snowmobiles or ATVs (Arctic Council Indigenous Peoples' Secretariat 2019). More recently, the Federal Institute of Native Languages of the Peoples of the Russian Federation also began a project aimed at revitalizing Indigenous languages in the Republic of Yakutia. The project will develop digital language training programs and interactive educational resources for teachers in the region to employ in classrooms so that they are better equipped to speak and teach in the native tongues of their students (Tass 2021). Readily available information on similar education initiatives being implemented elsewhere in Russia is, however, sparse.

8.2.5 Significance

Several parallels may be drawn across the circumpolar North concerning processes of education and self-determination, including the historical (and in some cases, ongoing) predominance of colonial and paternalistic state narratives surrounding education and public policy, followed by an increase in Arctic Indigenous peoples' involvement in decision-making activities regarding education in their communities over the past several decades. In addition, a strong focus on language revitalization/retention, self-government initiatives, reforms in curriculum and pedagogy, and ongoing challenges with shortages in qualified Indigenous educators in schools are common themes across many of the circumpolar countries and nations I surveyed. However, there are also significant differences to be addressed as well, especially considering the diverse socio-cultural, economic, and political circumstances that characterize the nations, countries, and territories of the circumpolar North. It is therefore difficult to pinpoint

just how "instructive" Nunavut may be, though it is certainly illustrative of some broader developments, difficulties, and calls for change.

8.3 Areas for Further Research

As I imagine is common with much anthropological research carried out at the level of a master's degree, I am at this stage left with more questions than answers. In this section, I therefore outline some key areas for further research regarding education and self-determination in Nunavut. Firstly and perhaps principally is the topic of self-government, which was referenced by several of the participants I interviewed and is also a recurring theme within archival material. I therefore invite others to consider what role self-government might/can/should play in the future of education and self-determination in Nunavut. In the excerpt below, NTI's senior education advisor provides some context by emphasizing the complex and oft perplexing connection between self-government, self-determination, and education in the territory:

> "What does self-determination look like for Inuit? Is it creating an Inuit specific government? I don't know. The way the whole land claims is structured is that it's supposed to support the majority population which is Inuit, and so because that exists now, we have to think about self-determination in the context of today. Our department of self-determination has that mandate to pursue new comprehensive self-government from our leadership. But in comprehensive self-government there is also like, kind of building blocks. You can look at different sectors and so because education, language and education has been such a huge priority for Inuit for so long, education naturally becomes a question of do we want to pursue control over our education system, and how would we do that in the context of our current public school system and the minister having authority…we're doing existing research to look at…First Nations models. But Nunavut is unique in the fact that we live in a jurisdiction where Inuit are the majority. Nowhere else in Canada is that the case and so even the First Nations model within a province or territory, like they're a minority. And most provinces and territories, even if they have control over their education system, their model doesn't necessarily transfer to Nunavut…And then, the fact that Inuktitut is considered an official language for Nunavut. That again, is an issue in the current policy context in terms of legislation and funding and resources. And so, it becomes complicated pretty quickly in terms of…self-determination or self-government in education, in the grand scheme of things and in our current reality."

Some other questions which emerged for me during this research and which may provide useful departure points for further research include the following: What is going on behind the scenes at the government/policy level? How can barriers to self-determination in education be addressed or overcome? How will Nunavut shape or be shaped by the broader international and circumpolar context regarding education and self-determination in the future? What are student and parent perspectives on self-determination and education? What might research on this subject look like from a more legal standpoint in light of the ongoing NTI lawsuit?

Considering ongoing developments and calls to action for educational self-determination in Nunavut, as well as other national and international contexts, further research which responds to these, and other relevant questions may provide valuable future insights and have the potential to further inform scholarly and public discussions and decision-making processes in the territory and beyond.

8.4 Considerations for Anthropology

By adopting an anthropological perspective to self-determination and education in Nunavut, I have aimed to develop a holistic analysis that utilizes thick description and understands education environments as essential sites for cultural transmission, inclusion, and exclusion. In turn, I have taken initial steps towards mapping an anthropology of education in Nunavut which I hope other anthropologists can reference and build from and on in the future. I would argue that anthropologists can and should play a role in informing education policy contexts, curriculum development, and other areas of education development given their ability to help identify critical areas of concern and need by drawing on the rich and dynamic views and

interpretations of key stakeholders, while also being mindful of the broader socio-cultural, political, and historical contexts which drive educational change and aspirations.

