Food (In)Security: Food Policy and Vulnerability in Kugaaruk, Nunavut

by

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Abstract

My research uses a framework of vulnerability and community economy to understand how Inuit practices of sharing need to be reflected in federal food policies for Inuit to be able to meet their food needs. I specifically draw on the work of feminist theorists such as Judith Butler, and Erin Cunniff Gilson, to consider how vulnerability that is expressed through acts of dependency and relationality can serve to meet peoples' food needs. I also take up the work of feminist economic geographers J. K. Gibson-Graham to understand how community economic capacities in Kugaaruk are informed by and thrive through the practice of vulnerability. I interviewed a range of community members in Kugaaruk including elders, hunters, people who run community food programs, and people who use community food programs – all of whom are invested in mitigating high rates of food insecurity in the community. Food sharing, which is a long standing practice and an Inuit law, is an important aspect of successful food programming in the community and something that community members want to see continue, despite realities, such as high costs and ineffective policies, that make it a very hard practice to maintain. I argue that if the government is serious about helping reduce rates of food insecurity in Nunavut, they need to support existing community capacities that are based on Inuit values of sharing to ensure people are able to meet their food needs.

Preface

This thesis is an original work by Merissa Daborn. The research project, of which this thesis is a part, received research ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board, Project Name “Food (In)Security: Food Policy and Vulnerability in Kugaaruk, Nunavut”, Pro00062730, March 21, 2016.

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Chapter One: Introduction

> I went in to buy my flour, I went in to buy my eggs and I'm surprised I could walk out of there cause they charged me my arms and my legs. And they say Nutrition North, well it'll surely save the day, just tell that to my friends who love Cheeze Whiz up in Arctic Bay. I said Northmart is ripping us off, Northmart is ripping us off, I said Northmart is ripping us off. Go to Baffin Canners instead.[1]

Food security in Nunavut is at the point of crisis. According to a 2015 Statistics Canada report, Nunavut has the highest rate of food insecurity in Canada at 36.7% — over four times the national average in 2011-2012.[2] However, PROOF, a food insecurity policy research group, has cited household food insecurity rates in Nunavut as being at 46.8% in 2014.[3] It is no surprise that rates of food insecurity are soaring in conjunction with the rising cost of imported southern food being sold in Northern Canadian grocery stores. The Nunavut Food Security Coalition cites that nearly 70% of Inuit homes in Nunavut are food insecure — over eight times higher than the national average, and much higher than rates cited by Statistics Canada and PROOF for previous years.[4] These rates all serve to indicate a serious crisis. In my thesis I argue that to actually mitigate rates of food insecurity there is a dire need for federal food policy to 1) recognize Inuit practices, such as sharing, that are already used to meet food needs, and 2) support Inuit community economies that consist of food banks, Hunters and Trappers Organizations, or sharing food via the radio, all of which centre Inuit values for ensuring community food needs are met. The goal of my research is to address the following: How may a move from food

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[1] The Jerry Cans, 'Northmart,' *Nunavuttitut*, Compact Disc, 2012.
[2] Shirin Roshanafshar and Emma Hawkins, "Health at a Glance: Food Insecurity in Canada," Statistics Canada, 2015.

[3] Valerie Tarasuk, Andy Mitchell, and Naomi Dachner, *Household Food Insecurity in Canada, 2014*, PROOF: Food Insecurity and Policy Research, accessed December 31, 2016, http://proof.utoronto.ca/resources/proof-annual-reports/annual-report-2014/ : 2.
[4] "Rates," Nunavut Food Security Coalition, accessed December 31, 2016, http://nunavutfoodsecurity.ca/Rates.

security to food *sharing*, create the space to begin "some strategic repair work," that can produce food policy that centres interdependency and relationality, which are key aspects of Inuit worldviews, to better meet Inuit food needs, rather than colonization and precarity, which is offered through current federal food policy?[5]

Existing research on food security tends to be aligned with the World Health Organization's (WHO) definition which defines food security as including access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that also meets the individuals' food preferences.[6] It is worth noting that the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) envisioned food security as being "based on universal human rights, including food as a right, [but this] was replaced in 1986 when the World Bank redefined food security as the ability to buy food."[7] The conceptualization of food security as something that not only includes food preferences, but is something that the individual must access themselves through purchasing power raises important concerns in regards to Inuit food security when non-market foods contribute significantly to the food needs of Inuit communities. Astronomical food prices and inadequate federal food policy have created an urgent need for new theoretical approaches to improve policies and programming. Studies of food insecurity are diverse and range from the global to the local. Global studies of food insecurity tend to focus on issues facing developing countries such as food aid, poverty, and

[5] Kim TallBear, Native American DNA: Tribal Belonging and the False Promise of Genetic Science, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 4.
[6] David Boult, *Hunger in the Arctic: Food (In)security in Inuit Communities: A Discussion Paper*, (Ottawa: Ajunnginiq Centre, National Aboriginal Health Organization, 2004). J.D. Ford and M. Beaumier, "Feeding the Family During Times of Stress: Experience and Determinants of Food Insecurity in an Inuit Community," *Geographical Journal* 177, no. 1 (2011): 44-61. World Food Programme, Development International Fund for Agricultural, and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World, 2013: The Multiple Dimensions of Food Security*, (Rome: FAO, 2013).
[7] Constance, Renard, and Rivera-Ferre, *Alternative Agrifood Movements*, 28.

agriculture crises.[8] There is also a large body of literature on policy approaches to food insecurity.[9] Food sovereignty as a way to achieve food security is another area of literature that first arose in South America and has since spread to other countries including Canada.[10]

Despite the diversity of food security literature, all begin with a model of food security that inevitably promotes the ability to purchase food as the answer to combatting food insecurity. I argue that approaches to food insecurity that rely on eradicating food insecurity via increased purchasing power are problematic because they put the onus on the individual to gain access to appropriate food, rather than putting the onus on the state or other actors to ensure individuals can receive necessary support to meet their food needs. I employ feminist theories of vulnerability, in conversation with Inuit theories of sharing, to argue that the settler state avoids "vulnerability, which is narrowly understood as liability to harm, by seeking security and by distancing [itself]from others who might unsettle" the state's economic security.[11] Inuit theories and practices of sharing parallel many arguments made in feminist theories of vulnerability, but provide further generative and enriching understandings of vulnerability that specifically speak to the Inuit context of food insecurity. The distinction between food security and food sharing is

[8] Majda Bne Saad, *The Global Hunger Crisis: Tackling Food Insecurity in Developing Countries,* (London: Pluto Press), 2013. Martin Caraher and John Coveney, *Food Poverty and Insecurity: International Food Inequalities,* (Cham: Springer), 2016.
[9] D. A. Boult, *Hunger in the Arctic: Food (in)security in Inuit communities*, (Ottawa: Ajunnginiq Centre, National Aboriginal Health Organization, 2004), 1-11. Hing Man Chan, Karen Fediuk, Sue Hamilton, Laura Rostas, Amy Caughey, Harriet Kuhnlein, Grace Egeland, and Eric Loring, "Food Security in Nunavut, Canada: Barriers and Recommendations," International Journal of Circumpolar Health, Vol. 65, No. 1 (2006): 416-430.
[10] Annette Aurélie Desmarais and Hannah Wittman, "Farmers, Foodies, and First Nations: Getting to Food Sovereignty in Canada," The Journal of Peasant Studies, Vol. 41, No. 6 (2014): 1153-1173; Sam Grey and Raj Patel, "Food Sovereignty as Decolonization: Some Contributions from Indigenous Movements to Food System and Development Politics," Agriculture and Human Values, Vol. 32, No. 3, (2015): 431-444; Nettie Wiebe, Annettee Aurélie Desmarais, and Hannah Wittman, *Food Sovereignty in Canada: Creating Just and Sustainable Food Systems*, Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing, 2011.
[11] Erin Cunniff Gilson, "Vulnerability, Relationality, and Dependency: Feminist Conceptual Resources for Food Justice," International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics, Vol. 8, No. 2, (2015): 5.

not a matter of mere semantics. There is a world of difference between having limited access to very specific resources that are meant to promote food security, and having food needs met and relationships maintained through the longstanding practice of food sharing – which I will expand upon in Chapters Three and Four.

The failure to recognize colonialism, particularly in the context of a settler colonial state such as Canada, as a main factor in food insecurity merely serves to perpetuate colonial modes of governing, and thus food insecurity, through the reliance on security based models that require an *individual* to *access* food that is necessary for meeting their food needs. These models emerge out of the sustained lack of interrogation of how the settler Canadian state does not experience material vulnerability, particularly in regards to the inequitable and precarious funding of services provided to Indigenous communities by the federal government.[12] It is worth noting that ineffective food policy is not solely an issue of epistemological differences when it comes to security versus sharing, nor is it solely an issue of political economic practices given that the state is in bed with capitalism vis-à-vis programs based in the private sector. One cannot be separated from the other, given that epistemological frameworks often inform peoples' political and economic practices. In my literature review in Chapter Three I have included an appendix that graphs a selection of literature that I reviewed of food security research and how well it addresses the impacts of colonization on food insecurity.[13] Decolonial and food sovereignty literature, despite departing from the normative approaches currently dominating the field, still lacks discussion of how the state fails to aid Indigenous peoples in meeting their food needs, and thus maintains state security through the hoarding, rather than sharing, of resources. I argue that

[12] Pamela D. Palmater, "Stretched Beyond Human Limits: Death by Poverty in First Nations," *Canadian Review of Social Policy*, No. 65/66, (2011): 112-127.
[13] See Appendix 1.

these approaches maintain ineffective food policy by failing to foster challenging conversations that take Indigenous concepts and axioms for food into account (such as Inuit food sharing practices). However, it is not just the accounting of and consideration of difference between settler and Inuit valuing of food and sharing that must be interrogated, but also the relations of power that are being produced through the current policy — most explicitly demonstrated by the profits made by individual settler business entities that use ineffective federal policies as an apparatus to gain profits. I specifically use Nutrition North as an example of a policy that furthers the security of the settler state, and individual settler citizens who hoard corporate subsidies. In focusing on Nutrition North as an example, I then establish grounds for interrogating the current state of food studies by deploying theoretical conceptions of vulnerability.[14]

Throughout this thesis I hope to further contextualize the high rates of food insecurity in Nunavut and identify approaches being used to remediate food insecurity. Most of all, I hope to provide an account of Kugaaruk's experiences with high food prices and food insecurity — and how they utilize food sharing to combat both. For food security research to produce effective policy solutions, it must be able to extend beyond the immediate reality of a lack of food, or a lack of resources to access food. If invulnerability centres privatization, profit, and denial of relations, all while failing to actually improve food security, then a move towards vulnerability, and a different set of ethics, may prove to be more generative. Gilson conveys that "although vulnerability in relation to food is often understood as susceptibility to harm, when vulnerability

[14] Judith Lawn and Dan Harvey, *Nutrition and Food Security in Kugaaruk, Nunavut: Baseline Survey for the Food Mail Pilot Project*, Ottawa: Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 2003; Bruce Stanton, *From Food Mail to Nutrition North Canada: Report of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development*, Ottawa: Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, 2011.

is understood in its most basic sense as a fundamental openness to affectivity, food as a locus of vulnerability can lead not just to harm but also to community and connection."[15] In Kugaaruk, vulnerability resulting from food sharing undeniably leads to community and connection.

My master's thesis research in Kugaaruk, Nunavut aims to foster a critical conversation about security based models of food security by considering the possibilities and ways forward for both policy and scholarship that are not based on security models, but rather people being in relation through vulnerability and sharing. In bringing theorizations of vulnerability and sharing from feminist theories and Inuit theories together, I aim to develop scholarship that provides proposed alternatives to the federal government's reliance on security based models for food policy, and thereby developing a more relational and vulnerable approach that could better feed Inuit. By deploying feminist theories of vulnerability, I will provide new insights for a specifically Inuit context that will address how federal policy fails to provide food security for Inuit peoples.[16] I will demonstrate that there is a need to shift analyses of food security from the individual's ability to access food, to the government's need to make a fundamental change in providing services that meet the needs of the Inuit.

Kugaaruk, Nunavut

Kugaaruk, Nunavut, formerly known as Pelly Bay, is located on the Simpson Peninsula, south of the Gulf of Boothia and is approximately 1,300km northeast of Yellowknife, Northwest

[15] Erin Cunniff Gilson, "Vulnerability, Relationality, and Dependency: Feminist Conceptual Resources for Food Justice," International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics, Vol. 8, No. 2, (2015): 35-36.

[16] Judith Butler, "Precarious Life, Vulnerability, and the Ethics of Cohabitation," The Journal of Speculative Philosophy, Vol. 26, No. 2, (2012): 134-151; Erin Cunniff Gilson, *The Ethics of Vulnerability: A Feminist Analysis of Social Life and Practice*, New York: Routledge, 2014; Gilson, "Vulnerabilty, Relationality, and Dependency," 2015; Donna Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness*, Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2003.

Territories.[17] I was introduced to the community by my supervisor, Dr. Sean Robertson. The location is nothing less than stunning with the hamlet built in the low lying area between mountains, with a river cutting along one edge, the hamlet is perched at the edge of Pelly Bay. Aside from being surrounded by beautiful land and water, Kugaaruk is in a spectacular location for accessing country food. In a 1974 article by Kenneth Jensen titled, "Pelly Bay, N.W.T.: Profile of a Cooperative Community," Jensen states that "the Eskimos [sic] [of Pelly Bay] told Rasmussen, the Danish explorer-ethnographer, they knew nothing of hunger and times of distress."[18] Jensen attributes this to the abundance of both bearded and ringed seals in the area, in addition to Arctic char, caribou, muskox, and whales. While the community is still able to reap the benefits of being located in such a bountiful area, since the time of Jensen's writing they have undergone drastic changes resulting from social, economic, political, and environmental processes. It is no longer accurate to describe the community as 'knowing nothing of hunger and times of distress.' Jensen's article goes on to discuss the establishment of a Co-op in the hamlet, which he describes as a "major institution for economic and social change," and suggests that as a result, "the economy of Pelly Bay will be totally revolutionized."[19] I would not go as far as to say that Jensen was wrong, but I think that he imagined the revolution as being a positive thing for the people of Kugaaruk. Instead, they *now* know something of hunger and times of distress.

Due to the high cost of importing food to Nunavut, rates of food insecurity across the territory are soaring. The Nunavut Bureau of Statistics (NBS) completes annual food price survey's that analyze food prices from 25 communities in 3 regions (Baffin, Kivalliq, and

[17] Government of Nunavut, "Community Profiles," *Government of Nunavut*, accessed May 31, 2017, http://www.gov.nu.ca/information/community-profiles.
[18] Kenneth D. Jensen, "Pelly Bay, N.W.T.: Profile of a Cooperative Community," (report reproduced by U. S. Department of Health, Education & Welfare, 1974): 4.
[19] Jensen, "Pelly Bay, N.W.T.," 16.

Kitikmeot). The food price survey is based on pricing a 24-item food basket that includes staple foods.[20] NBS released the most recent statistics in "Nunavut Food Price Survey, Comparison of 24 Select Food Items Basket, 2015-2016." The food basket average for Nunavut in 2015 was $165.31, which rose to $172.90 in 2016. However, only one community of the 25 communities included in the survey well exceeded the average cost. The food basket price in Kugaaruk for 2016 was a whopping $201.98, which surprisingly went down in price from 2015 when it was $204.02.[21] No other community exceeded $200 for the food basket price. The price survey reveals that the food basket cost in Kugaaruk is at a +16.8% price difference than the Nunavut average, in 2015 it was an astounding +23.4% above the Nunavut average. Kugaaruk faces geographic challenges for importing food because it is only accessible by barge once a year, which can account for the higher cost of food if retailers need to rely on shipping by air more often than other Nunavut communities. Retailer pricing discretion is also a factor in pricing differences between communities. The only other community that comes close to those figures is Resolute which was +2.7% above the Nunavut average in 2015, which skyrocketed to +15.2% for 2016.[22]

I belabour over these statistics because it is necessary to understand how dire issues of food insecurity are. While Kugaaruk may be in a geographical region that is abundant with

[20] Nunavut Bureau of Statistics, "Nunavut Food Price Survey, Comparison of 24 Select Food Items Basket, 2015-2016," *Prices*, accessed April 9, 2017, http://www.stats.gov.nu.ca/en/Economic%20prices.aspx. The 24 items included in the food basket are: 2% milk (2 litres), margarine (545g), eggs (12 large), potatoes (2.27kg), carrots (1kg), bananas (1kg), apples (1kg), canned baked beans (398ml), soda crackers (450g), canned cream of mushroom (284ml), ground beef (1kg), pork chops (1kg), wieners (450-500g), canned pink salmon (213g), white bread (570g), frozen pizza (one unit), frozen corn (750g), baby food in jars (128ml), macaroni and cheese dinner (220-225g), spaghetti noodles (500g), quick oatmeal (900g-1kg), instant rice (700g), frozen french fries (650g-1kg), white flour (2.5kg).
[21] Nunavut Bureau of Statistics, "Nunavut Food Price Survey."
[22] Nunavut Bureau of Statistics, "Nunavut Food Price Survey."

country food, many factors work in conjunction to constrain access to both country food, and store bought food. Kugaaruk is only accessible by sealift once a year, which means the rest of the year all foods are delivered by air, and thus contributing to higher costs in store. Unlike many other Northern communities who have a Co-op and a Northern store, Kugaaruk only has one store — a Co-op. Many people have cited this as a reason for the extreme prices because without a second store there is no competition and the Co-op essentially has a monopoly on business and prices. There is also a limited season for accessing items by sealift (items that are shipped more economically by barge), however, it is often not feasible for many community members due to the requirement of paying up front for bulk supplies. Buying store-bought foods is costly, but so is buying necessary supplies for hunting and being able to actually harvest the country foods that are in the region. It is common to hear several community members per day speak on the radio at either lunch or supper time asking for a little bit of food to feed their kids because their cupboards are empty. Hunger and distress have become all too familiar in the hamlet.

Kugaaruk's location in the territory of Nunavut factors significantly into how issues of food security are addressed, and how food is governed through policy in the region. In the article "From TEK to IQ: *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and Inuit Cultural Ecology" geographer George Wenzel states that, "it is useful to begin by noting that there are, in more than a metaphorical sense, two Nunavuts. The first, earliest manifestation is exclusively of the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement . . . The other, later one is the Territory of Nunavut. This Nunavut is a formal national political unit created by an act of the Canadian Parliament."[23] The establishment of Nunavut the territory meant that Nunavut "would have its own elected government, receive infrastructure and services funding from the federal government, and be autonomous with regard

[23] George W. Wenzel, "From TEK to IQ: *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and Inuit Cultural Ecology," *Arctic Anthropology*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (2004): 239.

to, among other matters, most social and resource policies – all, however, while remaining a federal government territorial dependency."[24] However, when it comes to the governing of food, particularly for Inuit peoples, programming is deployed by the federal government. The federal government operates the Department of Health, the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food, and the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development – all of which impact the governing of food for Inuit living in Nunavut. For example, Nutrition North is operated by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development. Even though Nunavut can be considered autonomous in many regards, when it comes to issues of food insecurity, the territory is still impacted by federal governing.

I also want to note how sovereignty is taken up in an Inuit context in Nunavut because it varies from uses of sovereignty deployed in an Indigenous context in Southern Canada. The Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) has established and adopted *A Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic* to outline the complexities of Inuit sovereignty (and self-determination which is an act towards sovereignty). The declaration defines self-determination as "our right to freely determine our political status, freely pursue our economic, social, cultural and linguistic development, and freely dispose of our natural wealth and resources. States are obligated to respect and promote the realization of our right to self-determination."[25] Land claim agreements, particularly the creation of Nunavut, are identified as a key building block of Inuit rights, and it is noted that "while there are conflicts over the implementation of these agreements, they remain of vital relevance to matters of self-determination and of sovereignty and sovereign rights."[26] In

[24] Wenzel, "From TEK to IQ," 239.
[25] Inuit Circumpolar Council of Canada, "A Circumpolar Inuit Declaration on Sovereignty in the Arctic," *Inuit Circumpolar*, accessed September 16, 2016, http://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/sovereignty-in-the-arctic.html.
[26] Ibid.

addition, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) is the national representational organization that protects and advances the rights and interests of Inuit in Canada. ITK operates according to the following goals: "We advocate for Inuit rights and interests through our relationship with the Crown. We are responsible for communicating a unified Inuit perspective on the issues affecting our population, and for ensuring that Inuit are consulted and accommodated where our Indigenous and other treaty rights stand to be affected by Crown decisions."[27] Both the ICC and ITK as respective organizations are in support of partnering and working with and within their respective states for very specific political purposes, and in general many Inuit I have met during my research are invested in the same sovereignty and self-determination projects. However, some Inuit are also conflicted with the use of these modes of recognition and rights. Inuk film-maker Alethea Arnaquq-Baril succinctly stated in regards to 'Canada 150' noting that, "I think Inuit have a role to play in the national discussion about decolonization as a Native people that are generally happy to be Canadians, but not necessarily happy with the state of Canada."[28]

In Jackie Price's master's thesis, *Tukisivallialiqtakka: The Things I Have Now Begun to Understand: Inuit Governance, Nunavut and the Kitchen Consultation Model*, she considers alternatives to working within the state to advance self-determination and governing. Price designed the Kitchen Consultation Model (KCM), which is a model for communities to use to direct their own consultation processes. The KCM ultimately recognizes that:

> Inuit communities have the ability and the responsibility to construct, facilitate, and support processes for meaningful dialogue amongst community members. It also recognizes that communities understand their needs, and can create sustainable community-based solutions. The model's practices are guided by Inuit governance principles. . . each community in Nunavut is different, and within each community there

[27] Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, "What We Do," *ITK*, accessed September 19, 2017, https://www.itk.ca/what-we-do.
[28] The Walrus, "Canada 15000 | Alethea Arnaquq-Baril | Walrus Talks," *YouTube*, accessed September 16, 2017, https://youtu.be/RP8okW73JYQ.

> exists different realties. . . KCM provides a culturally rooted alternative to [Government of Nunavut]-led public debates, and provides the necessary structure to support communities in directing their own political futures.[29]

In my own research I have demonstrated how Inuit govern within their own communities according to mutual responsibilities based on their laws and values, in parallel to the actions of political and rights-based organizations. In Kugaaruk, community economies are grounded in Inuit laws and values and have not only served to mitigate rates of food insecurity, but have proven the strengths of Inuit practices, and the shortcomings of government programs.

Purpose and Objectives

My research in Kugaaruk aims to foster a critical conversation about ways forward for both policy and scholarship that are not based on security models. In bringing together theorizations of vulnerability and sharing from feminist theories and Inuit theories based on language concepts into conversation with each other, I aim to develop scholarship that provides alternatives to the federal government's reliance on security based models for food policy, and thereby developing a more relational and vulnerable approach that could better feed Inuit hunger. By deploying feminist theories of vulnerability, I will provide new insights for a specifically Inuit context that will address how federal policy fails to provide food security for Inuit peoples.[30] I will demonstrate that there is a need to shift analyses of food security from the individual's ability to access food, to the government's need to drastically reform programming in order to provide services that actually meet the needs of the Inuit.

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[29] Jackie Price, "*Tukisivallialiqtakka: The Things I Have Now Begun to Understand: Inuit Governance, Nunavut and the Kitchen Consultation Model,*" (master's thesis, University of Victoria, 2007), 63.
[30] Butler, "Precarious Life, Vulnerability, and the Ethics of Cohabitation," 2012; Gilson, *The Ethics of Vulnerability*, 2014; Gilson, "Vulnerabilty, Relationality, and Dependency," 2015; Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto*, 2003.

My research asks the following: What kind of values constitute Inuit peoples' relationships to their food? How might a reorientation from food security to food *sharing*, based on the centring of Inuit food sharing practices, allow for the space to begin "some strategic repair work," that can produce food policy that integrates sharing between community members?[31] How does the cultural construction of the value of food negatively and positively impact policy and programming *by* the nation state *for* Indigenous communities? How can food policy be rewritten to reflect Inuit values of sharing while also acknowledging the cultural power that is reserved by the Canadian state? My research provides practical insights into the ways in which food policy in the North may be implemented to embody Inuit values of sharing food. As a settler Canadian who is fed by the lands and animals of Indigenous territories, I feel that it is of the utmost importance that my work intervenes in the inequalities that keep me better fed than Indigenous peoples in Canada whose territories my food comes from.

My employment of feminist theories of vulnerability will provide a necessary conceptualization of how the Canadian government may approach food policy in a manner that will better accommodate Inuit culture of food *sharing* and *value*.[32] Feminist theories of vulnerability provide essential critiques of security and insecurity in relation to food but are lacking due to not being in conversation with the peoples they identify as food insecure. It is my hope that feminist theories of vulnerability will meld with Inuit theories of food sharing in order to create a conversation in which both Inuit and settlers can address food insecurity in a manner that does not further perpetuate insecurity, but fosters scholarship and policy that can begin to

[31] Kim TallBear, *Native American DNA: Tribal Belonging and the False Promise of Genetic Science*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013): 4.
[32] Peter Collings, *Becoming Inummarik: Men's Lives in an Inuit Community*, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014; Nicole Gombay, *Making a Living: Place, Food, and Economy in an Inuit Community*, Saskatoon: Purich Publishing, 2010.

feed Inuit peoples by practicing vulnerability and being willing to share. I centre the contributions of Inuit language, knowledge, and theory that express the vulnerable and generative nature of Inuit food sharing practices. Inclusion of Inuit language concepts, knowledge, and theories will require that I take up the citational practice of citing participants as key theorists that I "stand with" in this research to not only revise my stakes in the knowledge I produce, but to "challenge [academic] disciplinary norms" as well.[33] In citing the Inuit peoples who are teaching me words and concepts from their language and culture, I do so with the aim of drawing on "subjugated knowledges" that have often been disqualified from the realm of academia in order to privilege Inuit knowledge over other knowledges, such as linguistic anthropology of languages, or ethnography.[34] My incorporation of Inuit knowledge and theories will constitute what Donna Haraway would describe as "the ability partially to translate knowledges among very different — and power-differentiated — communities," building on what Haraway identifies as *situated knowledge*, rather than an endeavour of linguistic analysis, or ethnography.[35] However, most importantly, Haraway elucidates that "feminist objectivity is about limited location and situated knowledge, not about transcendence and splitting of subject and object. It allows us to become answerable for what we learn how to see."[36] Kim TallBear argues that "this means that hypothesis, research questions, methods, and valued outputs, including historical accounts, sociological analyses, and textual interpretations must begin from the lives, experiences, and interpretations of marginalized subjects . . . If we promiscuously

[33] Kim TallBear, "Standing With and Speaking As Faith: A Feminist-Indigenous Approach to Inquiry," *Journal of Research Practice*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (2014): 2.
[34] Michel Foucault and Colin Gordon, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*, New York: Vintage, 1980.
[35] Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (1988): 580.
[36] Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 583.

account for standpoints, objectivity will be strengthened."[37] I am invested in writing an account of food insecurity in Kugaaruk that is informed by, accountable to, and strengthened by collaboration with community members, as well as an account that takes responsibility for the accounts that I cannot translate from my own standpoint as a settler scholar.