Given the increasing national and international conversations emerging around issues such as CRE, Indigenous education, sovereignty, self-determination, and decolonial and postcolonial education (see Chapters Four and Five), anthropologists should consider how they can contribute to these conversations in Nunavut and elsewhere, in both the scholarly and public spheres, and in the active service of those whose cultures, languages, and values are being directly impacted by various education policies and practices.

As I reflect on the research presented in this thesis, I recognize more than ever the importance of being an "engaged observer" while undertaking anthropological studies (Bourgois 2006). I cannot and do not claim to speak on behalf of Inuit in Nunavut, yet I am aware of my responsibility to critically analyze and write about and against the inequalities and power dynamics which shape reality. Though limited by my own positionality and ever entangled in a web of my own experiences and expectations, it is a responsibility I view as worth pursuing. Ultimately, I hope that the Inuit perspectives, histories, and stories highlighted in this research will help to guide discussions and potential avenues for action regarding the future of self-determination and education in Nunavut, wherein change is inevitable yet uncertain.

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Appendix A

Informed Consent Form

Study Title: From Settlement to Self-Determination: Towards an Anthropology of Education in Nunavut

Background

- You are being asked to participate in an independent research study on education and self-determination in Nunavut. This study is being conducted by Selina Ertman as part of her Master of Arts degree in Socio-Cultural Anthropology at the University of Alberta.
- The information you provide in this interview will only be used for this study and a master's thesis detailing the study's findings. One or more research papers describing the study's findings may also be published in academic journals.

Purpose

- The primary purpose of this research is to explore Inuit self-determination and education in Nunavut from an anthropological perspective. In particular, this research will consider how education policies and initiatives in the territory have shifted from a period of "settlement" to "self-determination" ranging from the late nineteenth century to now. This research will examine historical and ongoing perspectives and efforts concerning self-determination and education in Nunavut by incorporating archival analysis and interviews with teachers, policymakers, members of the territory's Department of Education, and other key stakeholders.

Study Procedures

- The study will entail an informal, semi-structured, and untimed interview conducted in a public setting or remotely via Zoom.
- You will be prompted with open-ended questions regarding your perspective on the following central topics: 1) The meaning of self-determination in relation to Nunavut's education system 2) The significance of recent efforts to incorporate Inuit ways of knowing, being, and doing into Nunavut's education system 4) Key concerns and barriers regarding education and self-determination in Nunavut. Data will be collected by the interviewer through notetaking and/or an audio recording. The interview will take approximately thirty minutes.

Benefits

- You will not directly benefit from being in this study.
- The information gained from you participating in this study will help the interviewer better understand self-determination and education in Nunavut from multiple perspectives.

Risks

- There is the possibility for the risk of physical infection for interviews conducted in-person.

- There is a possibility of psychological/emotional risk when discussing education in Nunavut, given the history and current ramifications of residential schools and colonialism in the territory.
- If anything is learned during research that may affect your willingness to continue being in the study, you will be informed right away.

Voluntary Participation

- You are under no obligation to participate in this study. The participation is completely voluntary. You are not obliged to answer any specific questions even if participating in the study.
- You have the right to withdraw at any time during the course of the study and up until December 2022, prior to the submission of the researcher investigator's master's thesis. If you do indicate your decision to withdraw to the interviewer, the information provided by you will not be disseminated in any form by the interviewer.

Confidentiality & Anonymity

- The information you provide in this interview will be used only for the study, and a Master's thesis detailing the study's findings. One or more research papers describing the study's findings may also be published in academic journals.
- Study data collected during the interview will be kept confidential and will only be accessible by the research investigator and the project supervisor.
- Study data will be secured in a locked cabinet and/or on a password protected computer, with the file encrypted.
- Study data, including any of your personal information, will be kept in a secure place for a minimum of five years following completion of the study, and electronic data will be password protected. When appropriate, the data will be destroyed in a way that ensures privacy and confidentiality.
- You have the choice of whether or not you will be identified in the dissemination of the research. Please check one:

[ ] I prefer to have my anonymity protected and that my relationship to the interviewer remain unspecified,

OR

[ ] I would like to be named in the study

Further Information

- If you have any further questions regarding this study, please do not hesitate to contact Selina Ertman by email: ertman@ualberta.ca or by cell phone: (780) 860-6171. Additionally, you may contact Dr. Mark Nuttall by email: mark.nuttall@ualberta.ca or by phone: (780) 492-0129.
- The plan for this study has been reviewed by a Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. If I have questions about your rights or how research should be conducted, you can call (780) 492-2615. This office is independent of the researcher.

- All participants will have the opportunity to review the transcripts of their interview before the research findings are made publicly available.
- All participants will receive a copy of a report of the research findings. This report will be made available in both English and Inuktitut.

Consent Statement

I have read this form and the research study has been explained to me. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered. If I have additional questions, I have been told whom to contact. I agree to participate in the research study described above and will receive a copy of this consent form. I will receive a copy of this consent form after I sign it.

_____ _____

Participant's Name (Printed) and Signature Date

_____ _____

Name (Printed) and Signature of Person Obtaining Consent Date

Appendix B

Nunavut Research Institute / ᓄᓇᕗᑦ ᖃᐅᔨᓴᖅᑐᑦᑎᐊᖅᑐᑦ
Box 1720, Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0 phone:(867) 979-7279 fax: (867) 979-7109 e-mail: mosha.cote@arcticcollege.ca

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH LICENSE

LICENSE NUMBER 01 031 22N-A

ISSUED TO: Selina Ertman
Department of Anthropology
University of Alberta
5-10811 86 Ave NW
Edmonton, Alberta
T6E 2N1 Canada

TEAM MEMBERS: M. Nutall

TITLE: From Settlement to Self-Determination: Towards an Anthropology of Educational Change in Nunavut

OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH:
My research focuses on educational change in Nunavut and asks the following key questions: 1) How has self-determination underpinned narratives about the future of education in Nunavut? 3) How illustrative and/or instructive is Nunavut in the broader international and circumpolar context regarding educational change and Indigenous self-determination? To respond to these questions, I will analyze how the territory's education system has shifted from a period of "settlement" to "self-determination," ranging from the late nineteenth century to now.

TERMS & CONDITIONS:

DATA COLLECTION IN NU:
DATES: April 1,2022 to December 31,2022
LOCATION: Iqaluit

Scientific Research License 01 031 22N-A expires on December31,2022
Issued at Iqaluit, NU on August 18,2022

Mosha Cote
Science Administration
Officer

NUNAVUT SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ACT
SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH LICENCE

Appendix C

Summary of Past AGM Resolutions Related to Education

Resolution	Subject	Summary
AGM 00-11-21 AGM 03-11-23	Supporting Inuit Schools Provisions in Education Act	To reinstate provisions for aboriginal schools-specifically Inuit schools in Nunavut which instruct students in the Inuit way of life including Inuktitut in the Education Act
AGM 02-11-17 AGM 03-11-19	Education Act and Language of Instruction	Need to address Inuktitut/Inuinnaqtun as the language of instruction in schools and Inuit cultural programming in the Education Act
AGM 02-11-23	Inuktitut Terminology	Concern with lack of standardized legal, technical, and other terms in the Inuktitut language and direction to pursue options for addressing Inuktitut terminology issues of importance to Inuit
AGM 04-11-12 RSA 17-10-14 RSA 19-10-12	Education Boards	Re-establish Regional Education boards to ensure Inuit in communities are provided with an equally effective means of addressing matters related to education, language, & culture
AGM 06-11-09	Education Act	NTI supports changes to the Nunavut Education Act which would: 1. Guarantee Inuit students the right to education in Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun from K-12 in every Nunavut community in Nunavut 2. Provide for a representative # of Inuit teachers and education staff, including principals 3. Provide for curriculum which encompasses Inuit culture, including Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun, Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, and land-based skills, along with vocational and academic proficiency 4. Establish elected Inuit school boards which would represent DEAs and have effective authority over regional school operations
AGM 07-11-07 RSA-13-10-16	Education Act: Inuit teachers and Inuit language	To immediately apply the necessary resources to ensure that there are enough Inuit teachers so the education program will be delivered in the schools in the Inuit language in the shortest possible time
RSA 16-10-12 RSA 18-10-08 RSA 19-10-08	Education Act Amendments	To keep the Education Act and ILPA as they are, and stop plans to reduce Inuit rights to Inuktut language of instruction, and Inuit local control over education, fund and hire training of Inuit educators, support Inuit control over education, make IQ a core element of curriculum in K-12
RSA-17-10-07	Article 23, Education and Language	Inuit employment plans with concrete targets and timelines to demonstrate substantial and steady progress towards fully Inuit representative workforce, with identification of new funding commitments specifically for training and hiring Inuit educators, and to base a new Education Act timetable for Inuktut Language of Instruction on those concrete targets and timelines