The centring of Inuit practices, language, and conceptions of food to be put in conversation with federal policy, means that my research occupies a position of great responsibility to be in conversation with Inuit about how to address inequalities, and foster alternatives to colonial policy. My research provides necessary community informed contributions in relation to the current political climate that is spurring advocacy in response to extreme food insecurity rates, especially in light of the turnover of the majority government in Ottawa. Mere months after the election of a Liberal majority government in 2015, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada announced that it would be conducting Nutrition North Canada Engagement 2016 beginning on May 30th, 2016 and running until December 9th, 2016 to seek input from "community members and other stakeholders on how the program can be more transparent, cost-effective, and culturally appropriate in the face of growing demand for healthy food in the North."[38] I have been closely following the 'consultation' process that has been making its way across the North, and I was able to write an article for Northern Public Affairs on the potential changes to Nutrition North and my experiences researching food insecurity in Kugaaruk. It is here that I see my research as being able to be in conversation with multiple actors, and while it is not solely 'studying up' federal policy, I am taking guidance from theorists who incorporate accountable practices into their research to make pointed interventions into

[37] TallBear, "Standing With and Speaking As Faith," 3.
[38] "Nutrition North Canada Engagement 2016," Nutrition North Canada, accessed December 31, 2016, http://www.nutritionnorthcanada.gc.ca/eng/1464190223830/1464190397132.

differing fields of power.[39] Geographer Paul Robbins has poignantly stated that "research on food has often made people hungrier."[40] As someone who is researching food insecurity, this has made me reflect on how I can ensure my own research promotes nourishment, rather than hunger.

Notes on Terminology

Throughout my thesis I use several terms in reference to the production or holding of knowledge including scholarship, research, experience, knowledge, and theory. For some, these terms may be interchangeable at times. I have chosen to use these terms as strategically as possible, particularly in regards to the research contributions made by Kugaaruk community members. My citational practices have been informed by a long line of feminist and Indigenous Studies theorists. TallBear has demonstrated to me as a teacher, and as a researcher in her article "Standing With and Speaking as Faith: A Feminist-Indigenous Approach to Inquiry," that it is possible to seamlessly switch between intellectual theorizations and contributions of a diverse range theorists ranging from her mother, to Vine Deloria Jr., to Donna Haraway.[41] TallBear notes that "Haraway gave additional intellectual language beyond what Vine Deloria, Jr. and my mother gave me to describe my approach and to understand my own ethos."[42] As a student of TallBear, I quickly learned that while various subjects may have very different sets of specialized language, not speaking in the language that is normally associated with European

[39] Eben Kirksey, "Don't Use Your Data as a Pillow," in *Anthropology Off the Shelf: Anthropologists on Writing*, eds. Alisse Waterston and Maria D. Vesperi (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009). Laura Nader, "Up the Anthropologist—Perspectives Gained from Studying Up," in *Reinventing Anthropology,* ed. Dell Hymes (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1972). Laura Pulido, "FAQs: Frequently (Un)Asked Questions About Being a Scholar Activist," in *Engaging Contradictions: Theory, Politics, and Methods of Activist Scholarship*, ed. C. R. Hale (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008).
[40] Paul Robbins, "Research is Theft: Environmental Inquiry in a Postcolonial World," *Approaches to Human Geography*, eds. Stuart Aitken and Gill Valentine, (London: SAGE, 2006): 311.
[41] TallBear, "Standing With and Speaking As Faith," 3.
[42] Ibid., 3.

academic theorists, does not mean that the intellectual contributions being made do not constitute theory.

I have explicitly chosen to refer to many Kugaaruk community members as key theorists in my research. In the introduction of *Theorizing Native Studies* Audra Simpson and Andrea Smith note that they do not "promote theory in opposition to community but actually [foreground] the fact that important theorizing is happening in Native communities, and that different forms of theorization can produce forms of analysis that take up political issues in ways that have important consequences for communities of every sort."[43] Many community members have shared insightful theorizations of sharing and vulnerability that have the power to produce an analysis of issues facing Kugaaruk with results that will be more generative and applicable to an Inuit context than strictly Southern academic approaches. I have done my best to centre the theorizations and contributions from community members such as Katherina Qirngnuq, Stephan Inaksajak, Joyce Nartok, and many others. In *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* Linda Tuhiwai Smith conveys: "I am arguing that theory at its simplest level is important for indigenous peoples. At the very least it helps make sense of reality. It enables us to make assumptions and predictions about the world in which we live. It contains within it a method or methods for selecting and arranging, for prioritizing and legitimating what we see and do."[44] Theory is a way to make meaning from a particular context, or reality. Community members who have shared their knowledge and experiences are theorists to me. Their theorizations make meaning of their realities and prioritize and legitimate what they see and do. They are much more than informants, or suppliers of data. They are theorists for their own

[43] Audra Simpson and Andrea Smith, "Introduction," in *Theorizing Native Studies*, eds. Audra Simpson and Andrea Smith, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014): 7.
[44] Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, (London: Zed Books, 2012): 40.

communities and it would be irresponsible of me to neglect these thinkers and theorists, or to call them by any other name.

Chapter Two: Methodology

Introduction

The research I have undertaken for "Food (In)Security: Food Policy and Vulnerability in Kugaaruk, Nunavut" is multifaceted. I have hauled boxes of books to and from the library, spent endless hours navigating online archives of federal policy, interviewed community members in Kugaaruk to further understand their experiences with federal food policy and food insecurity, spent days purchasing and packing food for land camps and for gift bags for interviewees, and have prepared gifts such as dried meats and beaded medallions to give thanks to community members who have so generously contributed to this work, and who have welcomed me with open arms into their worlds. I want to labour over the recounting of things that are typically overlooked when writing about methodology such as making sure four bulk boxes of Red Rose tea was packed in our supplies, instead of Tetley, because elders have very particular tea tastes, and spending hours drying meats for gifts so I can give my hosts more than the minimum remuneration mandated by the university. All of these things are just as significant, if not more than, hours spent at the library or coding 'data' obtained from interviews.

I spent the month of May 2016 in Kugaaruk for my initial research visit. In addition to conducting my own research during this time, I also worked along my supervisor Dr. Sean Robertson as his Research Assistant. Working closely with Robertson on his SSHRC funded project, "Introducing the Emotional and Affective Geographies of Law: Strengthening Community Through the Practice and Feeling(s) of Inuit Law," provided invaluable opportunities for me to sit in on interviews and connect with community members who I did not

interview myself.[45] I was also able to create crucial relationships with community members by assisting in two planning meetings with the Elder's Planning Committee for the youth and elder land camp that was taking place at the end of May that were connected to Robertson's SSHRC project. I had planned on attending the land camp but due to unexpected illness I returned to Edmonton a week earlier than anticipated.

In this chapter I will provide a brief overview of how I came to this research project, the methodology that informs my research, and methods used. I will give a detailed account of the particulars that are expected such as number of interviews, how I chose my participants, and how I identified themes from the conversations I had. I also want to give a detailed account of the methodology I have used. In doing so, I will demonstrate how instead of viewing the end result of my interviews as 'data,' I consider conversations had with 'research participants' to be theoretical contributions. Similarly, I will argue that the process of picking out the right brand of tea, or sitting with friends on weekends to bead gifts is integral to my practice of methods and methodological processes. In this chapter I will emphasize that my methodological approach reflects my *research standpoint* which Maggie Walter and Chris Andersen argue is comprised of "who we are, the values that underpin our concept of self, our perspectives on the world and our own position within it, our realities, and our understandings of how knowledge is construed and constructed."[46] My methodology reflects what I identify as knowledge, how I am in relation with others, how I care for my research and the people I research with, and determines what my final research looks like in all its forms.

Study Location

[45] SSHRC funded for the duration of 2014-2019.
[46] Maggie Walter and Chris Andersen, *Indigenous Statistics: A Quantitative Research Methodology*, (Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2013): 45.

Kugaaruk, formerly known as Pelly Bay, is located on the Simpson Peninsula, south of the Gulf of Boothia in Nunavut. The hamlet is located at the base of coastal mountains that lie between Pelly Bay and the Arctic tundra. The location proves to be not only beautiful, but plentiful. Access to the tundra, bay, ocean, and many lakes and rivers provides the community with access to caribou, muskox, polar bears, seal, whales, and fish. The *Netsilingmiut*, people of the seal, have "occupied this isolated area for centuries and have only recently (since the construction of the DEW line site in the 1950s) had regular contact with the outside world."[47] The 2016 Census reported the total population of Kugaaruk to be 933. The average age of residents is 18 years, and nearly 35% of the population is under the age of 15.[48] Unfortunately, Kugaaruk experiences lower participation rates in the labour market and higher unemployment rates than the entire territory. The 2011 Census reported that Kugaaruk had a participation rate of 47.8% and an unemployment rate of 21.9%, compared to the respective territorial rates of 63.4% and 17.9%.[49] While the economy in Kugaaruk is characterized as mixed and consisting of traditional subsistence activities in conjunction with wage-based economic activities, community members are predominantly employed in retail, trades, and transport or equipment operating positions.[50] The Nunavut Bureau of Statistics indicated that in 2011 the rate for residents receiving social assistance was 67.2% in Kugaaruk, the fourth highest rate in the territory.[51] The

[47] Government of Nunavut, "Community Profiles," *Government of Nunavut*, accessed May 31, 2017, http://www.gov.nu.ca/information/community-profiles.
[48] Government of Nunavut, "Demographics for Kugaaruk," *Building Nunavut*, accessed May 31, 2017, http://toolkit.buildingnunavut.com/en/Community/Demographics/78428517-7b83-4bc1-8ed1-a1f700f3102a.
[49] Government of Nunavut, "Demographics for Kugaaruk."
[50] Ibid.
[51] Action Canada, "Hunger in Nunavut: Local Food for Healthier Communities," *Action Canada*, accessed May 31, 2017, http://www.actioncanada.ca/project/hunger-nunavut-local-food-healthier-communities/. The only higher rates of residents receiving social assistance were Clyde River at 67.5%, Taloyoak at 72.1%, and Gjoa Haven at 71.9%.

high rates of unemployment and reliance on social assistance creates a serious barrier for many Kugaaruk residents to be food secure.

The complexity of factors attributing to food insecurity, and ill-health that often results from being food insecure, is addressed in a report by the Government of Nunavut titled, *Nutrition in Nunavut: A Framework for Action*. The report notes that in 2001, "virtually half (49%) of Nunavut households experienced food insecurity without sufficient food to eat because of a lack of money."[52] Moreover, "food insecure individuals are more likely to have multiple chronic health conditions and suffer more social and psychological distress."[53] The report goes on to identity ten goals, three of which are crucial for an overarching nutrition program. The first three goals are to establish a multidisciplinary advisory group to address food security programming, increase nutrition services in Nunavut that will be equitable to what other Canadians have access to, and support Inuit employment.[54] The goals identified by the report are lofty, and ten years after its publication, communities like Kugaaruk are still facing extreme rates of food insecurity, do not have access to equitable nutrition services, and have growing young populations who have few employment opportunities in their home communities.

Project Background

I chose to complete my master's in Indigenous Studies because after coming out of an undergraduate degree in which I predominately took Anthropology and History courses, I felt that neither discipline offered me the support to pursue the research I was interested in. Throughout my undergraduate degree, I had a few professors who were supportive of my research interests and allowed me space to pursue them. However, I felt that in order to receive

[52] Department of Health and Social Services, *Nutrition in Nunavut: A Framework for Action*, (Iqaluit: Government of Nunavut, 2007): 8.
[53] Ibid., 8.
[54] Ibid., 15-16.

disciplinary support of my research, and to fully immerse myself in a learning experience that did not undermine Indigenous sovereignty or shy away from anti-colonial critiques, I had to work in Indigenous Studies. My broader research interests in health inequities, policy, and food have been shaped by my previous work in non-profit programming for people with disabilities, and experiences growing up in Nova Scotia on unceded Mi'kmaq territory. Indigenous Studies has given me space to pursue research questions as a settler who is interested interrogating ongoing colonial processes that result in inequities for Indigenous peoples, with the goal of working towards better material realities, and a better way to live together in the future.

I was introduced to the community of Kugaaruk through Robertson's existing connections in the region. Robertson's relationship with Kugaaruk was facilitated by a contact at the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, which is a research partner for his project alongside the Kugaaruk Research Advisory Committee, as well as his partners at the Kugaardjuq School. In Robertson's planning of his project, he and the community identified shared priorities, such as the community's interest in teaching youth at land camps, and Robertson's interest in the transmission of Inuit law at land camps. Robertson and the community also planned for Robertson to bring graduate students to the community. At the early stages of my research Robertson and I met to discuss my research interests (health-related federal policies), as well as the research interests of the community. By November 2015 I was ready to propose my research to the community. Researching food insecurity and food policy allowed me to continue my interests in studying health policies, and to critically interrogate the way in which colonialism is perpetuated through policies that govern food. My initial research on Kugaaruk and food quickly piqued my interests when I discovered that Kugaaruk had been one of three communities

selected to participate in the Food Mail Pilot Projects.[55] The abundance of policy literature about Kugaaruk's participation with the Food Mail Pilot Projects provided me with a significant starting point to begin research on food insecurity in the community. Due to the high costs associated with traveling to Kugaaruk, it was not feasible for me to do a preliminary visit to the community to consult on my research project. Fortunately, I was able to remedy my inability to travel to the community for this important stage of my research by filming a short video introduction of myself and my proposed research, in order to ask the community if this was a project I could undertake with their approval. Robertson shared the video with the Kugaaruk Research Advisory Committee when he was in Kugaaruk for a planning meeting in November 2015. The committee responded enthusiastically to my video and were thrilled about my proposal to research food insecurity — an issue that impacts everyone in the community and has been at a point of crisis in recent years. The elders even asked if he could get me up there right away!

After receiving community approval for my research topic, there were several other steps I had to complete before my first research trip in May 2016. I needed to obtain a Nunavut Scientific Research License, submit an ethics application for University of Alberta Research and Ethics Board approval, create a set of interview questions I would be working with, and inform our research partners — Kitikmeot Inuit Association and Kugaaruk Research Advisory Committee of my research plans as they developed. While all of these steps can be fairly complex and time consuming, working alongside Robertson meant I was able to greatly streamline these steps. My research exists under the umbrella of Robertson's project, which

[55] Judith Lawn and Dan Harvey, *Vitamin A and D Intakes in Food Mail Pilot Project Communities*, (Ottawa: Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 2007), 1. This pilot project was meant to revitalize the Food Mail Program, which was replaced by Nutrition North in 2011.

meant that I was able to be added onto his existing Nunavut Scientific Research License without undertaking the process of applying for my own research license. I did have to complete my own ethics application, but was able to base it off of Robertson's application and make the required changes regarding the differences in our research topics, research risks, and terms of use. Being under the umbrella of Robertson's research project also meant that I had access to transcripts of his previous interviews in the region, and we were able to co-interview for several interviews when we had overlapping interviewees. Co-interviewing with Robertson also provided me with invaluable context because even though Robertson's questions predominately deal with Inuit law, food sharing is an Inuit law, which provided additional insight for my own research when interviewees delved into this topic in their discussions with Robertson. I will return to this in more detail in my description of methods used. Additionally, I had the support of Tom Kayaitok who was hired as a Research Liaison for Robertson's project. Kayaitok served as a liaison between the community, Robertson, and I. Kayaitok put me in contact with participants, interpreted when I interviewed Inuktitut-speaking elders, provided theoretical insights in his role as a research participant, assisted me in coordinating my final verification meeting and community event, and was ultimately invaluable to the completion of my research because of his ability to assist in cross cultural understanding.

A Case Study

I approached my research as a case study of food insecurity in the North from the specific context of Inuit experiences in Kugaaruk. I am deeply invested in my work being able to interrogate the role of settler Canadians and varying levels of settler government, so much so that I initially intended for my research to consist solely of policy discourse analysis. However, I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to have been able to collaborate with community members

in Kugaaruk on this research. My research is informed by Indigenous Studies as a discipline, and I have drawn from Indigenous Studies theory and methods where possible to direct my collaboration with community. Without their contributions, this research would be much different and would likely reflect the status quo that I set out to critique. It is important to remember that while my approach to this research could be replicated elsewhere, the results are unique to Kugaaruk. Inuit communities across the Arctic have many similarities, but they all undergo different experiences that restrict access to food and restrict sharing, and therefore all require different approaches to accounting for distinct community food needs. While I hope the results of my research can model a successful collaboration with community, it is necessary for Northern research to be cognizant of individual communities needs and experiences and be conducted accordingly. I particularly look forward to a future in which food insecurity research in the North will better reflect the specific context of communities across the North, rather than generalize the crisis and required remedies to a Nunavut wide framework.

Methodology

The methodological approach I have employed throughout my research has largely been informed by Indigenous Studies methodologies. As a student, part of my ethics requirements included completing the tutorial offered by CIHR, NSERC, and SSHRC titled *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans.* The latest edition of this policy includes a chapter titled "Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada."[56] While the chapter offers a thorough framework for ethical conduct of research, it is just a general guideline and cannot be used as a be all and end all to approaching research in

[56] Government of Canada, "TCPS 2 (2014) – the latest edition of Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans," *Panel on Research Ethics*, accessed May 27, 2017, http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/initiatives/tcps2-eptc2/Default/.

community. The policy offers little opportunity for researcher reflexivity, or interrogation of how best case research scenarios could still be problematic. The policy may provide guidance on how to navigate channels for gaining approval for community collaboration, or how to ensure research results in 'benefits' for the community, but it does not ensure that research is accountable to communities in the same way Indigenous Studies methodologies do.

While leading canonical works in Indigenous Studies such as Linda Tuhiwai Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, and Shawn Wilson's *Research Is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*, amongst others, have content on interrogating colonial power in academic institutions, and how to do research in Indigenous communities in a relationally responsible way, I have chosen to more closely engage with the latest contributions to the field.[57] Many of the Indigenous Studies scholars I have had cited throughout my thesis have shaped my thinking and practice of Indigenous Studies because I have had the opportunity to learn from these scholars in contexts other than just reading their books; I have attended their talks, sat in their classrooms, and engaged with them as a junior colleague. Having the opportunity to think alongside these scholars has resulted in turning to them more often during the writing process, because I feel that I am able to produce much more generative scholarship when writing and citing language I already feel comfortable thinking and practicing with.

What Indigenous Studies is and does is the subject of two recent collections in which leading Indigenous Studies scholars have written on the discipline. In *Critical Indigenous Studies: Engagements in First World Locations* editor Aileen Moreton-Robinson contends that Indigenous Studies is "where Indigenous-centered approaches to knowledge production are

[57] Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples, Second Edition*, (London: Zed Books), 2012. Shawn Wilson, *Research Is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*, (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing), 2008.

thriving and where the object of study is colonizing power in its multiple forms, whether the gaze is on Indigenous issues or on Western knowledge production."[58] In my own research practice, this has meant that I centre Inuit knowledge production, while also interrogating how colonialism has operated in the North to erase and deny Inuit knowledge and laws pertaining to food. In his contribution to the same collection, Chris Andersen asserts that "most Indigenous studies scholars writing on the intellectual mission of the field have tethered it to the idea that it must support or uphold Indigenous sovereignty."[59] In *Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies* Andersen and Jean M. O'Brien appeal for methodological promiscuity, noting that "as Indigenous Studies continues to emerge, it continues to draw on a huge array of disciplines and methodological debates to inform our perspectives and work."[60] I have found this to be particularly relevant as I have learned how generative it can be to draw on feminist theories of vulnerability and economics to inform my research. Andersen and O'Brien go on to assert that their understanding of Indigenous Studies underscores the importance of the approach outlined by Robert Innes, in which three central intellectual goals for Indigenous Studies should be "to access, understand and convey Native cultural perspective(s); to conduct research that benefits Native people and/or communities; *and to employ research methods and theories that will achieve these goals.*"[61] At its core, I understand my engagement with Indigenous Studies methodological approaches to require that I centre Indigenous knowledge, interrogate colonial

[58] Aileen Moreton-Robinson, "Introduction: Locations of Engagement in the First World," in *Critical Indigenous Studies*, ed. Aileen Moreton-Robinson, (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2016): 4.
[59] Chris Andersen, "Critical Indigenous Studies: Intellectual Predilections and Institutional Realities," in *Critical Indigenous Studies*, ed. Aileen Moreton-Robinson, (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2016): 65.
[60] Chris Andersen and Jean M. O'Brien, "Introduction – Indigenous Studies: An Appeal for Methodological Promiscuity," in *Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies*, eds. Chris Andersen and Jean M. O'Brien, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017): 2.
[61] Andersen and O'Brien, "Introduction," 3.

power, uphold Indigenous sovereignty, provide benefit to my community research partners, and most importantly – *use methods and theories that will achieve these goals*.

In my decision to use particular methods and theories that would best help me achieve the goals of my research, I inevitably made the decision not to engage in other modes of researching with community. Given that my research takes place in community, and centres the contributions of community members, it would be reasonable to consider collaborative approaches to research such as Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR), participatory action research, or community empowerment research. In "Indigenous Geographies III: Methodological Innovation and the Unsettling of Participatory Research" Brad Coombes, Jay T. Johnson, and Richard Howitt contend that while CBPR is meant to meet a set of ideals such as multi-layered reflexivity, research topics identified by the community, and a lengthy time investment, many of these ideals are not met due to funding or institutional constraints, or barriers for time and trust required. The authors note that "given the shortcomings of many research projects labelled collaborative, it is unsurprising that Indigenous communities push back, finding those approaches just as disempowering as conventional research practice."[62] In "Standing With and Speaking as Faith: A Feminist-Indigenous Approach to Inquiry" Kim TallBear elaborates on how "I inquire in concert with the communities with whom I do research and work."[63] While TallBear collaborates with communities, she notes that:

> [CBPR] combines research, education, and action in usually elaborately planned approaches involving a research team spanning the research institution and the community. CBPR is an important ethical and methodological innovation and useful across the social, health, and natural sciences. But I tend to work individual or in small

[62] Brad Coombes, Jay T. Johnson, and Richard Howitt, "Indigenous Geographies III: Methodological Innovation and the Unsettling of Participatory Research," *Progress in Human Geography*, Vol. 38, No. 6 (2014): 849.
[63] Kim TallBear, "Standing With and Speaking as Faith: A Feminist-Indigenous Approach to Inquiry." *Journal of Research Practice* Vol. 10, No. 2. (2014): 1.

> teams with graduate students and in conversation with community members. . . I am figuring out how to seek out and articulate overlapping respective intellectual, ethical, and institution building projects – how to share goals and desires while staying engaged in critical conversation and producing new knowledge and insights.[64]

At its best, CBPR or other similar research approaches, can provide a useful ideal for collaborating with community on research projects. However, I do not think that CBPR would necessarily be the best choice for my own research goals of collaborating with community given the time and monetary restrictions I face as a student. Furthermore, I do not think that CBPR would result in a better outcome than the methods and theories I have selected to meet my research goals.

Utilizing Indigenous Studies methodologies requires that I centre Inuit knowledge, interrogate colonial power, uphold Inuit sovereignty, provide benefit to my community research partners, and the most effective way I have been able to meet these requirements is through citational practices that are accountable to the Kugaaruk community members who have contributed knowledge and theory to my research. Many researchers have acknowledged Inuit knowledge and theorizations, particularly in the form of *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* (IQ).[65] The uptake of IQ as it relates to traditional knowledge, or traditional ecological knowledge, has often meant the inclusion of a "perception that the use of the term 'traditional' implies Inuit traditions (i.e., old knowledge) that, while interesting, may have a difficult time finding a place and role in modern Inuit society."[66] Despite varying understandings of IQ, authors such as George Wenzel,

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[64] TallBear, "Standing With and Speaking as Faith," 1-2.
[65] My contributors did not use the term IQ when I interviewed them to refer to traditional knowledge. However, at my verification meeting with the Kugaaruk Research Advisory Committee, I did tell the elders how I used IQ in my research to refer to Inuit knowledge and they approved of its use in the given context.
[66] Frank James Tester and Peter Irniq, "Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: Social History, Politics and the Practice of Resistance," *Arctic*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (2008): 49.

Frank James Tester, Peter Irniq, John Bennett, and Susan Rowley, have effectively written about the dynamic and living qualities of IQ.[67] Wenzel notes that a commentary in Nunatsiaq News by J. Arnakak notes that IQ possesses a temporal sweep that extends into the past, present, and future and is a living technology through which Inuit thoughts and actions, tasks and resources, family and society are organized.[68] However, even with well established literature on Inuit knowledge and theorizations, I have yet to see research on food insecurity in Nunavut that is driven by, or at least centres and engages with, Inuit knowledge and theory.

As a settler, my academic interests tend to lie in the practice of 'studying up' federal policy, so I take guidance from theorists who conduct research that makes pointed interventions into fields of power such as Laura Nader, Eben Kirksey, Kim TallBear, and Paul Robbins.[69] However, I am also well aware that had I approached my thesis from a strictly policy analysis standpoint, I would have been avoiding a central part of how the policies I was interested in came to be — I would be negating the communities who are actually participating in consultation processes to contribute to the policies that end up affecting them, regardless of the extent that their contributions are actually implemented. It is here that I recognize the trend of scholars being 'stingy' with their research in the acts of citational practices that leave out

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[67] John Bennett and Susan Rowley, *Uqalurait: An Oral History of Nunavut*, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004. Frank James Tester and Peter Irniq, "Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit: Social History, Politics and the Practice of Resistance," *Arctic*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (2008): 48-61. George Wenzel, "From TEK to IQ: Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and Inuit Cultural Ecology," *Arctic Anthropology*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (2004): 238-250.

[68] George Wenzel, "From TEK to IQ: Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and Inuit Cultural Ecology," *Arctic Anthropology*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (2004): 242.

[69] Eben Kirksey, "Don't Use Your Data as a Pillow," in *Anthropology Off the Shelf: Anthropologists on Writing*, eds. Alisse Waterston and Maria D. Vesperi (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009). Laura Nader, "Up the Anthropologist—Perspectives Gained from Studying Up," in *Reinventing Anthropology,* ed. Dell Hymes (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1972). Paul Robbins, "Research is Theft: Environmental Inquiry in a Postcolonial World," *Approaches to Human Geography*, eds. Stuart Aitken and Gill Valentine, (London: SAGE, 2006). Kim TallBear, *Native American DNA: Tribal Belonging and the False Promise of Genetic Science*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).

Indigenous theorists, particularly through the act of laying claim to the scholarly knowledge we produce, rather than citing the peoples that inform it the most, such as Inuit who theorize about the importance of continuing food sharing practices. And when I speak of Indigenous theorists, I do not strictly mean Indigenous scholars in the academy. I include my language teachers and community members that I have talked with as key theorists that I "stand with" in this research to not only revise my stakes in the knowledge I produce, but to "challenge [academic] disciplinary norms" as well.[70] I have learned from my courses with Kim TallBear that in Indigenous Studies, we have the opportunity to lead the way with such citational practices, and one way we can do so is by citing an Indigenous community member and Michel Foucault in the same sentence, with the same weight given to their theoretical contributions.

Because I have these goals of 'studying up,' while simultaneously aiming to challenge disciplinary norms through citational practices and standing with community members who I recognize as fellow theorists, establishing a productive and engaged relationship with community was necessary for my thesis to be not only an informed analysis and critique of federal policy, but to be a collaborative partnership that recognizes, cites, and values the theoretical and practical work happening in the community as a response to inadequate federal policy and the ongoing material realities of colonization. The centring of Inuit practices, language, and conceptions of food sharing to be put in conversation with federal policy, means that my research is in a position to make contributions to conversations about how to address inequalities, and foster alternatives to colonial policy.

It is hoped that my research will contribute to ongoing discussions that are spurring advocacy in response to extreme food insecurity rates, particularly in relation to anticipated

[70] Kim TallBear, "Standing With and Speaking as Faith: A Feminist-Indigenous Approach to Inquiry." *Journal of Research Practice* Vol. 10, No. 2. (2014): 2.

policy changes with the Liberal majority government.[71] Geographer Paul Robbins has poignantly stated that "research on food has often made people hungrier."[72] As someone who is researching food insecurity, this has made me reflect on how I can ensure my own research works toward supporting future research and policy endeavors that will result in nourishment, rather than hunger. I am further reminded of Thomas McIlwraith's *'We Are Still Didene': Stories of Hunting and History from Northern British Columbia* in which "the phrase 'acting stingy' referred to people who did not share food" and that "'stinginess can be as reprehensible as murder.'"[73] In opposition to stinginess lies generosity. I appreciate this as a theoretical approach to the vulnerability that is reflected in practices of sharing food, and as a framing of the settler state's food policy as being as reprehensible as murder when it fails to share food. In Indigenous Studies we are able to forge disciplinary practices in which we are generous with our research in a way that brings in the thinkers and theorists academic stinginess tries to cut out of knowledge production.[74] As a result, I aim to challenge academic stinginess inside the academy, but outside of the academy as well. While there are ample critiques of the ineffectiveness of the delivery or efficiency of federal food policy, scholars have yet to interrogate the implications of the state's stinginess, and how both policy and food studies scholarship can be more generous in return. Citational practices are one small way to counter stinginess with generosity, in addition to other

[71] CBC News, "Feds consider Nutrition North 'experiments' to support hunters," CBC.ca, last modified July 19, 2016, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/nutrition-north-consultations-traditional-food-1.3685295. I outline later in later chapters how my research dissemination is contributing to ongoing discussions around changes to Nutrition North.

[72] Robbins, "Research is Theft," 311.

[73] Thomas McIlwraith, *'We Are Still Didene': Stories of Hunting and History from Northern British Columbia*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012): 74.

[74] Pakki Chipps, "Family First," *Native Studies Review*, Vol. 15, No. 2, (2004): 103-105. Kirksey, "Don't Use Your Data as a Pillow," 2009. TallBear, "Standing With," 2014.

actions I can take as a researcher to ensure I am being generous through reciprocity, maintaining good relations, and producing research that is relevant to the community.

An absolutely critical aspect of my methodological approach is the ability to properly care for and attend to the relationships required to produce knowledge *with* and *for* community. I must stress that as a student coming out of Indigenous Studies, the ability to maintain ongoing, ethical relationships with community requires more resources. The ability to keep in contact and feed the relationships I have in the North is hinged on my access to funding. Without the ability to maintain these relationships, my research would take the form of extractive research. In his article "Insurgent Research" Adam Gaudry argues that what is lost in the process of extractive research is the "context, values, and on-the-ground struggles of the people and communities that provide information and insight to the researcher," and that few researchers are willing to acknowledge responsibility to the communities they study.[75] If I have to choose between two research relationships, the first that only 'gives back' in the form of compensation for time, or the second that collaborates with community members on projects that relate to on-the-ground struggles and work already taking place in community, I would choose the latter. I have committed an extensive amount of time to securing more resources for my research, and have spent personal time and resources to ensure that I can care for the relationships I have cultivated through my research in a way that fits with my methodological and theoretical values.

Conducting research as a settler researcher based in a Southern institution necessitates further considerations for conducting responsible, non-extractive, research in Northern communities – specifically Inuit and Indigenous communities in Nunavut, Northwest Territories, and the Yukon. I want to reflect on Zoe Todd's contribution to a collaborative article in Northern

[75] Adam J. P. Gaudry, "Insurgent Research," *Wicazo Sa Review* Vol. 26, No. 1, (2011): 113-136.

Public Affairs titled, "Interrupting the Northern Research Industry: Why Northern Research Should be in Northern Hands." Todd concludes by stating the following:

> I consider it my responsibility to enact a form of ethnographic refusal: in my case, the refusal to conduct ethnography that is driven by southern or foreign research institutions until Northern research processes are changed to give Northerners more say in the 'who, what, when, where, why, and how' of research as it happens in the North. For me, to stop participating in the Northern research industry *as it currently operates* is a personal and professional duty. . . I hope that in the future I can be part of a research community that is informed by Northern legal-governance principles, that is rooted in Northern institutions, that is attentive to Northern self-determination, and which engages *all* people in the North in an open and accountable way.[76]

I do not take Todd's statement lightly. I grapple with my position as a settler southern researcher on an ongoing basis. I think it is imperative that we ask, especially of students, what we consider to be our responsibilities when conducting (or not conducting) Northern research. When I ask myself why I am doing research in the North and if I should continue to do research in the North I need to answer the following: does this research allow me to ask the questions I need to be asking? Can I properly care for the relationships that are essential to this research? To what extent is community determining the 'who, what, when, where, why, and how'? What will this research do that a non-community based research project cannot? And what am I willing to refuse? And most importantly, as an Indigenous Studies researcher, how can I best ensure that the way in which I navigate costs associated with community-based research results in the interruption of the Northern research industry *as it currently operates*, and exemplifies an alternative that is accountable to and driven by Northerners? It is my intention that this chapter will reflect the work I did to properly care for my research relationships, centre Inuit knowledge, and foster the community driven aspects of this work.

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[76] Zoe Todd, "Interrupting the Northern Research Industry: Why Northern Research Should be in Northern Hands" *Northern Public Affairs*, accessed May 31 2017, http://www.northernpublicaffairs.ca/index/interrupting-the-northern-research-industry-why-northern-research-should-be-in-northern-hands/.

Properly caring for my research relationships is something that is absolutely integral to my research. As a settler researcher working with an Inuit community, and other Indigenous communities in other projects, I think that it is necessary to refuse research with communities if I am unable to care for the relationships that come with my role. Caring for research relationships takes on a multitude of forms, many of which I have learned from practicing, learning as I go, and through beading. As I have been learning to bead, I have been learning how to maintain good relations. My friend and ever patient teacher, Elaine Alexie, has spent hours sitting with me to teach me not just how to bead, but how to fix mistakes, be patient, create gifts, and be a respectful and caring Northern researcher. Ultimately, the lessons that Alexie has taught me as a Teetł'it Gwich'in woman have the power to transcend the boundaries of different communities because more than anything, it is about learning how to be a good guest. These lessons mean that I put time and effort into making sure I bring the right tea for elders, create gifts for them that are more meaningful than a little cash that will be long forgotten, take the time and effort to get words, ideas, and projects right, care for myself and my participants in times of stress, and ensure my work is reciprocal in the community. While these qualities can always be improved upon, they are what I strive for. In beading, I strive for rounded petals, consistent tension, and tight stitches, but I have yet to complete a beading project that does not require improvement in some way. I will remember this as I verify my research and painstakingly craft and edit my writing to ensure this story gets told in the best way possible.

It may seem jarring that I have failed to talk extensively about 'reciprocity' or 'giving back,' especially as a Southern settler researcher working in an Inuit community. While many of the things that I do could be qualified under these terms, I do not want to get into the habit of using them to define my work with community. TallBear has written about the inadequacy of

these terms, that research processes should not be framed as an "exchange for data for aid or service to the communities we study."[77] TallBear further explicates that, "in thinking about the ethics of accountability in research (whose lives, lands and bodies are inquired into and what do they get out of it?), the goal of "giving back" to research subjects seems to target a key symptom of a major disease in knowledge production, but not the crippling disease itself."[78] TallBear goes on to discuss the boundary that is erected between researcher and researched, and how moving towards a relationship-building process flips the research process to replace 'subjects' with colleagues, and data gathering with sharing of knowledge.[79] I recognize how dangerous it is to embed myself and my research practices within language of reciprocity and giving back. It further constructs a relationship in which I take, and then rectify my actions, or balance the field by giving something in return. Unfortunately, the taking is never on par with the giving.

Even though I perform acts that constitute 'giving back' and 'reciprocity,' I find it to be more theoretically and practically useful to account for modes of research production. TallBear notes that, "for the institutions that employ and fund us, we will articulate specific goals as guideposts. A researcher who "stands with" a community of subjects is willing to be altered, to revise her stakes in the knowledge to be produced."[80] As a settler researching in Indigenous communities, specific goals of research tend to account for 'giving back' either in monetary, or non-monetary ways. But a small stipend and grunt work do not equate to the tremendous amount of knowledge shared and theoretical contributions being made to my research by community collaborators. However, as a researcher who "stands with" a community of subjects who is

[77] Kim TallBear, "Standing With and Speaking as Faith: A Feminist-Indigenous Approach to Inquiry," in *Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies*, eds. Chris Andersen and Jean M. O'Brien, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017): 80.
[78] TallBear, "Speaking as Faith," 80.
[79] Ibid., 80.
[80] Ibid., 80.

willing to be altered, and willing to revise my stakes in the knowledge produced I aim to create research that stands in opposition to the standard of 'giving back.' I specifically see revising my stakes in knowledge production taking place through rigorous citational practices, working on collaborative projects such as co-authored articles, and utilizing the opportunities afforded to me by the institutions that employ, teach, and fund me to continue collaboration with community to further their work in community beyond my standardized two-year master's period. At this point in my career, I cannot expect to radically alter the practice of research collaboration with Indigenous communities. But I can take steps that are available to me to ensure my research results in outcomes that are more beneficial for the community than just a thesis. And I can think and write about why it is important – in hope for a future where students do not have to be set up to fail when they want to create research that stands with a community.

Methods

I have analyzed a wide range of texts to complete this research. Sources include books, peer reviewed articles, governmental and non-governmental reports, and less conventional sources such as tweets and songs. My analysis of policy documents and other grey literature sources contributed not only to my own understanding of how policy works on the ground, but informed my research and interview questions, and provided a larger frame of reference for my research as a whole. My literature review situates policy in relation to questions, themes, and critiques emerging from the literature covered in my review. Policy documents also serve as a source of evidence for particular issues such as lack of federal transparency, poor consultation methods, and community testimony. As part of establishing rigour in my literature review, I created an appendix to ensure a comprehensive review of a large number of sources. The

appendix reviews key words that were searched within the sources, and uses a pie chart to visually represent the findings.[81]

Methods that I used while doing my research in community included semi-directed interviews, participant observation, a focus group, and verification. The focus group was conducted in English, and most interviews were conducted in English with the exception of a few elders who used Tom Kayaitok as an interpreter. I chose to do semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are "organized around ordered but flexible questioning . . . [and] the role of the researcher (interviewer or facilitator) is recognized as being more interventionist than in unstructured interviews."[82] I felt that the flexibility offered by semi-structured interviews fit my research the best because it allowed me to provide some direction with my interview questions, but also ensured that community members could be free to answer questions in a flexible way that would not be supported by structured interviewing. Reading policy documents that included community testimony and participation in previous policy pilot projects gave me a baseline to work with in terms of being able to gauge an accurate research direction. However, I created room for participants to direct their answers and guide conversation as needed. I had a set of eleven interview questions that I prepared for use prior to going to Kugaaruk, and while most of the questions remained essentially the same, many underwent changes as I began interviews.[83] Most of the changes to my interview questions happened after my initial interviews, I immediately knew what was working and was not. Some questions elicited repetitive responses, and some questions needed to be altered because the language I wrote them in did not end up being relevant or accessible. Many of the interviews took place in the elder's room that was

[81] See Appendix 1.
[82] Kevin Dunn, "'Doing' Qualitative Research in Human Geography," in *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*, ed. Iain Hay (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2016): 158.
[83] See Appendix 2.

generously loaned in kind by our research partner, the Kugaardjuq School. A handful of interviews took place in participants' homes if they preferred to be interviewed at home. All interviews were recorded using Zoom handy recorders. The majority of my interviews were conducted between myself and one interviewee, but several interviews were co-interviews with Robertson. Co-interviewing was beneficial because if Robertson interviewed first, it provided additional context that I could refer to when asking my own questions later in the interview, or if I interviewed first, I was able to return to questions that may have been raised after listening to the conversation between the interviewee and Robertson.

I held one focus group with four participants in the elder's room provided by Kugaardjuq School. I created a set of questions that I posed to the focus group as I neared the end of completing individual interviews to further elucidate some key themes that were standing out to me at the time of interviews. The four women who participated in the focus group were well positioned to speak to the operation *and* use of federal and community food programs, aligning with the practice of purposive sampling in which "participants are chosen on the basis of their experience related to the research topic."[84] In addition to a set of questions I had prepared and provided the participants with prior to the meeting, we also brainstormed about pros and cons of various food programs and policies, and reflected on the standard definition of food security and whether that was congruent with Inuit ideas of food security.[85] The focus group was able to establish a "synergistic effect" in which the focus group "provides an opportunity for people to explore different points of view and to formulate and reconsider their own ideas and understandings."[86] Overall, the focus group provided a richer conversation by bringing together

[84] Jenny Cameron, "Focusing on the Focus Group," in *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*, ed. Iain Hay (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2016): 208.
[85] See Appendix 3 for images of focus group brainstorming materials.
[86] Cameron, "Focusing on the Focus Group," 204.

four women who were well informed and experienced on the topic and provided opportunity for them to direct the conversation in relation to their own knowledge and opinions.

As a settler researcher, and a researcher working in Indigenous Studies, being cognizant and reflexive of my positioning is of the utmost importance. Employing reflexivity by "writing self into the text" and "writing critically, in a way that reflects the researcher's understanding of his or her position in time and place, particular standpoint, and the consequent partiality of the researcher's perspective" is essential to my research.[87] Participant observation was an essential part of my research because it counts for the bulk of personal experiences. I went to Kugaaruk with a plan to participate in the land camp Robertson was planning with elders and youth to provide essential context for the practice of harvesting and sharing food, but I quickly learned that plans in the North do not survive long. After struggling with my own food issues while staying in Kugaaruk and struggling to stay healthy and maintain a strong immune system, I ended up getting sick twice. A nasty but short flu kept me bed ridden for a few days and head cold at the end of our stay meant that going out onto the land for a week in still cold temperatures was not feasible. So while I am not able to speak to the experiences of the land camp, I am able to reflect on every day life in Kugaaruk and my own experiences with food, the Co-op, food sharing, and ineffective federal policy. I kept a research diary while in Kugaaruk, but as an avid photographer, many of the experiences I have reflected on throughout my thesis were a result of reflections I wrote in conjunction with photographs I had taken.

The verification stage of my research included several components that were integral to completing my thesis, and was informed by Indigenous Studies methodologies that identify

[87] Juliana Mansvelt and Lawrence D. Berg, "Writing Qualitative Geographies, Constructing Meaningful Geographical Knowledges," in *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*, ed. Iain Hay (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2016): 406.

community feedback and approval as necessary to research completion. In January 2017 I sent packages containing printed transcripts, CDs with the interview audio file, and a research snapshot about Robertson's and my research, and letter in English and Inuktitut to each research participant. In April 2017 I returned to Kugaaruk to consult with each individual participant who was directly quoted to ensure that they approved of the quote and the context I quoted them in. I also held a verification meeting with members of the Kugaaruk Research Advisory Committee and our research partner from the Kitikmeot Inuit Association to present my overall research and receive feedback. The verification meeting was crucial for completion of my research. The meeting provided elders who did not complete interviews with me a chance to provide additional insight. I was also able to ensure that the committee approved of my research and the theoretical framework I utilized. In addition, the committee was able to ask me questions regarding community contributions, and what the outcome of the research would result in. I also held a drop-in event that was held at the Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTO) with coffee, tea, and an assortment of snacks that was open to all community members to learn about my research and ask questions about the project. In addition to verifying the research for this thesis, I also worked on a collaborative project connected to Robertson's research with three elders – Levi Illuitok, Tom Kayaitok, and Christian Nalungiaq to record audio to correspond with video footage from the May 2016 elder and youth land camp to create a short film about seal hunting. The video is incredibly important to the elders because it will provide a record for future generations of important sealing locations, how to seal hunt, and will use Inuktitut and English commentary. The ability to access this knowledge will be incredibly important for future generations to ensure the continued practice of Inuit law as it relates to seal hunting, as well as the beneficial material outcomes of successful seal harvesting. The elders asked that when the

film is complete that it be shared with the Kugaardjuq School, the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, and the University of Alberta.

Participants

The twenty participants included in my research ranged in age, gender, economic status, and experience. Participants included the following: elders, hunters, mothers from unemployed households, young to middle aged members of employed or semi-employed households, community service providers, and receivers of community services. Some participants occupy more than one of the roles indicated. Five men and fifteen women participated. The diverse voices contributing to my research from key community members who were able to speak to a range of experiences with food insecurity provided a comprehensive account of food insecurity in Kugaaruk. Despite having such a range of voices, I felt confident that I was achieving a degree of saturation with my interviews. Saturation would usually indicate that I could "gather no new information or insights," and while that was not necessarily the case, I felt that to a certain degree many participants with similar experiences (e.g. elders, hunters, etc.) offered like-minded responses.[88] In my research ethics I had proposed that our community research liaison, Tom Kayaitok, would be connecting me with interview participants and he was invaluable to connecting me with Inuktitut speaking elders. However, due to the nature of working in such a small community I also met participants through word of mouth when people heard "from the public" that I was in town doing interviews about food – people were very eager to talk to a Southerner about the challenges they face in accessing food! I also sought out individuals I knew held important roles in the community relating to food, such as those involved with the Hunters and Trappers Organization and the food bank. Due to the relatively limited number of interviews

[88] Cameron, "Focusing on the Focus Group," 210.

that I was undertaking, I debriefed with Robertson frequently to ensure I was on track for having a range of voices contributing to a comprehensive account of experiences, in addition to also achieving necessary saturation.

Even given the range of experiences between research participants, the composition of all the participants can be grouped into smaller sub-groups of experience, as noted above. While there are overarching shared themes that emerge across all interviews, each of these sub-groups (e.g. elders, hunters, community service providers) provide significant and distinctive contributions to this research. Elders' contributions to this research included necessary historical context of food sharing practices in Inuit communities and the health benefits of consuming a country food diet.[89] Hunters provided necessary insight into the inner workings of programs such as the Hunters and Trappers Organization, which is an essential service for getting country food to community members who are unable to hunt themselves.[90] Mothers from unemployed households, receivers of community services, and young to middle-aged members of employed or semi-employed households all spoke to experiences with varying levels of food insecurity and what services aid them in meeting their food needs, and which ones provide further barriers to accessing food. Community members, service providers such as hunters for the Hunters and Trappers Organization and food bank volunteers contributed necessary theorization of what practices and programs work best in aiding the community in meeting their food needs, and what needs to undergo radical change. All of these contributions came together to provide a multifaceted community testimony of experiences with food insecurity.

Analysis

[89] Katherina Qirngnuq, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[90] Columban Pujuardjok, in conversation with the author, May 2016.

I transcribed the audio files from the nineteen interviews and one focus group by October 2016 using the program InqScribe. I prepared the files for printing to be sent back to each participant along with an audio CD of the interview audio file, and a research snapshot that included a brief overview of mine and Robertson's May 2016 research trip.[91] In addition to transcripts of interviews, I also wrote detailed field notes every day and took many photographs to correspond with my personal notes that aided in writing reflexively and thoughtfully about my time in Kugaaruk. I did not code my field notes, I just reviewed my notes and photographs to develop my own self reflexive writing that is weaved throughout the thesis.

When it came to the time to begin processing my transcripts, or 'coding,' I decided to forgo coding my research with a software program such as NVivo. In doing so, I was able to save the time I would invest in learning a new software and begin my coding process sooner. All of my transcript files are stored in Word documents on a secure password protected hard drive, in addition to being stored on Google Drive. The University of Alberta identifies Google Drive as being a secure location to store research on, so I chose to continue with this platform for my coding process. After identifying themes that I expected to emerge from the transcripts, I assigned each term with a distinct text highlighter colour. I read through my transcripts and coded the text with the corresponding colour. I then deleted the non-coded text so I could read the coded content for each transcript on its own. I read the coded transcripts several times throughout this process. As I began the writing process I knew the transcripts so well that I knew exactly where to find the necessary contributions.

I identified my coding themes by pulling themes that emerged from interview questions, particularly themes that I knew correlated to saturated responses across all my interviews. My

[91] See Appendix 4.

approach to coding was to utilize descriptive codes which "reflect themes or patterns that are obvious on the surface or are stated directly by research subjects."[92] In the coding process, I tried to remain reflexive "in a way that gives consideration to the voices of those who . . . have participated in the research."[93] Ultimately, I was thematically coding the voices and contributions of community members and I felt that it was important that the coding process merely guide the knowledge and theorization of community members into an overarching narrative. I identified six overarching themes; food feelings, access, coping mechanisms, services used, changes, and sharing. Each of those categories contain sub themes. Food feelings contains the sub themes of emotional and physical feelings. Access includes the sub themes of hunting, sharing, and buying. Coping mechanisms includes compromises, sharing, and stretching food. Services used is a stand alone theme. Changes codes content that relates to what interviewees identify as changes that are needed to meet food needs. Sharing includes the sub themes of feelings, why (what drives them to share food), and consequences of not sharing.[94] While I did not revise any of these themes, some themes were more prominent than others.

While the description I have given of my coding strategies may seem to reveal a rather technical, non-theoretical process, it is anything but. In *Indigenous Research Methodologies* Bagele Chilisa identifies open coding as referring to "the process of breaking down data into themes, patterns, and concepts to create a meaningful story from the volume of data."[95] The process then results in the identification of codes across the "data generated through different data-gathering techniques, such as the individual and the focus group interview."[96] However, for

[92] Meghan Cope, "Organizing and Analyzing Qualitative Data," in *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*, ed. Iain Hay (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2016): 378.
[93] Mansvelt and Berg, "Writing Qualitative Geographies," 406.
[94] See Appendix 5.
[95] Bagele Chilisa, *Indigenous Research Methodologies*, (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2012), 214.
[96] Chilisa, *Indigenous Research Methodologies*, 214.

Chilisa this is not a value free process; she argues that "the researcher pulls together voices of the interviewees to create generalizations, patterns, or sameness communicated in Euro-Western academic discipline language. The voices of the researched cease to exist except when cited to illustrate a theme or a pattern."[97] So while I have presented themes and concepts that came across in unison from those I interviewed, I have strived to ensure the voices of community members are constituting and driving the content of the narrative that I have merely guided into shape. Instead, my goal has been to centre the voices of those I have researched with to ensure their voices are leading the story, rather than just highlighting a theme I had imposed. The verification stage of my research has played a critical role in this goal and enabled me to ensure my research was telling the story of the people of Kugaaruk in a way that is reflective of their voices, knowledge, laws, and theories.

Limitations and Advantages

Working with the community of Kugaaruk as a settler researching in a Southern institution served to compound many limitations throughout my research, beyond the obvious limitations of being a *kabloona* working in an Inuit community that brings language barriers, cultural differences, and skepticism of my intentions. My research output is also limited to Kugaarukmiut and cannot be generalized for all Inuit in Nunavut. Other limitations that were directly tied to my social positioning were funding needs and time constraints. My research would not have been possible without Robertson's support, in addition to funding from Northern Scientific Training Program, UofA Northern Research Awards, the Ashley and Janet Cameron Travel Award, and the Evelyn Kline Memorial Award in Community Development. However, as I have articulated elsewhere, my ability to properly care for research relationships hinges on my

[97] Chilisa, *Indigenous Research Methodologies*, 214.

access to funding. Opportunities to apply for funding are also limited by time constraints of a standard two-year master's program. Being constrained to a two-year time frame further limits my time in community establishing relationships and working on collaborative projects.