Appendix D

Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Rankin Inlet, Nunavut **November 15-17, 2021**

Resolution #: RSA-21-11-07 **Inuit Self-Government**

Moved by: Stanley Anablak

Seconded by: Guy Enuapik

WHEREAS Nunavut Inuit were self-governing long before Europeans arrived in what is now Canada, and were self-sufficient through their harvesting way of life based on their own language and worldview, economy, and systems of laws and governance, and deeply connected to and reliant on their homeland;

AND WHEREAS in the 1970s Nunavut Inuit began their aspiration to create their own government because of the damaging effects and disruptions of colonialism and attempts to assimilate Inuit language and culture into the dominant Canadian society;

AND WHEREAS Nunavut Inuit had hoped that the creation of a Nunavut Government, through the negotiation of the Nunavut Agreement, would reflect their right to self-determination, and that would continue and protect the connections to their homeland, language and cultural identity;

AND WHEREAS Nunavut Inuit had expected that the Nunavut Government, consisting of majority Inuit, would protect their rights and interests to land and wildlife harvesting, language and culture "to encourage self-reliance and the cultural and social well-being of Inuit" as a way to reclaim their sense of being;

AND WHEREAS Nunavut Inuit opted for a public government to be created subsequent to the signing of the *Nunavut Agreement*, but never ceded their inherent right to self-government, as recognized, affirmed and protected by sections 25 and 35 of Canada's *Constitution Act*, 1982, including jurisdiction and law-making authority over their own affairs;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Canada has renewed its commitment to respect that constitutional right to self-determination by having re-designed its comprehensive lands claim policy towards a more principled *Rights Recognition* framework of self-government, and as further re-affirmed by the passing of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* on June 21, 2021 that now requires "minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of Indigenous Peoples";

AND WHEREAS the socio-economic state of Inuit has not improved since the creation of the Nunavut Government in 1999, and has worsened in the areas of educational attainment, employment under-representation resulting in significant wage gaps, overcrowded housing conditions, food security, lower health indicators, economic participation and other social inequities faced by Inuit, as the Nunavut

Government has not been able to fulfill Inuit aspirations and priorities on the delivery of Inuit language and culture within education, Inuit employment and other critical socio-economic conditions and social justice of Inuit;

AND WHEREAS NTI has consistently tried to work with the Government of Nunavut in the meaningful implementation of treaty and Inuit rights with no satisfactory progress, and the exercise of self-government may offer Nunavut Inuit the means to improve their economic, social and cultural well-being where the Government of Nunavut has not been able to provide;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT Members desire Nunavut Inuit to exercise the right of self-government to enable Nunavut Inuit to have direct decision-making and control over their own affairs, and direct NTI to seek a negotiation mandate with the Government of Canada to begin self-government discussions;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT Members authorize the Board of Directors to oversee the self-government negotiation, and to implement the mandate through phased approach if the Board deems necessary;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT NTI report back to the annual meeting of members on the progress of the negotiation mandate on Inuit self-government, including any potential ancillary intergovernmental agreements, transitional requirements, anticipated timelines of negotiations and consultation plans as developed in partnership with the Regional Inuit Associations, that would support the exercise of Inuit self-government.

In Favour: All

Against:

Abstentions:

Carried: ☒

Defeated: ☐

Dated: November 16, 2021