My decision to do a homestay with an elder and his family while in Kugaaruk has provided a number of advantages. I felt better about having money going directly to a community member, rather than spending much more to stay at the hotel by myself, or with a Southerner living in the community. Not only was I able to create stronger relationships with individuals, I have been able to keep in touch with many people over Facebook which acts as a way to make up for the fact that I am unable to spend more time in community. Maintaining connections on Facebook has also meant that I have been kept up to date on issues related to my research. I was able to see video of the granddaughter of the elder I stayed with kill her first seal, watch craziness unfold when the annual sealift was delayed, and continue to stay up to date on community concerns about food prices.

My personal experiences with meeting my own food needs while living in Kugaaruk for a short period has greatly contributed to my research. A limited per diem of $25 per day meant that every food choice I made was a deliberation. Every item I bought I had to consider my dietary concerns, whether I *really* wanted to take my chances on something that was *that expired*, if I should choose something that is more affordable, and whether I should just splurge because I was craving it. After those considerations, choices were further limited by what the Co-op actually carries in their store. Protein sources were limited to expensive frozen meats like steak or whole turkeys, or more affordable proteins like chicken fingers or cutlets that end up being more of a carb than a protein. I was not able to maintain my health with the diet I was relying on. It did not take long before I was struggling with digestion issues, a weakened body after battling

a flu, and fell ill again before the end of my trip. I need to be clear though, regardless of my experiences, I was always able to look forward to going home. My experiences are not comparable to the everyday reality of the Inuit. I also need to highlight good food moments. My close friend Jac Curry was working in Northern communities over the summer of 2016 and was in Kugaaruk the week that I had the flu. She was much more prepared than I was to face the food realities of Nunavut and had brought many foods with her, including candied ginger that she gave to me to heal my gut after being sick. After recovering from the flu, a caribou roast that was being shared amongst the family I was staying with reminded me of the food I crave, like my grandparents' deer steaks, and the importance of country foods for the health of the Inuit.

At the beginning stages of this research I had considered not working with community and doing a thesis based entirely on policy and literature. I am invested in critiquing federal policy to not only hold to account processes that actively employ colonial practices, but to ensure that I am actively engaged in doing anti-colonial work. While I do not think that community based research is for everyone or every project, in this case I think that the resulting project is better *with* community than without. Inuit and Indigenous communities have been actively involved for decades in consultation, pilot projects, and 'engagement' sessions run by the federal government for both the Food Mail and Nutrition North programs. When I began to delve into policy, it became very clear that their voices were present, yet ignored. It would be irresponsible to ignore those voices again. Researching and writing this thesis is an ongoing process of checking in with myself to ensure that I am taking every opportunity to have the final product of this research be community driven, community approved, and centring the community contributions to policy that have long been neglected. Above all, I want the products of this

research whether it be the thesis, presentations, or other publications to be considered as furthering the work of theorists, activists, thinkers, and doers in Kugaaruk.

Research Dissemination

Sharing the final product of this research is a crucial part of my research, not only to ensure that the community and participants approve of it, but to ensure that it is as much a community undertaking as it is my own. I want the community to be able to point to the end result of this project and feel that they created this work as much as I did. The verification stage of this project was crucial, particularly in ensuring that each individual participant who was directly quoted approved of the quote and the context I quoted them in. In addition to this, the verification meeting with members of the Kugaaruk Elders Research Advisory Committee was essential to ensure elders and community partners approved of the research and were able to provide additional insights. I also hosted a drop-in event that was held at the Hunters and Trappers Organization with coffee, tea, and an assortment of snacks that was open to all community members to learn about my research and ask questions about the project. The event was advertised on the radio in English and Inuktitut. Unfortunately, because of the recent loss of the Kugaardjuq School to a fire, I was unable to hold the community event in the evening or over the weekend at the school gym, which would have provided an opportunity for more community members to attend. Instead, I held the event at the HTO office from 3-5pm to ensure as many people as possible would be able to attend after their children got out of school for the day. I estimate that approximately 40-50 community members attended the event that were not previously involved in the research project.

Beyond sharing this research with community, I also had several opportunities to present aspects of this project to a wider audience. At the time of writing, I have shared my research

through presentations and publications. I was invited to present "Feeding Relationships: Challenges in Northern Research" at UAlberta North's Northern Research Workshop Series, and I also presented "Navigating the Cost(s) of Northern Research" at the Faculty of Native Studies Research Day. Both of these presentations focussed on methodological approaches to Northern research, and the challenges associated with doing research that cares for research participants. More recently in April 2017 I presented "Becoming Vulnerable: Food Security and Sharing in Kugaaruk, Nunavut" through the UAlberta North Student Colloquium Series, which was an article based on my theoretical framework and how I have put feminist theory and community voices into conversation for this research. I also published an article in the Winter 2017 issue of Northern Public Affairs, "Beyond Food Security: Accounting for Community Food Needs in Kugaaruk, Nunavut" which connected my research experiences working in Kugaaruk to a large scale 'engagement' being undertaken by the federal government to receive feedback on potential changes to the Nutrition North program.[98] I have had a proposal accepted for an original research article in the Canadian Food Studies Journal for a national food security policy special issue and plan to disseminate my research further now that I have verified all of my research with the advisory committee and individual participants. After submitting a proposal to the special issue of Canadian Food Studies Journal, the guest editor, Charles Levkoe, a Canadian Research Chair in Sustainable Food Systems added me as a presenter on a Social Science and Humanities Research Council Connection Grant application with Amanda Wilson that will focus on innovation and national food policy. In short, if Levkoe's grant is successful, I will be participating in a webinar series and workshop on food policy innovation. I have also been

[98] Merissa Daborn, "Beyond Food Security: Accounting for Community Food Needs in Kugaaruk, Nunavut," *Northern Public Affairs* Vol. 5, No. 1 (2017): 52-54.

interviewed twice by University of Alberta communications associates, and hope it will result in an article on my research collaboration in Kugaaruk. I have taken as many opportunities as possible to disseminate my research to a variety of audiences because I am a firm believer that academic research should be made accessible to a wider audience, particularly when it is a topic that is so relevant to the average Canadian citizen.

Chapter Three: Literature Review

To be Inuk is to share, and to share is to be Inuk.[99]

Introduction

In Nunavut discussions around food have become increasingly centred on the word 'security.' Anthropologist Peter Collings' book *Becoming Inummarik* is full of anecdotes on Inuit food sharing practices such as the response one man gave when asked about food sharing, "People come and get food. When the box is empty, I fill it up again."[100] I argue that rather than *security*, Inuit conceptions of what settler Canadians may call food security, are invariably framed in terms of *sharing*, which denotes an aspect of vulnerability of those sharing food to ensure everyone eats.[101] But what happens when 'the box,' whether it is kitchen cupboards, community freezers, or empty store shelves, is almost always empty because outside forces restrict and impede access to food? In this chapter I outline the food insecurity crisis in Nunavut and review literature that comprises current approaches to food insecurity in the North including the fields of food insecurity, food sovereignty, and food sharing. I also review feminist theories of vulnerability and feminist economic geography to problematize security based approaches to food policy.

Food security in Nunavut is *beyond* the point of crisis. According to the research group PROOF: Food Insecurity Policy Research, household food insecurity rates in Nunavut measured

[99] Nicole Gombay, "From Subsistence to Commercial Fishing in Northern Canada: The Experience of an Inuk Entrepreneur," *British Food Journal* 108.7 (2006): 505.
[100] Peter Collings, *Becoming Inummarik: Men's Lives in an Inuit Community,* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014), 287.
[101] Mark Nuttall, Arctic Homeland: Kinship, Community and Development in Northwest Greenland, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992).

using Statistics Canada's Canadian Community Health Survey were as high as 46.8% in 2014.[102] The staggering rate of 46.8% of households experiencing food insecurity in Nunavut can be compared to Southern rates in which Nova Scotia has the highest rate of household food insecurity at 15.4% and Saskatchewan comes in with the lowest rate at 10.6%.[103] In 2015, the cost of imported Southern food being sold in Northern grocery stores was on the rise across the territory.[104] What is more concerning is that the Nunavut Food Price Survey conducted by the Nunavut Bureau of Statistics compares the pricing for a 24 select food item basket across Nunavut and in 2015-2016 Kugaaruk's basket cost an astounding $201.99, which is an average of 16.8% higher than the rest of the territory, making Kugaaruk the most expensive place to buy food in Nunavut.[105] It is important to note that of the 24 items priced, many of the items are staples that are amongst the most affordable options to buy, such as soda crackers, macaroni and cheese dinner, white bread, rice, quick oatmeal, and white flour.[106] It is easy to imagine that more nutritious and perishable foods come at an even higher cost than the food basket priced above. Astronomically high food prices, such as 2 litres of milk for $8.99, and 1.75 litres of orange juice for $16.89, suggest that the current federal food policy, Nutrition North, is not sufficient. Subsidies are not meeting the needs of Inuit who rely on the program. But this is not

[102] Valerie Tarasuk, Andy Mitchell, and Naomi Dachner, *Household Food Insecurity in Canada, 2014*, PROOF: Food Insecurity and Policy Research, accessed December 31, 2016, http://proof.utoronto.ca/resources/proof-annual-reports/annual-report-2014/ : 2.
[103] Valerie Tarasuk, Andy Mitchell, and Naomi Dachner, *Household Food Insecurity in Canada, 2014*, PROOF: Food Insecurity and Policy Research, accessed December 31, 2016, http://proof.utoronto.ca/resources/proof-annual-reports/annual-report-2014/ : 2.

[104] Nunavut Bureau of Statistics, "Food Price Survey – 2015-2016 Price Difference Stats Update, 2016," *Prices*, accessed January 20, 2017, http://www.stats.gov.nu.ca/en/Economic%20prices.aspx.

[105] Nunavut Bureau of Statistics, "Nunavut Food Price Survey, Comparison of 24 Select Food Items Basket, 2015-2016," *Prices*, accessed April 9, 2017, http://www.stats.gov.nu.ca/en/Economic%20prices.aspx.
[106] Ibid.

the only problem. There is an urgent need for new policy approaches that are grounded in the everyday experiences of community members. For many Inuit, this requires programming to include support for access to country food, a food source that has largely been left out of federal food policies to date.[107]

There is a tendency for policy approaches to adopt a food-security framework that is aligned with Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' (FAO) definition of food security meaning access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that also meets the individuals' dietary needs food preferences.[108] When food security hinges on *access*, it has led to programming that has tended to focus on increasing economic capacity, affordability, or increasing access to specific foods that are either dietary staples or deemed nutritious by Southern standards. Food insecurity research and federal policy are intimately intertwined. The way research frames and defines the problem of food insecurity continues to support and reinforce an extremely narrow idea of how food insecurity should be rectified through policy. Without a critical interrogation of how colonialism operates in the North, both research and policy will continue to uphold approaches to food insecurity that fail to consider that the material realities of Inuit peoples have been shaped and impacted by ongoing processes of colonization. There is a need to do better than barely mitigating these realities through 'fixes' such as minimal subsidies on select foods, or commoditizing country foods at the expense of the cultural practice

[107] Nutrition North does subsidize country foods if they are sold commercially. However, commercially regulated country food is not available in every community and isn't a feasible purchase for many low income families to make.
[108] David Boult, *Hunger in the Arctic: Food (In)security in Inuit Communities: A Discussion Paper*, (Ottawa: Ajunnginiq Centre, National Aboriginal Health Organization, 2004). J.D. Ford and M. Beaumier, "Feeding the Family During Times of Stress: Experience and Determinants of Food Insecurity in an Inuit Community," *Geographical Journal* 177, no. 1 (2011): 44-61. World Food Programme, Development International Fund for Agricultural, and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World, 2013: The Multiple Dimensions of Food Security*, (Rome: FAO, 2013).

of sharing. The goal of my research is to address the following: How may a move from food security to food *sharing*, create the space to begin "some strategic repair work," that can produce food policy that centres interdependency and relationality, which are key aspects of an Inuit worldview, to better meet Inuit food needs, rather than colonization and continued precarity?[109]

I specifically call for food insecurity research to direct its attention to processes of colonialism in order to identify how ongoing structures of colonialism impact the ability of Inuit to meet their food needs. To avoid a lengthy review of the colonization of Northern Canada and how it has continued unfold over time, I will briefly state that colonization in Northern Canada is unique in that it a) occurred significantly later than Southern Canada, b) did not undergo processes of settlement in the same way Southern Canada experienced it. I note these differences in order to establish that when I speak of current and ongoing processes of colonialism in the North, I specifically do so in reference to the characteristics of colonialism in which it "strives to unseat and obliterate the legal, political, social, economic, and metaphysical logics of those societies it engages with."[110] Such characteristics are still present in ongoing colonial structures, particularly food policies that are operated via the federal government, like Nutrition North Canada, which actively denies the legal, social, and economic practices of Inuit. Policy like Nutrition North Canada promotes access to 'healthy food' through neo-liberal and colonial logics of individualism, privatization, and market solutions that entirely disregard the logics of those who are meant to benefit from the programming.

In her work on human-fish relationships, Indigenous legal orders, and colonialism in Paulatuuq, Métis feminist and fish philosopher Zoe Todd asserts that "the challenge for

[109] Kim TallBear, Native American DNA: Tribal Belonging and the False Promise of Genetic Science, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 4.
[110] Zoe S. C. Todd, "'You Never Go Hungry': Fish Pluralities, Human-Fish Relationships, Indigenous Legal Orders and Colonialism in Paulatuuq, Canada" (dissertation, University of Aberdeen, 2016), 27.

Indigenous peoples in a settler colonial society, such as Canada, becomes the negotiation of ongoing colonial relations with the structures of settler colonialism which operate through the conscious erasure and denial of Indigenous peoples' laws, languages, and livelihoods."[111] In this thesis I aim to support Inuit negotiations with structures of settler colonialism that impede the ability of Inuit to meet their food needs, while simultaneously aiming to further the Inuit logics that settler colonialism seeks to unseat and obliterate, including Inuit laws, languages, and livelihoods. I specifically do so by centring Inuit voices that are responding to the failings of federal food policy in Kugaaruk. I also disseminate my research beyond the academy when possible so that the account I have received from community members in Kugaaruk can contribute to public negotiations and dialogues on policy change.

In this chapter I review several bodies of literature to make a pointed intervention in food insecurity literature. I review literature in the following fields: food insecurity, food sovereignty, and food sharing. Then, drawing from feminist theories of vulnerability and feminist economic geography, I problematize the bodies of literature in relation to my experiences researching in Kugaaruk. I establish that current federal food programming serves to provide an "unequal distribution of precarity," rather that provide sustenance.[112] I argue that to actually mitigate rates of food insecurity there is a dire need to 1) recognize Inuit practices, such as sharing, that are already used to meet food needs, and 2) support Inuit community economies that consist of food banks, Hunters and Trappers Organizations, or sharing food via the radio, all of which centre Inuit values for ensuring community food needs are met. If Nutrition North is to undergo a drastic change to actually aid in mitigating rates of food insecurity it must take into account the

[111] Zoe S. C. Todd, "'You Never Go Hungry': Fish Pluralities, Human-Fish Relationships, Indigenous Legal Orders and Colonialism in Paulatuuq, Canada" (dissertation, University of Aberdeen, 2016), 33.
[112] Judith Butler, "Precarious Life, Vulnerability, and the Ethics of Cohabitation," Journal of Speculative Philosophy, Vol. 26, No. 2 (2012): 148.

steps outlined above, which communities have readily outlined in recent consultation processes.[113] While I do not presume to think that these steps would be 'decolonizing,' I think that at the heart of centring and supporting existing Inuit laws, economies, and capacities, supports Inuit sovereignty and is a step toward the creation of anti-colonial food policy. Ultimately, there is a need to privilege community economy in new policies, rather than current governmental food policy that denies vulnerability, dependency, and interconnectedness amongst community and merely serves to further produce precarity and food insecurity through colonial values of neo-liberalism, individualism, and privatization.

Studies of food insecurity crosses academic disciplines, and is diverse in its range from the global to the local. Global studies of food insecurity tends to focus on issues facing developing countries such as food aid, poverty, and agriculture crises.[114] Due to the sheer volume of food insecurity literature, I predominantly review literature that is focused on Nunavut, or more generally, the Canadian Arctic. In my review of food security literature, I identified several categories of analysis and interpretation that stood out. There is a general body of literature that analyzes food insecurity as an issue of access due to economic barriers that restricts access to nutritious foods required for maintaining food security.[115] Within the general body of literature

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[113] I expand on community desires for changes to Nutrition North in recent consultation meetings in Chapter 4.

[114] Majda Bne Saad, *The Global Hunger Crisis: Tackling Food Insecurity in Developing Countries,* (London: Pluto Press), 2013. Martin Caraher and John Coveney, *Food Poverty and Insecurity: International Food Inequalities,* (Cham: Springer), 2016.

[115] David Boult, *Hunger in the Arctic: Food (in)security in Inuit communities,* Ottawa: Ajunnginiq Centre, National Aboriginal Health Organization, (2004): 1-11. Hing Man Chan, Karen Fediuk, Sue Hamilton, Laura Rostas, Amy Caughey, Harriet Kuhnlein, Grace Egeland, and Eric Loring, "Food Security in Nunavut, Canada: Barriers and Recommendations," International Journal of Circumpolar Health Vol. 66, No. 5 (2006): 416-430. Hilary Fergurson, "Inuit Food (In)Security in Canada: Assessing the Implications and Effectiveness of Policy," Queen's Policy Review Vol. 2, No. 2 (2011): 54-79. James D. Ford and Maude Beaumier, "Feeding the Family During Times of Stress: Experience and Determinants of Food Insecurity in an Inuit Community," The Geographical Journal Vol. 177, No. 1 (2011): 44-61. Catherine Huet, Renata Rosol, and Grace M. Egeland, "The Prevalence of Food Insecurity is High and the Diet Quality Poor in Inuit Communities," The Journal of Nutrition 142 (2012): 541-547.

on food insecurity in Nunavut, several other sub-categories stand out. Several scholars have focused on the correlation between climate change and the fluctuations (either positive or negative) in country food yields.[116] Sharing of country foods and the presence of mixed economies is an avenue of inquiry that is especially prevalent in food insecurity literature in the Canadian Arctic that researches Inuit communities.[117] Policy analysis of food insecurity in Nunavut is predominantly focused on delivery of programming and access to store-bought food, and minimally engaged with issues of climate change, country food, or mixed economies.[118] Food sovereignty literature is a crucial extension of food insecurity scholarship, especially when considering Indigenous peoples' food needs, but it is an area of research that has yet to be undertaken to any extent in Nunavut.[119]

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[116] Yang Guo, Lea Berrang-Ford, James Ford, Marie-Pierre Lardeau, Victoria Edge, Kaitlin Patterson, IHACC Research Team, and Sherilee L. Harper, "Seasonal Prevalence and Determinants of Food Insecurity in Iqaluit, Nunavut," International Journal of Circumpolar Health Vol. 74, No. 1 (2015): 1-12. T.L. Nancarrow and H. M. Chan, "Observations of Environmental Changes and Potential Dietary Impacts in Two Communities in Nunavut, Canada," Rural and Remote Health 10 (2010): 1-12. Sophie Theriault, "'Northern Frontier, Northern Homeland': Inuit People's Food Security in the Age of Climate Change and Arctic Melting," Southwestern Journal of International Law Vol. 15, No. 2 (2009): 223-249.

[117] Peter Collings, Meredith G. Marten, Tristan Pearce, and Alyson G. Young, "Country Food Sharing Networks, Household Structure, and Implications for Understanding Food Insecurity in Arctic Canada," Ecology of Food and Nutrition Vol. 55, No. 1 (2016): 30-49. Nicole Gombay, "Sharing or Commoditising? A Discussion of Some of the Socio-Economic Implications of Nunavik's Hunter Support Program," Polar Record 45.233 (2009): 119-132. Edmund Searles, "To Sell or Not to Sell: Country Food Markets and Inuit Identity in Nunavut," Food and Foodways Vol. 24, No. 3-4 (2016): 194-212.

[118] Kristin Burnett, Kelly Skinner, and Joseph LeBlanc, "From Food Mail to Nutrition North Canada: Reconsidering Federal Food Subsidy Programs for Northern Ontario," Canadian Food Studies Vol. 2. No. 1, (2015): 141-156. Tracey Galloway, "Canada's Northern Food Subsidy Nutrition North Canada: A Comprehensive Program Evaluation," International Journal of Circumpolar Health Vol 76. No. 1 (2017): 1-19. Kashef Majid and Sonya Grier, "The Food Mail Program: 'When Figs Fly' — Dispatching Access and Affordability to Healthy Food," Social Marketing Quarterly Vol. 16, No. 3 (2010): 78-95.

[119] Peter Andrée, Miranda Cobb, Leanne Moussa, and Emily Norgang, "Building Unlikely Alliances Around Food Sovereignty in Canada," Studies in Political Economy Vol. 88 (2011): 133-159. Annette Aurélie Desmarais and Hannah Wittman, "Farmers, Foodies and First Nations: Getting to Food Sovereignty in Canada," The Journal of Peasant Studies Vol. 41, No. 6, (2014): 1153-1173. Sam Grey, and Raj Patel, "Food Sovereignty as Decolonization: Some Contributions from Indigenous Movements to Food System and Development Politics," Agriculture and Human Values 32 (2015) 431-444.

I have undertaken such an extensive review of food insecurity literature because I found it challenging to find more than a handful of sources who offered analysis of food insecurity that I felt established a body of scholarship that I would want to contribute to. All of the approaches I have noted offer necessary analysis of issues facing food insecure populations. But they are also lacking. They are lacking a substantial interrogation of colonialism. Why does this matter? It matters because for Inuit peoples, being food insecure is a direct result of the material realities of colonization. Even though Nunavut is the result of a land claim agreement that includes self government, food is still governed by southern colonial institutions – Nutrition North is funded by the Government of Canada as part of Canada's Northern Strategy, and a portion of Nutrition North funding is allocated through Health Canada.[120] The governing of food in the North by federal policies contributes to the undermining and unsettling of Inuit worldviews through the specific promotion of government, corporate, and settler retailer interests. Even in instances of Inuit 'involvement' in food policy, such as identifying the need to include recognition of country food, or consulting Inuit in engagement sessions, Inuit involvement is consistently undermined or co-opted. There are few scholars who critically engage with impacts of colonization on Indigenous peoples access to foods, and in doing so, they are the exception to the norm.[121] It is these scholars that I have kept in mind as I have modeled my own research to acknowledge the historical and contemporary impacts of colonization on food security, to uphold Inuit

[120] Government of Canada, "How Nutrition North Canada Works," Nutrition North Canada, accessed April 11, 2017, http://www.nutritionnorthcanada.gc.ca/eng/1415538638170/1415538670874

[121] Kristin Burnett, Travis Hay, and Lori Chambers, "Settling the Table: Northern Food Subsidy Programs and the (Re)Colonisation of Indigenous Bodies," Australian Critical Race and Whiteness Studies Association Vol. 11, No. 1, (2015): 1-18. Sam Grey and Raj Patel, "Food Sovereignty as Decolonization: Some Contributions from Indigenous Movements to Food System and Development Politics," Agriculture and Human Values 32 (2015) 431-444.

sovereignty, and to centre Inuit voices and worldviews by closely collaborating with Kugaaruk community members on this research.

Securing Precarity

I want to talk about current approaches to food security, and what happens when researchers theorize policy responses for peoples who face extreme rates of food insecurity, without taking into consideration how their solutions re-entrench precarity and insecurity. The most commonly used definition of food security in recent scholarship is that it "exists when people have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious foods to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."[122] A major selling point of this definition is that it addresses not only the need for healthy and affordable food sources, but for the need of access to food *preferences*. The inclusion of food preferences is a defining feature of food security research in the Arctic context because it establishes the inclusion of what would be deemed 'culturally appropriate' foods, namely, traditional country foods such as seal, whale, and caribou. Unfortunately, the vast majority of current scholarship that begins with this frame of reference to address food insecurity in the Arctic, particularly from a food policy perspective, arrives at the same tired conclusion; Inuit peoples are facing food insecurity, government food policy needs to provide a greater subsidy for imported southern food, and preferences for country food is extremely important to Inuit peoples and "the access of which must be encouraged and supported."[123] As far as policy recommendations go, encouragement and support is about as weak as they get and exemplifies the lack of interrogation of what an actual commitment to

[122] Teresa Socha, and Mehdi Zahaf, Lori Chambers, Rawnda Abraham, Teri Fiddler, "Food Security In A Northern First Nations Community: An Exploratory Study On Food Availability And Accessibility," *Journal Of Aboriginal Health* 8.2 (2012): 6.
[123] T.L. Nancarrow, and H.M. Chan, "Observations of Environmental Changes and Potential Dietary Impacts in Two Communities in Nunavut, Canada," *Rural and Remote Health* 10 (2010): 10.

reducing, or god forbid — eradicating, food insecurity of Inuit peoples in the Arctic would look like.

Encouragement and support, while important aspects of any relationship, become redundant if they are meant to substitute consideration of material realities or the interrogation of how settler colonialism ensures the insecurity of Inuit. As a fun little experiment, or perhaps an exercise in torture, I word searched all of the sources I have saved in the process of doing a literature review on food security, insecurity, and policy in the Arctic for any form of the word colonization.[124] My literature review covered 17 sources regarding food security, insecurity, or policy. Of the 17 sources, 13 of the sources were explicitly focused on Nunavut, or the Arctic, and 4 of the sources were from a broader standpoint of Indigenous peoples and food security in Canada. The search results were that 8 sources mentioned colonialism 0 times; 4 mentioned it 1 time; 1 mentioned it 2 times; 2 mentioned it 3 times; and 2 engaged with colonialism in-depth.[125] The absolute failure to centre discussion of the impacts of colonization on access to food for Inuit is creating futile approaches to food insecurity in the Arctic. Research must at least minimally acknowledge the history of colonization in the Arctic, and how colonial processes of erasure of Inuit laws, languages, and livelihoods still impact access to food today, in order to avoid proposing solutions that merely serve to re-inscribe the same problematic processes that create food insecurity in the first place. Here, I specifically refer to policy that promotes market access, individualism, and privatization by limiting access to food to the individuals' purchasing capacity, and thus negates Inuit social, legal, and economic orders. If policy supported Inuit social, legal, and economic orders it would result in programming that is not only more

[124] Terms searched were colonial, colonialism, or colonization.
[125] See Appendix 1 for full details of my search and a chart illustrating the results. Appendix includes citations for all 17 sources.

politically and philosophically aligned with Inuit worldviews, it would also result in better outcomes for mitigating food insecurity because Inuit would be able to determine and meet their specific and unique food needs.

It is even more problematic when food security research focuses on the increasing limitations to access of food via country food and food sharing networks, yet does not extensively engage with factors external to the community in the break down of these processes. The article "Country Food Sharing Networks, Household Structure, and Implications for Understanding Food Insecurity in Arctic Canada" by Peter Collings, Meredith G. Marten, Tristan Pearce, and Alyson G. Young analyzed sharing networks in Ulukhatok, Northwest Territories to examine access to country food in single-adult households. The authors found that "the differences between how single women and single men experience constrained access to country foods may partially account for previous findings that single women in arctic settlements appear to be at particular risk for food insecurity."[126] According to the authors, food insecurity in Ulukhatok reflects shifts in economy, demography, and gender relations, requiring "future work in Ulukhaktok and elsewhere in the Arctic . . . [to] attend to these important cultural and contextual factors if we are to better understand food insecurity and what it means for residents of arctic communities."[127] While factors internal to the community, such as who is sharing with who, and how socio-economic and marital status relate to positions within sharing networks, it is necessary to consider external factors more in depth. The authors briefly touch on the obstacles younger men face in accessing country food such as the cost of hunting equipment, and the significant time required to gain necessary skills. So perhaps instead of linking food insecurity to

[126] Peter Collings, Meredith G. Marten, Tristan Pearce, and Alyson G. Young, "Country Food Sharing Networks, Household Structure, and Implications for Understanding Food Insecurity in Arctic Canada," *Ecology of Food and Nutrition*, Vol. 55, No. 1 (2016): 30.
[127] Collings et al., "Country Food Sharing," 45.

household makeups, the focus should be on why there is not support for young adults to access the needed equipment to get on the land due to one dimensional food policy, or the gap in necessary knowledge required for hunting pointing to little support for traditional knowledge being taught in schools or through land camps. There is a need to attend to issues of household food sharing networks, and how the values that inform these networks are consistently undermined in food policy, as well as the root of material inequities in the North if there is an end goal of substantive change for communities facing high rates of food insecurity.

For food security research to produce effective policy solutions, it must be able to extend beyond the immediate reality of a lack of food, or a lack of resources to access food. In the article "Inuit Food (In)Security in Canada: Assessing the Implications and Effectiveness of Policy" Hilary Fergurson argues that for food security researchers and policy makers, "a long-term vision and standardization of the methodologies, determinants and indicators of food security are required to improve access and availability to food that is of acceptable quality as defined by Inuit communities."[128] But perhaps more importantly, Fergurson argues:

> A multi-faceted approach must emphasize policies that improve purchasing power by reducing poverty, that address the reality of climate change and Inuit adaptations within a warming Arctic environment, and which recognize the impact of political interventions and external influences. These approaches should rely on Inuit participation and ownership over the decision-making process in order to . . . increase self-sufficiency according to traditions.[129]

Too often food security literature focuses on a single aspect of food insecurity, reducing the issue to one of not being able to afford groceries at the Co-op, or not being able to access a suitable amount of country food. If policy approaches only consider support for either store-bought food or country food, but not both, the people accessing programming will be left in a position of

[128] Hilary Fergurson, "Inuit Food (In)Security in Canada: Assessing the Implications and Effectiveness of Policy," *Queen's Policy Review*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (2011): 67.
[129] Fergurson, "Inuit Food (In)Security," 67-8.

precarity in which they cannot meet all of their food needs. While Northern communities are generally consistent in that Inuit are the majority, variances exist in experiences with food insecurity due to varying needs and desires of different generations, particularly in relation to strong ties to country food practices and the influx of imported Southern foods. Food security literature must begin to focus on these complexities, but more importantly, how community economies and material inequities factor into the process of mitigating food insecurity. Furthermore, it is particularly prudent for researchers to begin to centre Inuit communities who are equipped to reduce food insecurity if the necessary supports to do so could be put in place.

Food Sovereignty For Who?

If current research on food security is lacking attention to material inequities resulting from colonization, then a movement towards food sovereignty could be a step forward. Food sovereignty seems like a logical step, in theory. In reality, when food sovereignty scholarship is undertaken by settlers without consideration of colonial impacts on Indigenous food ways, it can serve to sustain colonization and the security of settler populations, at the cost of Indigenous peoples. I began my exploration of food sovereignty with the book, *Food Sovereignty: Reconnecting Food, Nature and Community*, edited by Hannah Wittman, Annette Aurélie Desmarais, and Nettie Wiebe. The authors' introduction, "The Origins & Potential of Food Sovereignty," describes the food sovereignty movement as an alternative to the neoliberal model of food production and is broadly defined as "the right of nations and peoples to control their own food systems, including their own markets, production modes, food cultures and environments, [and] has emerged as a critical alternative to the dominant neoliberal model for agriculture and trade."[130] Alternatives to neoliberal models of agriculture and trade are

[130] Hannah Wittman, and Annette Aurelie Desmarais, Nettie Wiebe, *Food Sovereignty: Reconnecting Food, Nature and Community,* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2010), 2.

desperately needed interventions. Food sovereignty started as a South American peasants' movement, but has since been coopted by the very peoples (settlers) who have historically, and contemporarily, oppressed Indigenous groups to the extent that such movements are required for their survival. It is of the utmost importance that when new food ethics and politics are created that they do not support the reconstitution of violences against places and peoples that current modes of neoliberal agriculture already commits.

Food sovereignty as a movement encompasses vastly different groups with drastically different interests, as evidenced in the La Vía Campesina movement. La Vía Campesina (International Peasant's Movement) discussed food sovereignty at their second international conference in 1996, at which time peasants and farm leaders who attended voiced concerns over the concept of 'food security' no longer being useful because the definition invites "an interpretation towards food related policies that emphasizes maximizing food production and enhancing food access opportunities, without particular attention to how, where and by whom food is produced."[131] While these are important discussions that are being advanced by the authors, as I was reading I grew increasingly irritated with what seemed glaringly absent: which nations and which peoples are fighting for food sovereignty? What happens when one nations' advances are at the expense of another nation or peoples existing on the same land? As I looked further into La Vía Campesina, I discovered that the two existing chapters in Canada are the National Farmers Union and L'Union Paysanne — both of which are settler farming family organizations.[132] In which case, these actors are joining the food sovereignty movement from their occupancy of Indigenous peoples' land from their positions as colonizers.

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[131] Wittman, Desmarais, Wiebe, *Food Sovereignty,* 2-3.
[132] "NFU," *National Farmers Union,* accessed December 13, 2015, http://www.nfu.ca and "Union Paysanne," *L'Union Paysanne,* accessed December 13, 2015, http://www.unionpaysanne.com.

The food sovereignty framework provided in *Food Sovereignty: Reconnecting Food, Nature and Community* may be useful, powerful, and generative in some international contexts, but in a settler colonial context in Canada I argue that it is unlikely to provide any generative outcome until it is localized to an Indigenous context. Fortunately for me, Wittman, Desmarais, and Wiebe followed up their first book a year later with *Food Sovereignty in Canada: Creating Just and Sustainable Food Systems*. All contributions to the collection were from a Canadian specific context, which sparked a hope in me that the contents would be more generative for thinking of food sovereignty within a colonial context. But alas, aside from one token Indigenous author, and thus one chapter focused on Indigenous peoples' food sovereignty that felt like a suggested afterthought, the collection generally fails to interrogate why it could be problematic for settlers to argue for food sovereignty while occupying Indigenous peoples' lands. Here, I am specifically thinking of family operated farms, community gardens, or food collectives that exist on unceded Indigenous territories — profiting and feeding settlers, instead of the Indigenous peoples who have been displaced, or forcibly removed to other, less fertile, lands.

A fundamental concern with the framework of food sovereignty advanced in *Food Sovereignty in Canada* is that it is considered by the authors to be "a viable and sustainable, life-giving alternative."[133] To which I must ask: who is eligible to receive this life-giving alternative? It is not the Indigenous peoples who are included in the text as merely informing a settler food sovereignty movement because Indigenous peoples had food systems that "*were* complex" and they had "a deep knowledge of local climates and these living food systems, gleaned from thousands of years of living in these places."[134] The manner in which Indigenous inclusion

[133] Nettie Wiebe, Annette Aurelie Desmarais, and Hannah Wittman, *Food Sovereignty in Canada: Creating Just and Sustainable Food Systems,* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2011), 3.
[134]Nettie Wiebe, Annette Aurelie Desmarais, and Hannah Wittman, *Food Sovereignty in Canada,* 6-8. Emphasis added.

seemed to be a mere afterthought, and the use of Indigenous peoples knowledge as something settlers need to absorb to be more ethical, make it increasingly apparent that settler scholars working from a framework of food sovereignty just do not get that they cannot have food sovereignty, without Indigenous peoples *not* having food *sovereignty*. Values embedded in the food sovereignty movement, whether Indigenous or non-Indigenous, are included at the cost of Indigenous values, laws, and sovereignty ultimately being undermined and co-opted for settler colonial purposes. Indigenous peoples cannot have food sovereignty without *sovereignty*. Thus, settler counterparts give up notions that Indigenous food sovereignty could simply occur as an add on to settler framings of food sovereignty.

If, and when, food sovereignty is used to advance scholarship that begins from an Indigenous nations' assertion of sovereignty, or from a place that acknowledges the contested sovereignties existing within a colonial context, it can inform new approaches to food security and policy. Dawn Morrison, a Secwepemc activist, is the author of the article "Indigenous Food Sovereignty: A Model for Social Learning" in the *Food Sovereignty in Canada* collection puts forth an Indigenous food sovereignty framework that "provides a restorative framework for health and community development and appreciates the ways in which we can work together cross-culturally to heal our relationships with one another and the land, plants and animals that provide us with our food."[135] Morrison suggests four main principles that should guide Indigenous communities striving to achieve food sovereignty: 1) the sacred or divine (food is a gift from the creator); 2) participation (food sovereignty requires action); 3) self-determination (regarding food choices), and; 4) legislation and policy (reform and reconciliation).[136] Responsibility for Indigenous food sovereignty is not just the responsibility of Indigenous

[135] Ibid., 100.
[136] Ibid.,100-101.

peoples; Morrison asserts that "cooperative modes of interaction between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. . . will require evening out power imbalances . . . [and establishing] social and environmental responsibility and respectful relationships between Indigenous peoples, settler communities, and their governments."[137] What I would like to emphasize from Morrison's approach to food sovereignty is that it calls for an evening out of power imbalances, and thus what could be theorized as a *giving up* of power on the part of settlers, as well as relationships between Indigenous and settler individuals, in addition to relationships between communities and governments. From this point of departure, it is possible to begin imagining a theory of food sovereignty that does not rely on settler occupation and exploitation of Indigenous lands to nourish settlers, while starving Indigenous peoples.

Settler approaches to food sovereignty in contrast to Indigenous peoples approaches to food sovereignty, or even anti-colonial settler scholars' approaches, are so drastically different that it is hard to come to terms with the fact that the same term is being employed in such radically different ways. In their article "Food Sovereignty as Decolonization: Some Contributions from Indigenous Movements to Food System and Development Politics," Sam Grey and Raj Patel poignantly remark that the case of the 100-mile diet, one of many liberal middle class food ethics, means that "we are invariably talking about a hundred miles of someone else's homelands."[138] It is then possible that food sovereignty looks different in relation to whose hundred miles of homelands we are talking about. For the O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation, food sovereignty relies on their concept of sovereignty, which is defined as "a re-establishment of relationships with the land and *wechihituwin* [resources] of their area . . . [not]

[137]Nettie Wiebe, Annette Aurelie Desmarais, and Hannah Wittman , *Food Sovereignty in Canada,*107.
[138] Sam Grey, and Raj Patel, "Food Sovereignty As Decolonization: Some Contributions From Indigenous Movements To Food System And Development Politics," *Agriculture & Human Values* 32.3 (2015): 442.

as control over land, water, or wildlife, but a relationship with these entities that allows for the mutual benefit of all parties . . . to support the community through engagement and sharing."[139] In contrast, other communities view food sovereignty as "increased access to traditional foods and food systems," that would also mean subsidies, community gardens, or community cooperatives as required solutions to obtaining food security.[140] Instead of settlers creating food sovereignty movements, perhaps it would be more prudent to look to the Indigenous nations on whose territory they reside, or those they feel relationally responsible to, to guide a food ethic that is relational and accountable to the peoples land that feeds us, rather than the white liberal middle class.

I was hesitant to include food sovereignty literature in this review due to the simple fact that it predominately focusses on farming and seeds, and has yet to take hold in Nunavut. In fact, my article search for "food sovereignty" and "Inuit" yielded only two results – one of which was a collection of articles on food security that did not actually contain literature combining the two search terms, and the other was a result pertaining to an Inuit call for food sovereignty in Alaska.[141] A wider search using the individual terms of food, sovereignty, and Inuit yielded only one result that was of any use. The article "Contemporary Programs in Support of Traditional Ways: Inuit Perspectives on Community Freezers as a Mechanism to Alleviate Pressures of Wild Food Access in Nain, Nunatsiavut" by authors Jennifer Organ, Heather Castleden, Chris Furgal,

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[139] Asfia Gulrukh Kamal, and Rene Linklater, Shirley Thompson, Joseph Dipple, Ithinto Mechisowin Committee, "A Recipe For Change: Reclamation Of Indigenous Food Sovereignty In O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation For Decolonization, Resource Sharing, And Cultural Restoration," *Globalizations* 12.4 (2015): 571.
[140] Teresa Socha, and Mehdi Zahaf, Lori Chambers, Rawnda Abraham, Teri Fiddler, "Food Security In A Northern First Nations Community," 11-12.
[141] James Stotts, "Inuit people of Alaska must have right to co-manage fish and game in the Arctic; OPINION: For the sake of indigenous culture and simple survival, people of the north must need food sovereignty." *Alaska Dispatch News (Anchorage, AK)*, June 10, 2016., *NewsBank*, (accessed April 11, 2017).

Tom Sheldon, and Catherine Hart minimally addresses the topic of food sovereignty for Inuit. The authors assert that, "in addition to being recognized as a right, food and its surrounding discourse has evolved to account for its inherently political nature by acknowledging the right of individuals and communities to define their own food system including production, distribution, and consumption; this is known as food sovereignty."[142] Ultimately, the authors' research explores how a community freezer used to support country food access represents traditional values and influences food security, and food sovereignty. They note that "the result of a decreased ability to consume wild food is, in fact, the reduction of food sovereignty and it is this that has led to negative impacts on mental, spiritual, and cultural health."[143] I find this conclusion unsettling, especially given that the definition the authors provided included the ability of communities to define their own food system, including consumption. Food sovereignty must extend beyond the harvesting of traditional foods if communities are also consuming non-country foods. I am concerned that settler scholars conducting Indigenous food sovereignty research pigeonhole communities into what constitutes their food systems, particularly in regards to what is deemed 'traditional' (e.g. whale, but not bannock), and thus establish a tendency to narrowly focus sovereignty to being limited to what communities *produce and distribute*, rather than what they consume.

Country food is without a doubt an essential component of Inuit diets, but limiting food sovereignty to foods that predate colonial influences does more harm than good for Inuit who are working within restricted material realities. Organ et al. go on to argue that "interventions to tackle food insecurity are also beginning to reflect the colonization of Inuit peoples through

[142] Jennifer Organ, Heather Castleden, Chris Furgal, Tom Sheldon, and Catherine Hart, "Contemporary Programs in Support of Traditional Ways: Inuit Perspectives on Community Freezers as a Mechanism to Alleviate Pressures of Wild Food Access in Nain, Nunatsiavut," *Health & Place* 30 (2014): 251.
[143] Organ et al., "Contemporary Programs," 252.

community food programs such as soup kitchens and food banks, which have been shown to contribute to, not alleviate, ill-health associated with the nutrition transition."[144] I am consistently disturbed by the trend in food insecurity studies that focuses on the poor health of food insecure people, while failing to consider agency involved in food choices, and the capacity to determine food needs. Community food programs such as soup kitchens and food banks that are run by community members committed to meeting their communities' food needs should not be framed as the problem. Rather, questions to ask should be: why is there such a dire need for these programs? What other forces are contributing to ill-health? If these programs are contributing to ill-health, what are the other factors contributing to this phenomenon? And most importantly, how can Inuit be supported in the process of being able to determine and meet their food needs, whether that means country food or kraft dinner?

Becoming Vulnerable

In order to conceptualize a way in which settlers can begin to look to Indigenous peoples for guidance on a better way to eat, a better way to relate, and a better way to share outside of current frameworks of food security, I turn to feminist theories of vulnerability. Feminist theorist Erinn Cunniff Gilson's article "Vulnerability, Relationality, and Dependency: Feminist Conceptual Resources for Food Justice" provides a framework to critically engage with current approaches to food security, particularly as it is expressed through policy interventions. Policy approaches to food security are invariably framed in terms of being vulnerable from a *lack of*, with a goal of becoming *in*vulnerable, which becomes increasingly problematic when "the pursuit of invulnerability and denials of dependency, interconnection, and relationality constitute the conditions for oppression, marginalization, and injustice."[145] Gilson conveys that in pursuing

[144] Organ et al. "Contemporary Programs," 252.
[145] Gilson, "Vulnerability," 5.

invulnerability, "one denies or avoids one's own vulnerability . . . thus, the effect of pursuing invulnerability/denying vulnerability is to privatize and narrow responsibility. One avoids vulnerability, which is narrowly understood as liability to harm, by seeking security and by distancing oneself from others who might unsettle a secure self-conception."[146] In the pursuit of invulnerability, it becomes clear that vulnerability is both emotional through the distancing and denial of relations, and material through the privatizing of responsibility.

The employment of invulnerability occurs at the level of the settler state via food policy but also occurs at the level of individual settlers whether this is through food research, privatized food distribution, or the settlers growing, hunting, and eating foods from Indigenous territories. At the state level, Gilson states that "invulnerability is sought through ensuring that quantities of food sufficient to feed the population and/or generate surplus are produced, or that markets for crops are stabilized via policy interventions that calibrate supply to match demand."[147] At the level of the corporations, "invulnerability is sought by exercising as much control as possible over all the variables involved in food production in order to maximize output and profit."[148] Both of these modes of invulnerability are applicable to the Arctic because of the fact that policy approaches to attaining food security in the North invariably relies on imported southern food. Imported Southern food results from neoliberal state level production that produces food at a surplus, and is simultaneously manufactured via corporations that capitalize on shipping to the North. Sadly, a lot of imported Southern food in the North ends up in the garbage bin because of high food costs making it unaffordable, meaning fresh produce often goes bad before it is able to

[146] Ibid., 23.
[147] Ibid., 24.
[148] Ibid., 24.

move off shelves.[149] Rather than food contributing to the 'goal' of taking food insecure peoples from the position of vulnerable to invulnerable, it rots while those peoples are unable to afford it. But the corporations who are involved in food production and output? They remain invulnerable after receiving government subsidies to offset the costs of shipping to the North.[150]

If invulnerability centres privatization, profit, and denial of relations, all while failing to actually improve food security, then a move towards vulnerability, and a different set of ethics, may prove to be more generative. Gilson conveys that "although vulnerability in relation to food is often understood as susceptibility to harm, when vulnerability is understood in its most basic sense as a fundamental openness to affectivity, food as a locus of vulnerability can lead not just to harm but also to community and connection."[151] It is through a vulnerable relation to food that relations of dependency can come to be. Engaging in vulnerable, dependent relations needs to happen at the state and individual levels. At the state level there should be a rearticulation of current federal food policies that fail to centre and support existing practices of relationality and interdependency that currently help sustain Inuit communities' food needs. In addition, the state needs to ensure any rearticulation of policy includes enhanced accountability and transparency that limits individual settler retailers from abusing federal policy by failing to pass on rebates to Inuit consumers. At the individual level, this would entail settlers making serious interrogations of where their food comes from, and what responsibilities they have to the peoples whose land keeps them well fed. It is my hope that such an interrogation can lead to interventions in traditional modes of access to food security — food banks, federal policy, social assistance — and the taking on of a new responsibility to consider how settlers may take personal

[149] David A. Boult, *Hunger in the Arctic: Food (In)Security in Inuit Communities,* (National Aboriginal Health Organization, 2004), 6.
[150] Boult, *Hunger in the Arctic,* 7.
[151] Gilson, "Vulnerability," 35-36.

responsibility for ensuring that the peoples whose land they live on, and animals they eat, are as well fed as them. I am again refraining from alluding to any chance of 'decolonization' with these outcomes. However, the outlined shift in programming and values could support Inuit economies, laws, and livelihoods and begin to mitigate the ongoing realities of colonialism.

I turn to Judith Butler's theorizations in "Precious Life, Vulnerability, and Ethics of Cohabitation" to grapple with the complexities of being able to live together better on colonized lands, which also inevitability means navigating "antagonistic ties, wretched bonds, raging and mournful modes of connectedness."[152] In the article, Butler closely engages with Emmanuel Levinas and Hannah Arendt to build upon their theorizations of precarious life and vulnerability, both of whose perspectives derived from Jewishness and cases of genocide. Butler departs from the Euro-American frameworks of Levinas and Arendt and posits that we must understand the relationship of precarity to practices of cohabitation, but that "precarity only makes sense if we are able to identify bodily dependency and need, hunger and the need for shelter, the vulnerability to injury and destruction, forms of social trust that let us live and thrive, and the passions link to our very persistence as clearly political issues."[153] For Butler, "if we try to understand in concrete terms what it means to commit ourselves to preserving the life of the other, we are invariably confronted with the bodily conditions of life and so, a commitment not only to the other's corporeal persistence but to all those environmental conditions that make life livable."[154] Butler explains that precarity cannot be separated from politics that address the organization and protection of bodily needs, such as food and shelter.[155]

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[152] Judith Butler, "Precarious Life, Vulnerability, and the Ethics of Cohabitation," Journal of Speculative Philosophy, Vol. 26, No. 2 (2012): 149.
[153] Butler, "Precarious Life," 147.
[154] Ibid., 147.
[155] Ibid., 148.

Denial of interdependency, relations, and vulnerability are essential components of precarious conditions. Butler argues for the need to find political and economic forms that minimize precarity in order to work towards economic political equality. She explains that:

> Whether explicitly stated or not, every political effort to manage populations involves a tactical distribution of precarity, more often than not articulated through an unequal distribution of precarity, one that depends on dominant norms regarding whose life is grievable and worth protecting and whose life is ungrievable, or marginally or episodically grievable and so, in that sense, already lost in part or in whole, and thus less worthy of protection and sustenance. My point is not to rehabilitate humanism but, rather, to struggle for a conception of ethical obligation that is grounded in precarity.[156]

It is here that I am reminded of current federal food policy and its distribution of precarity. Nutrition North operates as a retail subsidy that provides residents in Northern communities with subsidized nutritious, perishable foods. The subsidy is paid directly to retailers who are expected to pass on the savings to customers who buy eligible foods. However, the program has undergone criticism due to lack of transparency, lack of public evidence to prove that subsidy rates have undergone review since the program was implemented in 2011, infrequent compliance reports, and most concerning, it has "not required that compliance reviews of northern retailers include analysis of profit margins in order to verify that the full subsidy is being passed on."[157] As Nutrition North currently exists, it serves to provide an unequal distribution of precarity, rather than any amount of equitable programming that could lead to food security for Inuit. Rather than making life more livable for Inuit, Nutrition North serves up more precarity for those who need relief, while retailers and transportation providers reap the benefits. I am skeptical of the ability to achieve economic and political equality for people living in highly precarious states. But a better distribution of precarity could go a long way. Becoming more vulnerable, and

[156] Ibid., 148.
[157] Tracey Galloway, "Canada's Northern Food Subsidy Nutrition North Canada: A Comprehensive Program Evaluation," International Journal of Circumpolar Health, Vol. 76. No. 1 (2017): 16.

allowing for interdependency and relations, is essentially just that – a better distribution of precarity in which people maintain an ethical way of living together. Despite an extensive consultation process in 2016 for Nutrition North Canada undertaken with the promise of the Liberal majority government to "reform" the policy, it seems that the government is facing a more "difficult challenge" than they anticipated.[158] When in opposition, the Liberals were extremely critical of Nutrition North, going as far to note that it was a failure. In their article "Nutrition North Canada: Real Change is Yet to Come" authors Michael Fitzgerald and Fred Hill have argued that since the Liberals have inherited the failure that is Nutrition North, the only change the Liberals have made thus far is to expand the program to additional Northern communities.[159] So rather than reform the program, the Liberals have merely extended a failing program to more communities. An ethical and better distribution of precarity requires more than expansion, it requires the Liberals to follow through on campaign promises to reform Nutrition North.

The failure of settler conceptions of food security, is that it is an inherently individual process based on access to, rather than giving to, or sharing with. I argue that engaging with, and embodying, vulnerability is necessary to begin "some strategic repair work," to begin producing food policy that centres relationality rather than continued denial of relations on the part of the settler state, and individual settlers, such as retailers or food producers, who benefit from the various forms of governing used to restrict Indigenous food needs.[160] With that being said,

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[158] Jim Bell, "Nutrition North Consultation Sparks Dizzying Kaleidoscope of Demands," *Nunatsiaq Online*, May 3, 2017, http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nutrition_north_report_a_dizzying_kaleidoscope_of_demands/.

[159] Michael Fitzgerald and Fred Hill, "Nutrition North Canada: Real Change is Yet to Come," *Northern Public Affairs*, Vol. 5, No. 1, (2017): 44.

[160] TallBear, *Native American DNA,* 4.

material vulnerability is an excellent place to start for the settler state to begin to rectify the material realities that prevent Inuit peoples from being food secure. However, without vulnerability, it will not be possible to establish relationships of interdependency that create the opportunity to move beyond food security or sovereignty, and to a concept of *sharing*.

Community Economy

In order to consider how traits of vulnerability and interdependency may be incorporated into food policies, I turn to sharing and community economy. Anthropologist Edmund Searles and geographer Nicole Gombay are amongst the leading scholars who write on Inuit sharing practices and the place of those practices within community economies. In the article "To Sell or Not to Sell: Country Food Markets and Inuit Identity in Nunavut," Searles notes that due to the cost of living in the Arctic rising at a faster rate than other parts of Canada, the average salary rates of low-skilled and unskilled jobs cannot meet the needs of residents facing rising costs of living. Due to this increasing gap, "the net result is that many Inuit households continue to struggle just to pay their bills and manage their debts, with little disposable income available for hunting."[161] Searles ultimately argues that the future of food insecurity amongst Inuit who continue to harvest country food depends upon how "individuals and organizations interpret and respond to the cultural and social consequences of privatizing and commoditizing food resources long valued for being key indigenous objects that exist safely outside the influence of money, markets, and other non-indigenous traditions and values."[162] While I agree that the future of food insecurity amongst Inuit largely hinges upon interpretations and responses of privatizing or commoditizing country food resources, especially when federal policies have already supported

[161] Edmund Searles, "To Sell or Not to Sell: Country Food Markets and Inuit Identity in Nunavut," *Food and Foodways*, Vol. 24, No. 3-4 (2016): 204.
[162] Searles, "To Sell or Not to Sell," 210.

the regulation and sale of country food largely due it fitting in with nutrition focused food policy, I do not agree that these foods need to safely exist outside the influence of money or markets, or that these are necessarily non-Indigenous traditions and values.

The ability to harvest country food to share amongst family and community may in itself be an act that does not result in monetary gain for the hunter, but that does not mean harvesting country food for the purpose of sharing is divorced from notions of money or markets. In fact, parts of the harvest that are in-edible are often sold on markets extending beyond the community in order to fund future hunting. Alethea Arnaquq-Baril tackles this issue in her 2016 film, *Angry Inuk*. Arnaquq-Baril argues that the commercial seal hunt ban has negatively impacted Inuit who hunt seal for food, while also selling seal skins on world markets to support future hunting and create sustainable economies. However, the European Union's ban on seal skin products has severely impacted these economies – so much so that seal skins that used to return $100 profit, now return about $10.[163] Gombay succinctly reflects on the complexities of maintaining Inuit economies, while also needing to participate in global economies:

> Clearly country foods are bound up in the socio-economic systems of Inuit . . . in complex ways. They are fundamental to how Inuit perceive themselves in relation to society, community, and the larger environment, and they provide people with important physical and social sustenance. The challenge has become how to find the money and time to be able to go and harvest food, and to do so in a way that enables people to continue to share it.[164]

Even though Inuit are navigating participation in multiple economies, Gombay asserts that "many Inuit are remaining faithful to a world of values that they have always known, a world in which survival depended upon people's connections with one another."[165] Commitment to

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[163] "Angry Inuk," National Film Board, accessed April 11, 2017, https://www.nfb.ca/film/angry_inuk/.
[164] Nicole Gombay, "Sharing or Commoditising? A discussion of Some of the Socio-economic Implications of Nunavik's Hunter Support Program," *Polar Record* 45 (2009): 121.
[165] Gombay, "Sharing or Commoditising," 128-9.

continuing sharing practices is not a question of concern, but rather, how may these practices flourish in the communities' economy with the support of other economies?

How might Inuit engage in vulnerable practices, such as sharing, within an economy that not only centres the value of these practices, but also financially supports them? Feminist economic geographers J.K. Gibson-Graham theorize ethical economic diversity by "working toward destabilizing the economy as it is usually known and performed, and [are] attempting to reveal a space of political decision. . . [to resocialize] economic relations."[166] The authors contend that existing discourses of community economy advocate community self-reliance through the reduction of dependency on global economic ties while privileging "care of the local community and its environment."[167] The authors take this further by asking, "how do we multiply, amplify, and connect these different activities? How do we trace the connections between diverse practices"?[168] I cannot help but think that in Nunavut, this could very well take the form of commercial seal hunting – a practice that inevitably cares for the local community and environment by providing food and wildlife management, while also connecting the community to global markets that aid in sustaining a community economy.

Commercial seal hunting may not seem to be the most directly relevant example when considering policy that is meant to mitigate food insecurity, even though it does, I will consider another scenario. Gibson-Graham state that, "by highlighting the sociality of all economic relations, the community economy approach seeks to recognize the interdependence of a broad variety of economic and so-called "noneconomic" activities."[169] When thinking of Kugaaruk I recognize the sociality and interdependence of economic and "noneconomic" activities such as

[166] J.K. Gibson-Graham, *A Postcapitalist Politics*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, (2006): 79.
[167] Gibson-Graham, *A Postcapitalist Politics*, 80.
[168] Ibid., 80.
[169] Ibid., 95.

running a community food bank, hosting an elder's lunch, answering radio calls for country food, or making sure the Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTO) has enough funding to meet the community's growing food needs. Ultimately, Gibson-Graham argue that:

> An ethical discourse of the community economy would highlight the inherent sociality of decisions made in defining necessity, and the various forms of interdependence (the trade-offs or flow-ons) that are enacted when such decisions are made. Making the time and space in which to engage in meaningful discussion and decision making about them could be part of enacting a "community economy."[170]

It is important to note that theorizations of community economy do not necessitate an idealized version of a particular communities' economy. Inuit are generally noted to participate in mixed subsistence-market economies. However, if and when Inuit are pigeonholed into the idea that their economy merely engages with the capitalist market to supplement a subsistence lifestyle, it is detrimental. Instead, it is time to consider how we can support well established community economies that operate in a multitude of ways to continue subsistence practices that are not merely frozen in time to the realm of tradition, participate in global economies, and make strategic use of various sources of capital to meet their communities' needs. In Kugaaruk, this results in a community economy that is grounded in vulnerability, dependency, and interconnection. Yet, it ultimately needs more support to ensure food insecurity in the community can be mitigated according to the community's definition of necessity, rather than the government's.

Sharing Security

Food (and sharing food) is a central to Inuit worldview and what it means to be an Inuk. In her article, "Community, Obligation, and Food: Lessons from the Moral Geography of Inuit," Nicole Gombay argues that what ensures Inuit communities continue to exist is the connection of

[170] Gibson-Graham, *A Postcapitalist Politics*, 90.

obligation to their worldview. More specifically, Gombay notes that Inuit "are linked by obligations and their concomitant responsibilities to share the bounty that is first offered to them by the animals. It is community developed not by formal rules, but by the socially and normatively governed practice of sharing food that is initiated by the original gift from the land."[171] Anthropologist Edmund Searles has argued that Inuit food provides "a means by which Inuit construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct their identity as real Inuit."[172] Searles goes on to explain that, "as a reservoir of practices and beliefs, catching, preparing, sharing, and consuming Inuit country food . . . provide a made-to-order recipe by which any Inuit person can transform an ordinary experience, such as eating a piece of natsiminiq ("ringed seal meat"), into a cultural statement ("By eating this, I am really Inuit")."[173] But in addition to what kinds of food makes an Inuk an Inuk, sharing food demarcates a boundary between Inuit and non-Inuit because "those who share Inuit food with family, friends, and others in need are not just practicing tradition; they reify a cultural boundary that distinguishes Inuit from non-Inuit culture."[174] To return to the quote that opened this chapter, "to be Inuk is to share, and to share is to be Inuk."[175]

The distinction between food security and food sharing is not a matter of mere semantics. There is a world of difference between having limited access to very specific resources that are meant to promote food security, and having food needs met and relationships maintained through the longstanding practice of food sharing. More importantly, food sharing is not necessarily limited to the sharing of traditional country food, and is not necessarily a cohesive practice

[171] Nicole Gombay, "Community, Obligation, and Food: Lessons from the Moral Geography of Inuit," *Geografiska Annaler Series B, Human Geography*, Vol. 92, No. 2 (2010): 248.
[172] Searles, "To Sell or Not to Sell," 201.
[173] Ibid., 201.
[174] Ibid., 201.
[175] Nicole Gombay, "From Subsistence to Commercial Fishing in Northern Canada: The Experience of an Inuk Entrepreneur," *British Food Journal* 108.7 (2006): 505.

across all regions of Nunavut. Recognizing the unique needs of specific Inuit communities needs to be a priority when considering solutions to food insecurity. Moreover, recognizing the specific material realities of each region is an absolute necessity. Kugaaruk is located in a region that is quite plentiful, and supporting access to country food is an approach that makes sense in that specific region. However, other regions may not be located in a region with an abundance of wildlife as a result of forced relocation and may require more access to imported foods. It is not enough to merely support nutrition programming, or hunting programs. There needs to be an ongoing interrogation of both research and policies to identify how they support and promote solutions that are part of a larger colonial project that serves to dispossess and assimilate Inuit peoples, particularly through the undermining of Inuit social, legal, and economic practices in the governing of food by the settler state. An integral part of this interrogation also needs to identify what forces impede sharing, because it is those forces that will also impede food security, relationships, vulnerability, and survival.

Food for the Future

I have learned through my interviews with community members how federal food policy needs to be reoriented to specifically promote Inuit food-sharing culture. A reorientation from food security to food *sharing* can produce food policy that integrates sharing between community members, which is a practice that is already carried out with both country foods and store bought foods. Northern federal food policy needs to undergo change to take into account the needs of communities, and in doing so it needs to focus on crucial supports such as supporting local hunters or community run food programs that are already deemed effective by Inuit communities.

Nutrition North cannot be expected to meet all the requirements of Inuit peoples' food needs, but it can be expected to do better than its current form. When Nutrition North replaced the Food Mail Program in 2011, it replaced many aspects of programming that were well suited to Inuit communities such as the subsidization of non-food items that Inuit need for harvesting country food. This has created barriers for meeting food needs when items that are needed for harvesting country food are inaccessible due to high costs. Inuit communities have been asking for the return of these items to the eligible subsidy list since the transition from the Food Mail Program to Nutrition North.[176] In Kugaaruk, I heard many elders say that they liked country food because it was free and they just had to go out on the land to get some, which was better than spending hundreds of dollars for a bag or two of groceries at the Co-op. But in reality, country food is not free when you factor in the cost of keeping snow machines in working condition, gas and oil in the tanks, and bullets in guns. Yet, if Nutrition North or other federal food programming incorporated these items into their subsidy lists, country food would be a very affordable and nutritious alternative to imported Southern beef, chicken, or pork. And a caribou would go further in an Inuit community than a single roast beef. Subsidizing non-food items goes beyond just providing food, it provides wages for hunters, supports knowledge transmission, and results in the continuity of Inuit laws.

In Nunavut, food security is made possible by networks of relationships among Inuit who share country food. Nutrition North programming needs to complement this already existing system in order to support access to nutritious Northern country foods. Programming that meets the specific needs of Inuit communities will result in more long term benefits than *just* lowering

[176] Bruce Stanton, *From Food Mail to Nutrition North Canada: Report of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development*. Ottawa: Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development (2011): 23.

the prices on select foods in stores. If Inuit demands for the subsidization of items such as fuel, ammunition, and equipment were met, despite being non-food items, their availability would result in greater access to country food. Moreover, supporting hunting and fishing in communities maintains traditional ecological knowledge, supports intergenerational knowledge transmission between elders and youth, supports local economies, and can provide savings for families who do not want to rely on purchasing imported meat for the bulk of their diets. Most importantly, it puts fish on the floor, caribou in hungry bellies, nutrients in bodies and bones, and seal in the school's soup.

Nutrition North has been under fire by Northerners, particularly through the End the Price Hike campaign.[177] The End the Price Hike campaign was created in partnership with the Feeding My Family group and was designed to raise awareness about the high cost of food in the North, and to lobby politicians for change because "the current national strategy simply isn't working."[178] The campaign began at a critical time when the federal government was undergoing transition from a Conservative majority to a Liberal majority. Mere months after the election of a Liberal majority government in 2015, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada announced that it would be conducting Nutrition North Canada Engagement 2016 beginning on May 30th, 2016 and running until December 9th, 2016 to seek input from "community members and other stakeholders on how the program can be more transparent, cost-effective, and culturally appropriate in the face of growing demand for healthy food in the North."[179] Nutrition North's engagement session in Kugaaruk took place on November 3rd, 2016. The community identified several priorities and key issues that they wish to see reflected in the Nutrition North program,

[177] "End the Price Hike," accessed January 20, 2017, http://endthepricehike.ca.
[178] Ibid.
[179] "Nutrition North Canada Engagement 2016," Nutrition North Canada, accessed December 31, 2016, http://www.nutritionnorthcanada.gc.ca/eng/1464190223830/1464190397132.

including: greater subsidies of staple foods; subsidies of family necessities such as infant formula; regional adjustments to reflect the needs of each community; the need to ensure Nutrition North's programming complements other forms of programming; and promotion of access to country foods by supporting local hunters through subsidies of supplies required for hunting such as ammunition, fuel, and equipment.[180] It is no surprise that these priorities are mirrored in other community engagement sessions across the North.[181]

Throughout my own work in Kugaaruk, I consistently heard that retail food prices needed to be lower. But I also heard that it was not all that was needed. Kugaaruk community members work hard to ensure the community has much needed services such as a food bank, an elder's lunch, a school breakfast and lunch program, a soup kitchen, and many other services that meet needs that are unmet by Nutrition North. It is also important to note that school breakfast and lunch programs are run by the Government of Nunavut and is an example of successful Inuit centred programming. These programs provide essential services that will still be needed in communities, even if prices are lowered. Lower prices will not remedy the need for food sharing, social opportunities for elders, or diversifying diets of students while ensuring they have the fuel to make it through a day of learning. Community programs are also essential because they embody and reflect Inuit values, which drastically differs from individualism and market access promoted through federal food policy.

Inuit who are participating in these engagement sessions have no shortage of innovative ideas of what will work for their communities. Along with many communities who participated

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[180] "What We Heard About Nutrition North Canada," *Nutrition North Canada*, accessed December 31, 2016, http://www.nutritionnorthcanada.gc.ca/eng/1465233643322/1465234133331#chp2_8.

[181] The notes from the engagement session in Iqaluit on September 26, 2016 include recommendations that are distinct from those suggested in Kugaaruk; however, it includes the recommendation to tailor the food eligibility list for each community because food preferences in Iqaluit likely differ from those in smaller communities.

in the Nutrition North engagement sessions I will be curious to see whether the federal government embraces community input for a program that extends beyond the grocery store or falls back on the status quo that only subsidizes the cost of shipping and stocking perishable foods. If the federal government is serious about revitalizing food policy, we should all be asking the following: how can the federal government be held to account to ensure the needs of Northern communities are met by Nutrition North? Is Nutrition North erasing and denying Inuit laws, languages, and livelihoods in relation to food? And perhaps most importantly, is Nutrition North bringing Inuit together to eat together, share together, and survive together; or is it actually serving to further entrench food insecurity through the distribution of precarity, while limiting food sharing among community?

Chapter Four: Connection and Char: Accounting for Community Food Needs in Kugaaruk, Nunavut

Want to yap about not hunting seals? Feed us instead. Organic only please.
Kugaaruk Food Bank
P.O. Box 63
Kugaaruk, NU,
CANADA X0B 1K0[182]

Introduction

I spent nearly a year researching food insecurity in the North, and Inuit food sharing practices before going to Kugaaruk to do my research. I thought that all of the government policy, grey literature, and food insecurity research that I read could prepare me for, or reveal an accurate portrait of food insecurity in the North. Reading about food insecurity in the North merely prepared me to expect to pay exorbitant prices for food, and to expect produce to be less fresh than what I am used to in Southern grocery stores. It did not prepare me the sheer lack of food options, the amount of expired food still on shelves, or the empty shelves that resulted from delayed shipments. It was not until I was in Kugaaruk, with empty Co-op shelves, without the foods I needed to keep me healthy, and the ability to see the on the ground complexities of food sharing and food insecurity that I was able to begin to have even a remote understanding of what it means to be food insecure in Kugaaruk. Living in Kugaaruk for a short period provided me with the opportunity to experience the failures of federal food policy, witness the multitude of obstacles locals face in accessing food, the complex strategies used to meet food needs, and the endurance of sharing as a practice to mitigate food insecurity. It is my hope that my thesis, and this chapter in particular, can provide a deeper understanding of food insecurity in the North that is accountable to the Kugaaruk community members who have informed this research. Most

[182] Tanya Tagaq, Tweet, November 3, 2016, https://twitter.com/tagaq/status/794374075120570368.

importantly, I hope that it can honour the women who participated in my focus group who want Southerners to "see the North a lot better."[183]

E: They got to see the North a lot better.
E: Let the government see the North, how it been. See it for themself. Instead of . . .
MA: Instead of just sitting.
E: Just sitting in their office and assuming that we're okay.
MA: They can come here and see what's really happening. Our community.
L: Reading it in a book is totally different from seeing it with your eyes.
E: They got to see. Not just for few hours. They gotta ask questions.
E: Then they gonna see angry peoples.

In addition to providing a case study of experiences on food insecurity in Kugaaruk, this chapter, and the people of Kugaaruk, speak to the complexities of attaining food security in the North. I have structured this chapter into several subsections that reflect the themes and context laid out in the literature review such as sharing, vulnerability, accessing food, community strategies, and accounting for community needs. Building from the argument I make in the previous chapter that policy approaches to food insecurity must account for community needs, I centre the voices and values of those who were generous enough to share their experiences and knowledge with me. I argue that the community of Kugaaruk has a thriving community economy based in sharing. If the government is serious about helping reduce rates of food insecurity in Nunavut, they need to support the existing community capacities, such as the food bank and Hunters and Trappers Organization, that are based on Kugaaruk values of sharing to help people meet their food needs.

Sharing as Tradition, Law, Culture, and Ontology

In Kugaaruk both elders and younger people are adamant about the necessity of continuing the traditional practice of sharing. Anthropologist Edmund Searles has argued that for Inuit sharing food demarcates a boundary between Inuit and non-Inuit because "those who share Inuit food with family, friends, and others in need are not just practicing tradition; they reify a

[183] Erin (name changed), in discussion with the author, May 2016.

cultural boundary that distinguishes Inuit from non-Inuit culture."[184] I asked Katherina Qirngnuq, an elder and an avid fisher, how she felt about being able to share food with other people and she said, "[it] doesn't make me feel any different cause it's our tradition lifestyle. It's been passed from generations to generations. Like if I hear somebody out there, the kids are hungry, I would be glad to give what they need. . . Because Inuit, like I said, traditional lifestyle is our thing. It's a must thing."[185] Qirngnuq illustrated this further: "like, come early October one of the first people that go to Kellett River come back with fish, a close relative or not, if they see enough fish on the sled, you're welcome to grab one fish. Without asking. That's their traditional lifestyle. That would be called *ikupik*.[186] You don't even have to ask the man that had just gone home from fishing, or the wife, a person could just take one fish and take it home."[187] I asked Qirngnuq if she thinks sharing is still as important today as it was in the past, especially with rising food prices and costs associated with getting on the land, and she maintained that "it is very, still very important. It better keep on while I'm still along . . . I have to pass that on to my kids. To make sure that Inuit traditional style doesn't die."[188]

Sharing is still an important practice amongst community members, particularly with younger generations who rely on food sharing to meet their food needs, and who want to pass on the practice to their children and grandchildren. Joyce Nartok, a Community Liaison Officer for the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, is happy to pass on the importance of food sharing to her children and shared the story of her son's firsthand experience of sharing his first caribou:

> There's an old tradition where, when you're kid, if you get your first something you're to share with the elders. I had that experience my own. I was so proud when I was a kid.

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[184] Edmund Searles, "To Sell or Not to Sell: Country Food Markets and Inuit Identity in Nunavut," Food and Foodways Vol. 24, No. 3-4 (2016): 201.
[185] Katherina Qirngnuq, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[186] Qirngnuq translated ikupik as meaning 'grab a fish' in Inuktitut.
[187] Ibid.
[188] Ibid.

> Everybody was saying how they really loved my food. I was able to share with my family and even with my boy who had his first caribou, we couldn't, me and his dad couldn't have any of the meat. We're only allowed the eyes . . . It was funny cause my son, he was all excited, happy, he's like mom could you make me caribou, *uuruk,*[189] and I said yes. But he's named after my grandfather so we brought all the meat there, the whole caribou, and he said he's to share it amongst with the elders. And . . . he was . . . smaller so he didn't get it at the time, but we kept telling him that so that he could have more blessings for caribous. But . . . we gave all of the caribou meat to all elders in the community and all we were left with was the caribou eyes. And I couldn't even cook him his catch . . . But yeah, always proud to give to give to my family and friends and people in the community who are in need.[190]

Nartok's commitment to continuing sharing practices in her family by ensuring the younger generations are able to have the same experiences of sharing that she was raised with is a crucial component of Inuit peoples being able to meet their food needs in the future. Being able to go on the land with elders not only provides learning opportunities, it provides an essential source of food as well.

The importance of food sharing goes beyond maintaining important cultural practices, it is also a significant source nutritional needs for Inuit in need of food. Many people I spoke with had strong feelings about the importance of being able to share with others if you are able to, in order to ensure no one goes hungry. Tom Kayaitok, an elder and hunter, told me:

> We try to give county food out to poorer people. Like people that don't have a hunter, or people that cannot go out and hunt themself, hunt for themselfs. Those kind of people we try to help more, and give them food . . . We been told from elders, we been told to share to other people. And they always tell us that long as you have enough food for you family, share to other people. They need food, they got to eat to stay alive, to live. There is a word in Inuktitut for that . . . *Tunikirok*. Giving . . . *Tunihirok* means like, share . . . we were always told to give to other people that whatever food they need. We were taught this way. We were taught, long as we have enough food, share you food to other poorer people that needs it.[191]

[189] *Uuruk* was translated by Nartok as meaning boiled caribou.
[190] Joyce Nartok, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[191] Tom Kayaitok, in conversation with the author, May 2016.

In a conversation with Lutgarde Angutingunirk, the Vice-Principal for the Kugaardjuq School, I asked her to describe how she feels about being able to share food with others, to which she replied:

> If I eat by myself, I don't think I would feel great. I don't think that's a good, that's not Inuit *maligait* that we, we always have to share . . . when I got married to my husband, he's got twelve or thirteen siblings, he said no matter what, the food is very small country food, his mum would share it amongst all the siblings. At least just one bite. She said, that's how he was raised. Me, I grew up with only two sisters and one brother so I had a lot when I was growing up, but my husband didn't. He had to share a lot. I shared but, if I don't share . . . I would be like, dark. In the darkness.[192]

So not only is sharing necessary for people to meet their food needs, it is an essential component of being Inuk for those who are doing the sharing.

Food sharing in Kugaaruk is not just a common practice, it is an Inuit law. It is a law based on survival, protection of land and animals, good relations, identity, and ontology. Relationality that is expressed through the practice of sharing is a key component of Inuit ontology, or how Inuit theorize being Inuk, which is further reflected in the values of *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* (IQ). The emergence of IQ post-Nunavut Land Claims Agreement was a framework meant to express the cultural expectations and guiding principle(s) of the Government of Nunavut.[193] However, one issue of concern with the uptake of IQ — is that it is considered to be knowledge of traditions, of the past. George Wenzel notes that in a commentary by J. Arnakak in a 2000 issue of Nunatsiaq News, IQ was described as possessing a temporal sweep that is "a 'living technology' through which Inuit 'thoughts and actions,' 'tasks and resources,' 'family and society' are organized."[194] Frank James Tester and Peter Irniq reflected

[192] Lutgarde Angutingunirk, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[193] George W. Wenzel, "From TEK to IQ: *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and Inuit Cultural Ecology," *Arctic Anthropology*, Vol. 41, No. 2 (2004): 238-9.
[194] Wenzel, "From TEK to IQ," 242.

on Peter Usher's four categorizations of TEK, noting that despite the label TEK, Usher's definition does not limit knowledge to that which is traditional. Usher's four components are:

> (1) factual/ rational knowledge about the environment, (2) factual knowledge about past and current use of the environment, (3) culturally based values statements about how things should be and what is fitting and proper to do, and finally (4) culturally based cosmology — the foundation of the knowledge system — by which information derived from observation, experience, and instruction is organized to provide explanations and guidance.[195]

The above elements that are rooted in tradition, yet reflect contemporary insights and practice. Food sharing can span all of these categories, some of which will be elucidated below from excerpts of conversations with Kugaaruk elders.

The importance of IQ as a concept, and as a way of relating that has concrete outcomes in the world should be a necessary consideration for any policy impacting Inuit. Tester and Irniq note that given the magnitude of issues facing Canadians (one that they name is climate change), the articulation of IQ as a concept "[raises] fundamental questions about how human beings relate to nature, and the norms, practices, sensibilities, and respect that constitute that relationship, has a place in contemporary Canadian and international debates about how to live on a planet of limited means."[196] I find this to be especially pertinent when considering food insecurity. Tester and Irniq argue that "a definition reflecting an Inuit worldview has obvious and positive implications for the everyday life and health of Inuit communities. These implications include empathetic, conscious, and informed relations among people, and roles and responsibilities for elders, youth, and parents. There are implications for an ethic of sharing, of caring, and of respect for the autonomy of individuals."[197] An ethic that may emerge from IQ values would produce inevitably better food policy to help Inuit meet their food needs.

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[195] Frank James Tester and Peter Irniq, "*Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*: Social History, Politics and the Practice of Resistance," *Arctic*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (2008): 56.
[196] Tester and Irniq, "*Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*," 58.
[197] Ibid., 58.

Food sharing is an important cultural practice for Inuit that ensures access to life sustaining nutrients, strengthens relational bonds, and also cares for the environment and animals that are an integral component of the food being shared in many communities. Bartholemy Nirlungayuk is an elder, hunter, and Co-op board member. Assisted by Tom Kayaitok as an interpreter, we spoke about the importance of food and sharing in Inuit communities, and the care and rules that shape these practices. He relayed that what he was told by his grandfather was that, "you don't waste food. And if you don't look after food, your family's gonna be hungry in the future. . . so it's more like, law. A *maligait*."[198] He was also told that, "if you waste food and just leave food out on the land somewhere . . . you gonna remember that when you get hungry. When you get really hungry you gonna remember that you just left, you just throw away food."[199] Nirlungayuk speaks to the complexities behind food sharing laws. He indicates that you need to care for the animals and land that provides food which can be achieved by not wasting food or leaving food to rot on the land; the land must be kept clean so animals will keep returning. Otherwise, there can be a risk of consequences, and hunger, in the future.

Rules and laws surrounding food are long standing traditions that are still practiced today, despite increasing pressures on Inuit lifestyles such as settlement, imported food, and loss of cultural knowledge. I recognize the complexities of framing sharing as a 'tradition,' yet I do so at the direction of my research partners who embrace the term to constitute their experiences. I also turn to Tester and Irniq who note that "the use of the term 'traditional' in concepts like TEK, or the translation of IQ, is problematic. It suggests that contemporary insights—which may be a combination of insights handed down from generation to generation and new knowledge acquired by people who study, travel, and interact with a contemporary world—may not be

[198] Bartholemy Nirlungayuk, in discussion with the author and interpreted by Tom Kayaitok, May 2016.
[199] Ibid.

considered IK."[200] Moreover, Tester and Irniq argue that "the term 'traditional' can therefore generate the idea that IK, and IQ, are classic "museum pieces" with some limited use in completing what is otherwise scientific knowledge."[201] It is important that despite the moniker of 'tradition' Inuit knowledge is not relegated to either 1) a position of not being considered 'Indigenous knowledge' because it is too contemporary, or 2) being useful only in a museum because it is no longer practiced or relevant. Despite the complexities of the use of the term 'traditional,' I do so at the direction of my research partners, and those who have set precedent for identify Inuit traditional knowledge and laws as a dynamic and *living* technology and praxis.[202]

Despite the strong commitment in Kugaaruk to maintain traditions, there are many obstacles people come up against in the pursuit of traditional practices such as sharing. People from younger generations may not have access to an elder to go on the land with, which results in the loss of learning opportunities, and the loss of a significant food source when they are unable to hunt. In addition, the cost of having a snow machine to access the land and food is a significant cost that many people cannot afford at all, or they have trouble maintaining their snow machine due to the high cost of gas, oil, and parts. The common obstacles people face in being able to maintain traditional practices speak to the complexity and inaccuracy of thinking of these practices within a traditional/modern binary. Geographer Nicole Gombay's work in Nunavik engages with the complexities of food, place, and politics. Gombay considers the

[200] Tester and Irniq, "*Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*," 56. TEK refers to traditional ecological knowledge, and IK refers to Indigenous knowledge. Both terms are often used in co-management processes, and government policy.
[201] Tester and Irniq, "*Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*," 56.
[202] Wenzel, "From TEK to IQ," 242. Wenzel, "From TEK to IQ," 242. Zoe S. C. Todd, "'You Never Go Hungry': Fish Pluralities, Human-Fish Relationships, Indigenous Legal Orders and Colonialism in Paulatuuq, Canada" (dissertation, University of Aberdeen, 2016), 65.

"realities of peoples who must shift amongst identities as their world operates at different scales that have rendered their circumstances increasingly more multifaceted . . . [and] for whom such juxtapositions and transformations appear in new and capricious ways that are often not of their own choosing."[203] It is generative, and necessary, to recognize the fluidity of traditions such as food sharing that now exist in a reality that calls for a shift in the types of food that are shared (store bought and country food), methods of sharing (over radio waves or on the land together), or modes of access (credit card at the local Co-op, snow machines, or a dog team).

Theoretical Framework

I was recently sharing an overview of my research in a workshop and a colleague asked me how I am able to contend with and account for the differences in worldview between Inuit and the predominately white feminist theorists I engage with. To put it succinctly, I do so very carefully. I have very thoughtfully and deliberately put Inuit theories and knowledge into conversation with feminist theorists when there have been instances of resonance between the two, and when the two have traversed seemingly disparate discourses. The expression of Inuit values, particularly as it occurs through sharing practices, resonates with understandings of vulnerability and relationality by feminist theorists. However, Inuit values also extend to their relations with non-humans as well, particularly through the practice of Inuit law when harvesting animals for food. I have strategically introduced these two vastly different ways of knowing into conversation with the goal of a mutually enriching result of cross pollination. This is not to say that Inuit have something to learn from feminist theorists, but to suggest that when used in conjunction with Inuit knowledge, feminist theory can be employed to produce generative research outcomes and policy recommendations.

[203] Nicole Gombay, "Shifting Identities in a Shifting World: Food, Place, Community, and the Politics of Scale in an Inuit Settlement," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, vol. 23, (2005): 417-418.

It is hard to research food insecurity from a place of positivity without being constrained and absorbed by the sheer injustice and violence that is imposed on food insecure peoples. I quickly discovered that being solely invested in outrage at the systems that sustain such processes would not take me far with my research. It is not possible or ethical to insist on a conversation that single-mindedly maintains that through food policy, the state damages Indigenous peoples beyond repair, when this is not the conversation that food insecure communities are wanting to have.[204] Instead, in taking direction from community members and centring my research on Inuit values that inform the multitude of ways in which the community works to reduce food insecurity, my research shifted to a much more generative approach that was still able to acknowledge injustice without having it dominate the conversation and overpower the dedicated and productive efforts of the community.

I consider the most significant rationale for taking on the task of bringing feminist theories into conversation with Inuit for the purposes of my research is to argue for a better standard of care in research, policy, and academic critique. I have had many conversations with Indigenous Studies and feminist theorist Kim TallBear as a student taking her courses about the challenges and obligations researchers face when 'studying up' or critically interrogating particular knowledges and technologies. In a contribution to *Critical Indigenous Studies: Engagements in First World Locations* TallBear succinctly and poignantly credits the impact of a feminist ethic on how she has carried out her own research, relaying:

> I was learning that we needed to care for our subjects . . . that intellectual and ethical benefits result when we are invested in the knowledges and technologies we critique, when we realize the shortcomings of critique for critique's sake. This is why anger and reaction to injustice can take us only so far. Sometimes, we must not just study worlds, but we must live and

[204] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume I: An Introduction*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1990) 139.

> work there, participate in everyday technical conversations, socialize there. We can care while we challenge. We can critique toward the end of making lives and institutions better.[205]

I have purposefully pursued the creation of research that would interrogate the colonial realities that sustain food insecurity amongst Indigenous and Inuit populations. I have also recognized that I must maintain some semblance of investment in the institutions and policies that I was critiquing because my research partners are invested in the improvement of these institutions and policies. For instance, improving federal food policies does not equate to Indigenous sovereignty or decolonization, but it could equate to better material realities for Inuit. Therefor, I am invested in seeing Nutrition North undergo drastic change to ensure Inuit food needs are met. In doing so, I have been able to provide a nuanced understanding of not only how Inuit food sharing practices are informed by a particular set of values, but how the operation of such values should be reflected in food policies in order to provide a more accountable and effective approach to mitigate food insecurity in Kugaaruk.

I met Margaret Suvissak when she was an employee at the Kugaardjuq School, and I have read the transcripts from our conversation more times than I can count, and every time that I do I am incredibly moved by the words she shared with me. When she was reflecting on the rising cost of food she commented that it was like they are entertaining the people of Kugaaruk, and the people are just watching and thinking oh god, why are they doing this to us. I asked if she thought the government could be doing more to help, to which she responded that if they have a heart, if they understand, if they listen, and if they visualize it. If they put Kugaaruk under their wings, Kugaaruk could do the same for them, easy as that. I asked what she meant by putting them under their wings and she said that Inuit like to help — togetherness has been in

[205] Kim TallBear, "Dear Indigenous Studies, It's Not Me, It's You: Why I Left and What Needs to Change," in *Critical Indigenous Studies: Engagements in First World Locations*, ed. Aileen Moreton-Robinson (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2016), 74.

their traditions for a very long time before they became a territory.[206] Embracing a similar approach to the necessity of relations, feminist economic geographers J.K. Gibson-Graham poignantly state that "to explicitly theorize the sociality of all relations is . . . to refuse to suppress the togetherness implied in any singularity, any identity or concept of Being."[207] Gibson-Graham argues that such a refusal might initiate a discourse of economy that would necessitate "encapsulating the quintessentially ethical concern at the heart of 'society' — the question of how to live together."[208] If I have learned anything from the people of Kugaaruk, it is that they as a community know how to live together. But of course, that was never the question. Rather, my research has grappled with the question of how can settler Canadians better support the community of Kugaaruk in the work that they do to live, survive, and thrive together? And how can the strains put on these processes through federal policies, denial of dependency, and refusal of vulnerability be mitigated?

Sharing Vulnerability

The term vulnerability generally denotes a state of liability to harm and thus signifies an unfavourable, or detrimental position to be in. However, through my research of feminist theories of vulnerability I have come to see vulnerability as a positive trait. Unfortunately, approaches to food security via policy generally require the "pursuit of invulnerability and denials of dependency, interconnection, and relationality [that] constitute the conditions for oppression, marginalization, and injustice."[209] Yet, when vulnerability requires dependency, interconnection, and relationality it is not a detrimental position to be in when those traits support

[206] Margaret Suvissak, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[207] Gibson-Graham, *A Postcapitalist Politics*, 82.
[208] Ibid., 82.
[209] Erinn Cunniff Gilson, "Vulnerability, Relationality, and Dependency: Feminist Conceptual Resources for Food Justice," *International Journal of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics,* Vol. 8, No. 2 (2015): 5.

survival rather than negate it. In Kugaaruk, sharing food is a practice that requires dependency, interconnection, and relationality. Rather than a detriment, these traits ensure people support each other in meeting their food needs and in fact, *without* dependency, interconnection, and relationality the people of Kugaaruk *would* be in a state liable to harm. Feminist theories of vulnerability resonate with Inuit ontology in that it carefully assesses how people relate to one another, and sets a standard for how it can be done best.

The act of sharing food is much more than just being able to meet the food needs of one person or family when they are food insecure. It establishes and strengthens relational networks in which people come to depend upon each other for mutual survival. Bernice Inaksajak, a young mother, articulated that when she or her kids have visitors, she makes sure they eat food if they have not eaten yet and that she likes to share food, even if it is just a little because later on when you have nothing, that person will help you back.[210] Bartholemy Nirlungayuk with Kayaitok as an interpreter relayed:

> Like for himself, he said he could survive. Even with all this high cost of food and because, he's not alone. He's got sons. He's got family. They always share together. But some other people out there, they have nothing. Even with their little kids, they have nothing. Those other one are really poor people. Still we're a poor people but we help each other. We survive . . . Like for himself, giving is good. It's good life, giving to other people. Because in the end, you get bigger awards in life. If you give, you are rewarded.[211]

Caring for others through the practice of sharing is necessary for not only living a good life, but for survival in the North. I spoke with Laura* (who wished to remain anonymous) about how she feels when she is able to share food with others, and she told me: "It does make me feel good knowing that somebody else's stomach is gonna be full, for that day. I know there's no

[210] Bernice Inaksajak, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[211] Bartholemy Nirlungayuk, in conversation with the author and interpreted by Tom Kayaitok, May 2016.

homelessness here that I know of, but they still go hungry."[212] Laura also told me that if she was not able to share food, she would feel badly but that she could "ask somebody else if they can help out too . . . that's all I can do."[213]

Sharing amongst family is the first priority for most people in Kugaaruk, but sharing with other community members who are not immediate family such as elders, single mothers, or families who do not have an active hunter in the family is important for many people in Kugaaruk. Vulnerability is expressed through dependency, interconnectedness, and relationality as a community. Sharing occurs at several levels, the individual, the familial, and the community. In my conversation with Lutgarde Angutingunirk, she spoke about the dynamics of sharing within your own family, and outside of the family as well:

> The ones I feed at my home, they're my responsibility. My grandkids, my kids, my kids are old now, they're adults. Some are working, some are not. I can deal with that. I make sure everybody's full before I eat. Because sometime I have lack of money cause I'm the only one working. I make sure all my grandkids, all my kids are full first and then I eat whatever's left. That's very important as a mum. But when you share with people out there that are not your family, like we're all related but we're not close family like a daughter or granddaughter or son. When you share, when you know you give them food, when they know that they got food in their stomach, their smile comes up. Big smile. And then they say thank you. They say thank you. And it makes you really proud, at least you did something good for somebody today. You do something good for everybody but, I mean everyday but, nothing like feeding somebody who's hungry . . . They gotta eat, kids gotta eat. The only way they can work at school is be full. Not full, but not hungry. That's the only way I know. Like, they got a big smile, makes you proud. Few times make me wanna like, emotional. But I just, just block it.[214]

Mary Aklah, a food bank committee member, also feels strongly about being able to ensure everybody has food to eat as well: "And like, I can't see anyone that I can't leave out. Cause the

[212] Laura (name changed), in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[213] Ibid.
[214] Lutgarde Angutingunirk, in conversation with the author, May 2016.

way I grew up, like from being hungry, and I don't want anybody to be hungry like. Even just little bit for them to have. I always feel great about it."[215]

In a conversation that I had with Laura, Erin, Mary Aklah, and Margaret Suvissak we spoke about what current programs in the community offer *other* than *just food*, and why that is important. Erin (who chose to remain anonymous) pointed out that the HTO "pays hunters, and it provides food for the community that needs that food."[216] The elder's lunch provides food for elders, but Erin also made it clear that it also gives them social time and "keeps them motivated to do other things, like doesn't keep them sitting at home being bored."[217] Laura also mentioned that the elders play games at the lunches and "when they win prizes it's usually food. At least the elder or the person have food to take home to their family."[218] Not only do community food programs offer food, they maintain community connections. Therefore, sharing practices that reflect vulnerability and Inuit ontology should be supported with more political and institutional support for community programs. Laura maintains that the community is dedicated to helping each other, telling me that "the community, they are trying to help others too as well. If they know that someone's struggling in at their home, they're always wanting to help somebody else. Cause you never know, it might be you someday, so they try and help each other . . . that's how the community keeps on going."[219] Commitment to community is one of Kugaaruk's greatest strengths. In fact, I will later address how community commitment to sharing is the community's greatest asset when it comes to current food security policy, and the best hope for future re-articulations of improved policy to meet the community's needs. State services have the

[215] Mary Aklah, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[216] Erin (name changed), in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[217] Erin (name changed), in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[218] Laura (name changed), in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[219] Laura (name changed), in conversation with the author, May 2016.

capacities to complement and support the practice of Inuit cultural and legal traditions such as sharing, however, as it stands they currently do more to restrict these practices than support them.

Sharing Strategically

The act of not sharing is not something that Inuit take lightly. Joyce Nartok explained that if she was unable to share she would feel helpless. We spoke at length about how important sharing is not only to her, but to the people of Kugaaruk. Her contributions to this thesis are invaluable and complement the intellectual conceptualizations that feminist theories of vulnerability make about the usefulness of vulnerability in issues of food justice. She explained:

> Just the other day, we had empty cupboards, fridge. But we did have caribou meat. And my husband make some *uuruk*, caribou, boiled caribou meat with some soup. But uh, we had a friend over. Even that was still not enough. But I can't, when someone's at my house they have to eat along. So I'm like, eat with us, even though I know there was hardly any. But in our old saying is, food tastes better when you eat with someone, and it tastes even better when there's hardly any, enough. Yeah, so it was really good cause it was not enough.[220]

I asked her if sharing is still an important practice in the community with the high price of food and she replied:

> Few years ago it was so important, sharing. Nowadays, um, it's not so much anymore. To me I think because of the prices being so high. I know that if one family get a whole lot of caribou, they gonna share, right. But if it's not so much, they're just gonna keep it to themself and kind of not share because they know that it's gonna be hard times I guess. Like, I find that a few years ago, you had more people sharing than you do now . . . I guess I would understand where they're coming from. Because of their, because of the price here. Yeah, I would understand that and be okay with it I guess.[221]

It is crucial to interrogate what is behind the challenge to sharing as a practice. It is not a lack of care, or desire to abandon tradition. It is however the culmination of a number of forces that

[220] Joyce Nartok, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[221] Joyce Nartok, in conversation with the author, May 2016.

make life nearly impossible for an individual, let alone an individual who wants to care for a number of relations.

The topic of not sharing generated a heated response with the people I had conversations with in Kugaaruk. The thought of people not sharing is one that leads to hurt, anger, and sadness by those who have lived their entire lives practicing sharing. Especially because the prospect of not sharing poses a potential threat to well established community dependency and interconnectedness that is grounded in the communities' capacities to meet their food needs. Bernice Inaksajak reflected on this saying that it is better to share because we are all humans, but that some people are stingy. Inaksajak does not like the kind of people who do not share but she does not say anything.[222] Donna (who chose to remain anonymous) added to this when she reflected on her experiences: "They sometimes say like, they get annoyed or they get mad, or they don't wanna give. Just cause like, I don't know if, just because we ask or just because we don't have a job. Sometimes it gets hard to ask. Cause they think we won't give it back in return . . . it just gets hard to ask sometimes. But when somebody else ask if we got it, we do give."[223] In a conversation about the consequences of not sharing food Laura commented, "I don't want to know them . . . I'm sure they have their own reasons to be that way. They might of grow up poor, and they don't want to feel that way, I don't know. But they have their own reasons. You can't really judge a person by how they are. So, I don't know."[224] No one wants to be in the position of always needing to be shared with, or being in the position of not being able to reciprocate sharing.

[222] Bernice Inaksajak, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[223] Donna (name changed), in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[224] Laura (name changed), in conversation with author, May 2016.

The reality for most Inuit in Kugaaruk today is that they are constantly up against forces that restrict and impede their ability to continue food sharing. A multitude of factors may contribute to not being able to share, including not having a job, personal reasons such as wanting to hoard food in fear of hunger, the high cost of food in the community, or just not being able to share as widely as someone may like to because of external pressures and limited resources to do so. Lutgarde Angutingunirk talked about the difficulties of being able to manage sharing, alongside feeding her own family: "I always leave enough food for my family to make sure they're gonna eat next week, tomorrow. I manage my food. I manage my budget. . . I go pay cheque to pay cheque just with food. . . And I'm the only one that's working."[225] Even those who have good, well paying jobs are still put in the position of struggling to feed their families and have enough to share because of the high cost of food. Mary Aklah agrees:

> I don't know how to say no. My husband always say, our kids need it. Like he tries to explain it to me but me, I got a big heart for everybody. I treat them everybody same. Like it's hard to see them be hungry. Cause I can't say no. But slowly this year I'm starting to say no, cause I can't afford anything at the Co-op and my husband and I are not working anymore. It's really hard now. . . I try not to, but it really hurts me inside, but I got to look after my kids and my grandkids. That they always hungry too.[226]

In my conversation with Rosa Nirlungayuk, a single mother, she also highlighted how hard it is to share even amongst family when ability to access food is so limited. She commented that, "It's kinda hard to share right now. It's too high, you know. I love to share but, if there's leftover, yeah I'll give them to my uncle or my cousin . . . they're living alone . . . there leftover, I'll tell my kids to go bring them to their uncle."[227] Being in the position of not being able to share food is lamentable for the person who wants to be able to share. The person who requires food to be shared is in a position of food insecurity that is further exacerbated by the fact that even a

[225] Lutgarde Angutingunirk, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[226] Mary Aklah, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[227] Rosa Nirlungayuk, in conversation with the author, May 2016.

combination of several services available in Kugaaruk meant to aid food insecurity are insufficient enough to actually do so.

I had a conversation with Joanne Ruben, a mother and government employee, about how it is hard to share at times, especially if you want to ensure your own kids are not going to go hungry. However, she told me that sharing is still very important, explaining:

> Cause from back then to right now, it's a lot different. Like back then they, they wouldn't ask for anything back even if you give country food or store bought food, you just give them. But now, they're selling. Even meat, selling the meat by local radio and that's not right for me. . . One time I was visiting over in Gjoa Haven, elderly lady was going by radio and asking for at least a caribou rib, but she doesn't have money and she said that if she gets her old age pension she can pay for that meat. I didn't feel comfortable with that. That's really disturbing to hear. . . That's, that's not right. Cause in those days, nobody ask for something back. Even if they gave them country food or store bought food.[228]

Ruben makes an important insight here. The idea of selling country food to those in need, instead of sharing food, can produce a visceral reaction amongst Inuit. Ruben was disturbed when she heard an elder who was clearly in need of food offering to pay for the meat. Gombay speaks to why this reaction is so strong in her article "Community, Obligation, and Food: Lessons from the Moral Geography of Inuit." Gombay notes that:

> Again and again, as I asked people what they thought about selling country food . . . people insisted that such behaviour was not permissible; food should be shared. Such sharing seemed to be an important constituent of Inuit life in society and was linked to far larger ideas about community. In the eyes of many people to whom I spoke, the sharing of food was both a manifestation of, and a way of sustaining, an Inuit sense of community.[229]

Gombay notes that this commitment to sharing is grounded in peoples' dependency on others, which in a sense, establishes an insurance policy to get them through times of need. But more importantly, "Inuit are aware that such sharing is an expected part of what it means to live in community, and they try hard to ensure that the practice is maintained. To do otherwise would be

[228] Joanne Ruben, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[229] Nicole Gombay, "Community, Obligation, and Food: Lessons from the Moral Geography of Inuit," *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography*, 92.3 (2010): 237.

to repudiate what it means not only to be a member of community, but to be an Inuk."[230] If people are failing to practice sharing and accepting money for food, like the example Ruben shared, they are essentially shirking their responsibilities as an Inuk, and their role in the community.

When I think of the material realities that the people of Kugaaruk are up against, I think of my conversations with Margaret Suvissak. Suvissak spoke so poignantly, especially as the discussion related to the limitations of sharing. Suvissak shared that growing up in poverty she learned to sometimes not eat for a day or two, to make sure others had food. I asked her what she thought of people who kept food for themselves instead of sharing with others and without anger or resentment, she expressed that while part of her thought they would be selfish, another part of her thought they were smart to keep the food to themselves so they would not have to go hungry.[231] What forces make these hard decisions a reality? And what needs to change to ensure approaches to mitigating food insecurity can shift to focus on how Inuit can best feed the ones they care for?

Restricted Access

Nutrition North is a program that is meant to be a long term strategy for dealing with food insecurity in the North. Nutrition North has been in effect since 2011, and its predecessor, Food Mail, provided subsidized food shipping programming since the 1960s.[232] Food Mail operated as a program that provided retailers, or individual consumers, who had a contract with

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[230] Gombay, "Community, Obligation, and Food," 241.
[231] Margaret Suvissak, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[232] Kristin Burnett, Kristin, Kelly Skinner, and Joseph LeBlanc, "From Food Mail to Nutrition North Canada: Reconsidering Federal Food Subsidy Programs for Northern Ontario," *Canadian Food Studies,* Vol. 2 No. 1 (2015): 144. "Food Mail Program," *Canada Post,* accessed 1 April 2016, https://www.canadapost.ca/cpo/mc/aboutus/community/foodmailprogram.jsf.

Canada Post to receive eligible products at a subsidized shipping rate.[233] Nutrition North differs in that it offers a point of sale retailer subsidy on nutrition, perishable foods. The change in programming resulted in a drastic change of eligible items for subsidy. Nutrition North excludes non-food items from subsidy such as snowmobile parts and hunting supplies, which are required to maintain food harvesting and sharing practices.[234] Unfortunately, during my time in Kugaaruk, it became evident that for community members Nutrition North seemed to be miscommunicated, and therefore the program was not as effective as it could be. Several people were unsure of why particular items received subsidy and not others. For example, frozen produce such as mixed vegetables may be available in five or six different varieties in the Co-op, but only a couple may be subsidized. Several people were also baffled that often times only the Co-op brand items were subsidized, and not name brand, despite Co-op brand being more expensive than name brand at times. In addition to these concerns, I often heard that the items that are subsidized are out of the price range for most families and it makes more sense to buy staples like rice or flour that will go further than fresh produce for feeding their families.

Nutrition North has undergone extensive critique due to concerns of accountability, compliance, and transparency. Anthropologist Tracey Galloway conducted an extensive review of the program in her article, "Canada's Northern Food Subsidy *Nutrition North Canada*: A Comprehensive Program Evaluation."[235] Galloway exposes several flaws with the program, one being that subsidies are allocated on a per kilogram basis with foods divided into a higher "Level

[233] Bruce Stanton, *From Food Mail to Nutrition North Canada: Report of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development,* Ottawa: Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development (2011): 8-9.
[234] Stanton, *From Food Mail to Nutrition North*, 1.
[235] Tracey Galloway, "Canada's Northern Food Subsidy *Nutrition North Canada*: A Comprehensive Program Evaluation," International Journal of Circumpolar Health, Vol. 76, No. 1 (2017): 1-19.

1" subsidy bracket, and a lower "Level 2" subsidy bracket.[236] Nutrition North indicates that the rates are reviewed periodically, and food prices are used to inform adjustment to subsidy rates to ensure equitable subsidization across the North. However, Galloway notes that "despite these statements, subsidy rates have not altered since they were introduced in 2011, nor is there publicly-available evidence of regular review of subsidy rates or response to changing conditions in freight or fuel costs."[237] Even more concerning is that Nutrition North claims retailers who receive payment under the subsidy are subject "to periodic third-party compliance reviews" with the original intent of monitoring to "conduct a biennial audit of each retailer who received more than 1% of the subsidy."[238] Galloway notes that the intent was reflected in early stages of programming: "there were seven compliance audits conducted in 2011-12 and seven more conducted in 2012-13. Since that time, there have only been four additional compliance reports conducted, in 2013-14."[239] Most troubling is that the Auditor General of Canada noted that Nutrition North "also has not required that compliance reviews of northern retailers include analysis of profit margins in order to verify that the full subsidy is being passed on."[240] This reflects a concern that I heard time and time again in Kugaaruk. Many people could absolutely not believe that they paid such an exorbitant price for an item that was supposed to be subsidized. Ultimately, the current regulation of the program does not ensure the program is running with the necessary transparency required by the public.

The subsidization of nutritious and perishable foods by Nutrition North may seem like a good program in theory. Making nutritious foods more accessible through a subsidy is only

[236] Galloway, "Canada's Northern Food Subsidy," 6.
[237] Galloway, "Canada's Northern Food Subsidy," 4-5.
[238] Ibid., 10.
[239] Galloway, "Canada's Northern Food Subsidy," 10-11.
[240] Ibid., 16.

effective if the actual subsidized items are as affordable, accessible, and as practical as other food options. It is unreasonable to expect that community members, particularly young people without a hunter in the family, would choose to buy a small container of subsidized blueberries if they could get a large bag of flour to cook bannock for the same price. Erin put this succinctly when she explicated on the issues facing people in Kugaaruk who are trying to meet their food needs with a combination of country foods and store bought foods, while simultaneously using various avenues of access such as hunting, the Co-op, and sharing:

> Well it's, it's still expensive to go out hunting. And if you go, don't get anything, you don't get nothing. Same with um, trying to give them healthy food. The less healthy food are less expensive, that's why some peoples prefer to get unhealthy food. Better than that healthier food at the store. And there's some peoples don't even have anything to go out hunting with. And it's hard to ask for peoples that, if they don't have nothing, it's hard to ask from peoples.[241]

Nutrition North needs to be able to do better in meeting the multitude of needs facing Inuit communities.

Many critiques that I have heard in Kugaaruk, and in the summaries of the Nutrition North engagement session, speak to a desire for the return of elements of the Food Mail program. Lutgarde Angutingunirk spoke to me about how she thinks the government needs to do more about the high cost of food in Kugaaruk, she asserted:

> They're not. We need to do more. The government's gotta do more by Food Mail. That, and reduce freight from if you order, like here in our store our meat are sometimes not fresh, you could see it. If you go Yellowknife, or Edmonton, you see the meat, it's very look fresh. We got money to order. But the high cost of shipping it here, we need Food Mail, reduce the food mail costs of the freight to get them here.[242]

[241] Erin (name changed), in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[242] Lutgarde Angutingunirk, in conversation with the author, May 2016. Authors note: in this quote Lutgarde mentions sometimes not having fresh meat in Kugaaruk. She is referring to fresh frozen meat. Kugaaruk Co-op does not carry any fresh meat (other than processed deli meats).

While Lutgarde Angutingunirk specifically identified the desire for a return of the Food Mail program, others I spoke with, like Stephan Inaksajak, the mayor of Kugaaruk, identified the need for specific changes to the Nutrition North program that reflect aspects of the Food Mail program that were left behind when Nutrition North was introduced. He said:

> The way I look at that Nutrition North, it not really helping the community. Cause it's just certain food they'll help with putting the food down. But the majority of what the store gets, it's not getting subsidized. That's why the community is suffering from all the high prices of food . . . the way I look at it, if the government of Canada could help out more.[243]

Community members are well aware that Nutrition North programming is not as effective as it should be. Based on Galloway's analysis of Nutrition North, concerns about the freshness of food and the lack of subsidization are warranted.

It is not uncommon for the food that is meant to be made more accessible by Nutrition North to actually end up being unfit for consumption. I spoke with Dolorosa Nartok, an elder, and she told me, "like they were saying um, the grapes, apples, oranges, and all those were gonna get lowered . . . by the time they go here, they kinda really rotten. Like you should go to the Co-op and see!"[244] I did go and see, and she was right. I barely bought any fresh produce during my month long stay in Kugaaruk, save for a prepackaged salad, a bag of mixed apples and oranges, and some plums and bell peppers near the end of my stay when the produce selection increased exponentially. Laura expanded on this problem, revealing that "sometimes we have to wait for our charter for two weeks to get produces. And fruits or vegetables, by the time they come in, they're gonna be spoiled. They're gonna be mouldy."[245] I was in Kugaaruk during the shoulder season when weather tends to be unpredictable, which meant a lot of delayed food shipments when planes were not able to land. Galloway notes in her review of Nutrition North that "in

[243] Stephan Inaksajak, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[244] Dolorosa Nartok, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[245] Laura (name changed), in conversation with the author, May 2016.

winter, weather-related flight cancelations mean stores await re-supply for 2-3 week periods. From April to October, temperature fluctuations mean that frozen perishables often thaw en route, necessitating their disposal from risk of spoilage."[246] Unfortunately, Nutrition North deflects responsibility for these pitfalls, noting that "day-to-day retail operations are outside the scope of the program. Consumers are encouraged to engage local store management and raise with them issues that are within the retailer's purview, such as decisions to put food items on sale, remove food items from the shelf, and to discard such items."[247] The reality is, is that much of the produce that is sold in the North would never make it to the shelf in the South because produce of such poor quality would not sell.

If food is in stock, and fresh — not mouldy or rotten — there are still additional obstacles to overcome for that food to actually be accessible for many people, including cost and practicality. The Nunavut Food Price Survey conducted by the Nunavut Bureau of Statistics compares the pricing for a 24 select food item basket across Nunavut and in 2015-2016 Kugaaruk's basket cost an astounding $201.99, which is an average of 16.8% higher than the rest of the territory, making Kugaaruk the most expensive place to buy food in Nunavut.[248] It is

[246] Galloway, "Canada's Northern Food Subsidy," 13.
[247] Government of Canada, "Ask Us," *Nutrition North Canada*, accessed May 29 2017, http://www.nutritionnorthcanada.gc.ca/eng/1415636712544/1415636742096.
[248] Nunavut Bureau of Statistics, "Nunavut Food Price Survey, Comparison of 24 Select Food Items Basket, 2015-2016," *Prices*, accessed April 9, 2017, http://www.stats.gov.nu.ca/en/Economic%20prices.aspx. There is no southern equivalent of the 24 Select Food Items Basket to compare the Nunavut one to. The Nunavut Bureau of Statistics only compares the average cost of select items across three Nunavut regions to establish a Nunavut average, which is then compared with the Canada average for individual grocery items that are published by Statistics Canada. For instance, the Kitikmeot Average for 2.5kg of All Purpose White Flour is $13.99, the Nunavut average is $13.70, and the Canada average is $5.00. The complete itemized comparison can be found at: Nunavut Bureau of Statistics, "2016 Nunavut Food Price Survey, Comparison of Nunavut & Canada CPI Food Price Basket Items," *Prices*, accessed May 28, 2017, http://www.stats.gov.nu.ca/Publications/Historical/Prices/2016%20Nunavut%20Food%20Price%20Survey,%20Comparison%20of%20Nunavut%20&%20Canada%20CPI%20Food%Price%20Basket%20Items.xlsx

important to note that of the 24 items priced, many of the items are staples that are amongst the most affordable options to buy, such as soda crackers, macaroni and cheese dinner, white bread, rice, quick oatmeal, and white flour.[249] It is easy to imagine that more nutritious and perishable foods come at an even higher cost than the food basket priced above.

Many of the flaws associated with Nutrition North programming can be attributed to limited transparency, and limited accountability, which is often deflected onto retailers who are responsible for implementing the program. For instance, Nutrition North's consumers who are concerned about grocery costs are encouraged to contact their local retailer. If the consumer is not "satisfied with their response, you can contact the retailer's head office. If the head office is a co-operative store, another option may be to participate in the operation of the co-operative. . . For INAC's part, the department's role is to provide a subsidy to registered retailers to reduce the cost of food and then hold retailers accountable for fully passing on the subsidy to customers."[250] Unfortunately, as Galloway's extensive research on Nutrition North shows, retailers are *not* being held accountable. Consumers looking for answers to their concerns about the implementation of the program are merely deflected back to the source of their concern for answers. It is unacceptable that such a necessary program is so limited in transparency and accountability that it is ultimately operated at the predilection of individual retailers. I was able to experience first hand how the Co-op can operate at what is seemingly the managements' whim. When I returned to Kugaaruk in April 2017 after my initial visit in May 2016, I was in utter shock at the incomprehensible differences at the Co-op. I learned that the Co-op's management turned over in January of 2017, which resulted in a vastly different selection of food and some items being sold at half of the price they were selling for just a year earlier. If the

[249] Ibid.
[250] Government of Canada, "Ask Us," accessed May 29 2017.

price of food and the price of transportation has not drastically dropped, the only reasonable explanation is that previous management sought a much higher profit margin than necessary, which is absolutely unnecessary and reprehensible in a region that suffers from such extreme rates of food insecurity.

Obstacles to Tradition and Food

Obstacles that stand in the way of accessing food for many community members tend to be twofold in that they also serve as obstacles to practicing tradition. There are a multitude of factors that create obstacles for people in accessing food and practicing tradition. The push for Inuit to permanently live in settlements and organize life according to settler Canadian standards in the 1960s has had a lasting impact on life, and food security in the North. Inuit in the area of what is now Kugaaruk remained almost entirely migratory, only visiting the mission during holidays, until 1967 when the permanent settlement was built by the Canadian government with the help of the local co-operative.[251] Colonial disruptions including the encroachment of missions and creation of settlements have had long lasting impacts on Inuit life, particularly with the implementation of wage labour, southern education systems and the resulting impacts on hunting practices. For many people who have turned to wage labour, it is only possible to hunt as a part-time or weekend activity. Climate change, health of animal populations, and the high cost of transporting food and goods to Kugaaruk further compound the pre-existing complexities of meeting food needs.

It is difficult for people to attain food security in Kugaaruk when access to food is restricted through high food prices, poor quality food, and ineffective programming that really

[251] Father Franz Van de Velde O.M.I., Trinette S. Constandse-Westermann, Cornelius H. W. Remie, and Raymond R. Newell, "One Hundred and Fifteen Years of Arviliguarmiut Demography, Central Canadian Arctic," *Arctic Anthropology*, Vol. 30, No. 2., (1993): 5.

does not make nutritious foods more accessible. Laura explained the pressure associated with needing to care for so many people when Kugaaruk only has one store with high food prices:

> It gets frustrating sometimes. Cause it's not just for us that we're buying for. It's for both, both our family, my family, my husband's family. It's not even just that. It's people in the community. Like, most of what we buy, or one third of what we buy, it goes to the people who's not, who doesn't work. So, we still giving out to people. So it gets pretty frustrating and, what can we do? And this is our only store. It's very, very, it's very, very frustrating at times. . . And it's very hard.[252]

Not only is it frustrating to be spending alarming amounts of money for food at the only store available to the community, but if people want to feed their family with country food, they are still forced to the Co-op to purchase the necessary hunting supplies. The operation of the town today is all too reminiscent of an era when Hudson's Bay Company held a monopoly over the sale of goods in the North.

Country food is the food of choice for many community members because it is a healthy and nutritious food source and can be more affordable than imported Southern meat. However, it is not always more accessible. Laura and I had a discussion about how it is common to hear people refer to country food as being 'free' because you just need to go out on the land to get the food you need. Laura disagreed though, and said "if I wanted to go say this weekend, I plan on going for meat, country food, like caribou. I have to buy gas and that five gallons of gas will cost me little bit over thirty dollars. On top of that I still have to buy bullet, which I bought bullet last week for forty-five dollars. Just twenty bullets inside, forty-five dollars! And still I have to buy grub. And it's not cheap."[253] Unfortunately, for younger community members who may be out of work, or do not have a lot of capital to invest in hunting equipment, getting 'free' food from the land is not an option. Another concern that I have heard from elders is that even when younger

[252] Laura (name changed), in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[253] Laura (name changed), in conversation with the author, May 2016.

people are able to purchase a snow machine, because they are increasingly built to rely on electronic features, when they break down they are just too expensive to fix.

Bernice Inaksajak told me that she grew up going onto the land with her grandmother. She would go camping with her and they would make *piffi* [dried fish] and cook together. Unfortunately, her grandmother passed away in 2002 and she has not been camping on the land since.[254] The disruption of younger generations being able to be on the land with elders, continuing sharing practices, and accessing country foods will have a significant impact on food security for future generations. Tom Kayaitok, spoke to the significance of being able to access the land to ensure food security when he said, "long as I have enough equipment to go out on the land, I don't care if there's no food . . . because I know I'm gonna get the food. Long as I got gas and my snowmobile's working good. I know I'm gonna get some. But if I don't have a snowmobile to go out on the land, then I starting to worry."[255]

Community Strategies

Sharing food is not the only means of accessing food in Kugaaruk if you are in need of food. It is a core means of accessing food, but other programming in the community is meant to increase access to food for people who are food insecure. Being able to fulfil food needs is a complex venture in Kugaaruk. While there are many programs to aid in the food insecurity crisis, even when relying on multiple services at time, it can be difficult or even impossible to be food secure. If given the opportunity, Dolarosa Nartok (and many others), "would have country food. But sometime it's hard to get country food too cause the hunters have to buy their gas, oil, food, to go out hunting and it costs lots to, just to go out hunting too."[256] It is times like that when

[254] Bernice Inaksajak, in conversation with the author, May 2016. *Piffi* is dried fish.
[255] Tom Kayaitok, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[256] Dolorosa Nartok, in conversation with the author, May 2016.

people are craving country food but unable to get onto the land that the Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTO) is such a precious resource. I spoke with Columban Pujuardjok, the chairperson for the HTO, about the importance of the services the HTO provides for the community. Pujuardjok informed me that to help mitigate the high prices of food in Kugaaruk, the HTO was able to secure extra funding over the winter of 2015-2016 to harvest extra food for the community.[257] Pujuardjok said they used the funds:

> For paying the hunters, and their catch. And after when they finish, we give all the food to the local people in the town. There's caribou, fish, musox, and seal meat. And so we have to get all those meat, cause soon as they brought it here to the town, the local finish them the same day. Even though maybe twenty, thirty, food in there. That's how much, that's how much hard to get a food for the people.[258]

Pujuardjok explains, "and that's the only money we use, to pay that hunters. Nothing else. When they finish, when we call the local people, they get the free food, they don't pay out nothing."[259] While the HTO is a program that is firmly grounded in the practice of sharing, it is able to be so effective because external funding keeps the program running during the winter, which is one of the greatest times of need.

When accessing country food is not a feasible option, a resource the community turns to is the food bank. The food bank is a necessity when the HTO is out of food, in the cold months when hunters are unable to get out onto the land, for those who cannot afford to get out onto the

[257] Pujuardjok estimates that the HTO received approximately $20,000 in funding from the Kitikmeot Inuit Association to harvest food for the community over the winter. Pujuardjok noted that they have received approximately $20,000 in funding in most recents year, and in the winter of 2016-2017 they received approximately $25,000. It is important to note that while this may seem like a large figure, the cost of getting onto the land in the North is high and those funds do not go far once it is divided amongst hunters to pay for oil, gas, and bullets. A report by Action Canada titled "Hunger in Nunavut" notes that "an all-season hunting outfit can cost upwards of $55,000 — more than twice the average annual income in Nunavut." The cost of maintenance is also an ongoing concern for most hunters who can actually afford a full hunting outfit. Action Canada, "Hunger in Nunavut: Local Food for Healthier Communities," Action Canada, accessed May 28 2017, http://www.actioncanada.ca/project/hunger-nunavut-local-food-healthier-communities/.

[258] Columban Pujuardjok, in conversation with the author, May 2016.

[259] Ibid.

land, and for food needs other than country food. Laura volunteers with the food bank and poignantly expressed:

> And for me, that's not secure enough for our community. We try and have food mostly for the cold winter months when there's hardly any caribou close by. At least if they have something nutritious, like for example, we try and get mostly whatever they have, what's their daily food . . . But that's not always enough. Just in one evening if we, for example we go to the store on this evening to go buy some groceries, and we're open that same evening, pretty much the whole thing will be gone that same evening. And then we won't have another food in the storage for maybe over a month, two months. Cause we don't run a bingo until after every second month now.[260]

The inability of such a crucial resource to consistently offer support to the community directly impacts the food insecurity of those who require its services.

The food bank is without a doubt one of the most valuable resources the community has, yet it is unable to keep up with the demand. Laura went on describe how hard it is to run a food bank that often has no food:

> Say for example, tonight's gonna be my night to be there with another person and give them out food. There's too many people that are, that are always hungry, so whatever we buy during that day before, is gonna be all gone the same night. That's how much people are struggling. And then the next day there's gonna be people that are asking for more food, or somebody else that didn't came that is asking, and we have no choice but to say sorry we don't have any. And it's hard sometimes . . . Cause there's too much turn downs, more than giving. So, I'm not sure. I'm not sure if I'll stay there longer.[261]

The community is not lacking in dedication or support. People like Laura work hard to keep their community fed, and have to do the unthinkable task of turning people away when they just do not have the resources to do their work. Solely relying on the proceeds from bingo games that the food bank is only able to run approximately every 6-8 weeks means this very necessary resource is unable to keep up with demand.[262]

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[260] Laura (name changed), in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[261] Laura (name changed), in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[262] Bingo is run via the radio in Kugaaruk. You can purchase bingo cards at the hamlet office and the proceeds go to whichever group is running bingo that week. However, due to the number of community organizations that participate in bingo, by the time each organization gets a turn several weeks pass,

One program that does provide consistent security for people in Kugaaruk is the breakfast and lunch program offered at the Kugaardjug School. Erin* reckoned that the breakfast and lunch programs are valuable because they provide food for students, but also because "some kids that never used to go to school are starting to go to school" to be able to have two meals a day.[263] Laura spoke to its importance as well, asserting that "it really helps the ones that, for the parents who don't, who might not have food at home. At least they know that their child will eat throughout the day."[264] Mary Aklah confirmed the benefit of the breakfast and lunch program: "Like myself, I always tell my kids to eat in school cause I got nothing to cook for them. So it really helps for them to eat here."[265] The breakfast and lunch programs are one of the most valuable food programs running in the community. The school supports approximately 300 students from kindergarten to Grade 12.[266] For families that are food insecure, knowing that their children are able to go to school and eat two meals a day is a huge relief to the possible alternative of going hungry. Unfortunately, after losing the Kugaardjug School to an overnight fire between February 28th and March 1st, 2017 the breakfast and lunch program underwent a serious disruption. At the time of writing, the breakfast program had only been reinstated for preschool and kindergarten, and the lunch program was not able to be reinstated. Losing the school resulted in a serious hit to one of the community's best supports for food security.

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limiting the opportunity to do any serious fundraising this way. At the time of verification, Laura informed me that the procedures had recently changed so that the food bank could run a bingo every two weeks so long as they submitted a report to the hamlet. However, more recently (September 2017) Laura has informed me that the food bank no longer has a place to store food due to the hamlet being renovated to accommodate the Kugaardjug School after their school was lost to a fire earlier in the year.

[263] Erin (name changed), in conversation with the author, May 2016.

[264] Laura (name changed), in conversation with the author, May 2016.

[265] Mary Aklah, in conversation with the author, May 2016.

[266] Sarah Rogers, "Fire Destroys Nunavut Community's Only School," Nunatsiaq Online, accessed March 23, 2017, http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674fire_burns_through_nunavut_communitys_only_school/

Additional avenues of accessing food in the community include the following: purchasing food outside of Kugaaruk either by ordering groceries from Yellowknife or ordering groceries on the sea lift which requires a large amount of upfront capital and is not an option for people who do not have high-paying jobs; Helping Our Northern Neighbours is run through Facebook and pairs families in Nunavut with Southern sponsors who send care packages of food; Nutrition North is a federal point of sale subsidy program; Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP) is funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada and provides support to improve the wellbeing of pregnant women and new mothers; an elders discount at the Co-op; and an elder's lunch and soup kitchen provided through the Wellness Centre. When these services are used in conjunction, they can aid in meeting the food needs of some community members.

Despite the several services that aid in meeting food needs, many of these options are not always feasible or accessible when needed. Rosa Nirlungayuk turned to Helping Our Northern Neighbours for help, but had to "wait for over a year to get [a] sponsor."[267] Mary Aklah uses another strategy to meet her food needs. When traveling to Yellowknife for medical treatments, she does her grocery shopping before returning to Kugaaruk. Aklah and I spoke about how she copes with the high cost of food in Kugaaruk and she said:

> I can't afford everything what they selling here cause like, two bags of shopping bag it goes over almost $500. Trying to buy like two weeks groceries for my family. And it's really like, it's not fair . . . So I always end up buying them in Yellowknife too. Like I buy more than what I get in Yellowknife and at the end I have to pay for my freight when I'm going home too. Cause I got all these groceries, like we allowed only two luggages. I always end up going home with three luggage with groceries.[268]

Even with the added cost of paying for an extra luggage on her return trip from Yellowknife, it is still more affordable for Aklah to buy her groceries in Yellowknife. Laura explained "we

[267] Rosa Nirlungayuk, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[268] Mary Aklah, in conversation with the author, May 2016.

recently started having to order from Yellowknife. M&Ms Meat Shop just to get more food. For a lower cost.[269] For Laura, turning to buying food outside of the community is only a small step in mitigating the frustration and stress of feeding a large family in a community that charges exorbitant prices for foods that are often times spoiled before they even make it to the shelf. Ordering food from Yellowknife means having food that is "a lot fresher . . . you can taste the difference."[270] Buying elsewhere is a great short term coping strategy to ease the strain of high food costs in Kugaaruk, but it is not a feasible long term strategy for dealing with food insecurity.

Rosa Nirlungayuk likes to use country foods when feeding her family, along with vegetables and fruits which she thinks are "very main important foods."[271] Nirlungayuk explained to me that unfortunately, "they're so hard to get cause, as a single mom and I'm not working, being on income, and I have kids who are adults and grandkids now. It's very hard. Meat, country foods, vegetables, fruits we love. They're really hard to get here now. They're always coming in rot, all the time. But we still pay for the same price."[272] Like Laura, Nirlungayuk has to cope with the frustration of the high cost of food in the local Co-op. Unlike Laura though, Nirlungayuk is not able to order food from Yellowknife and instead she is not able to buy the foods she really wants, choosing "the things that we hardly eat, I get them cause they're lower [in price]."[273]

[269] Laura (name changed), in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[270] Laura (name changed), in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[271] Rosa Nirlungayuk, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[272] Rosa Nirlungayuk, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[273] Rosa Nirlungayuk, in conversation with the author, May 2016.

The price of food in Kugaaruk is high, regardless of whether it is an item that receives a subsidy from Nutrition North or not. I talked with Joyce Nartok about how she copes with the high cost of food and she laughed as she began to say:

> Maybe complaining. I hear that a lot. Like, we even talk amongst ourself and complain that it's, I guess the only thing we can do is complain. But we, like even for myself, I have a good paying job but I still can't make it two weeks because the cost here. We're like, like today I got paid right, don't last me 'til my next pay but I have some caribou meat so it kind of um, helps with the next few days that I won't have 'til my next pay. So yeah, fish and caribou helps a lot if I don't have the money to buy food from the store . . . Just coping with having meat.[274]

Coping with country food is a common practice in Kugaaruk, but when it comes to store bought foods, Nartok explained how she copes with the high costs: "I would rather want chicken, but I'll buy macaroni. Things like that, like it's way cheaper to buy macaroni than chicken."[275] Bernice Inaksajak also copes in a similar way, saying that the high costs at the Co-op make it hard to feed her big family. She prefers to use as much country food as possible so she can buy the staples from the store like dry goods, rice, or mix and only buys expensive items when she really needs to.[276] In a conversation with Margaret Suvissak, she expressed that every payday she has to make compromises when buying food. Every payday she sees the food she wants most, and then she sees the price and moves on to find cheaper food.[277]

It is essential to contend with the fact that when people in Kugaaruk need to access food, they do not do so merely as an individual looking to maintain their own personal food security. They always consider their relations, which is reflected in many of the food choices and coping mechanisms people use when accessing food. Columban Pujuardjok does a lot of the cooking at home because his wife is working and he is not. He explained that when he cooks he uses

[274] Joyce Nartok, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[275] Joyce Nartok, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[276] Bernice Inaksajak, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[277] Margaret Suvissak, in conversation with the author, May 2016.

"caribou or fish and add little bit of what I bought from the Co-op. And little meat I always with them, like fry them or make soup out of it or for my grandkids too. That's what I do. I try to save more money . . . When I cooking, like don't want to waste the food . . . leftover food or something and I cook it and I mixed it with something and we save more food like that."[278]

Katherina Qirngnuq told me how she makes feeding her family more affordable, explaining:

> I was just finished roasting caribou ribs the other day in the oven and I got one of my son in laws to boil some of the caribou ribs with the tongue. Mix it with soup mix. And my grandchildren can have that. It's healthy . . . soup mixes either with two pouches in a pack or four pouches, they're mostly under five bucks so I would buy that in order to mix it for boiled caribou . . . there's over ten people in my house, it wouldn't be enough to buy like couple of t-bone steaks from the Co-op.[279]

Lutgarde Angutingunirk also has a large family that she needs to be strategic about feeding. When we spoke one afternoon she expressed:

> I got a big family. I got seven kids, three, uh four of my own, three are adopted. I think thirteen grandkids, but less than that could eat, some are infant that they can't eat. So my family comes to my house for supper and my family comes home to my house for lunch. And I gotta feed everybody. But it's a high cost of food at our store, and our only store. There's some things that I'd rather get for them to eat healthy, but I can't afford. So I have to buy something like kraft dinner that would feed lots of kids, like rice. I'd rather buy something like chicken or something. And but, I can't afford it. What am I gonna mix it with? There's a lot of times I do that and which is hard for me, my husband's diabetic, I gotta look for special food. But those comes number one, the food that he's gotta eat . . . I have to make decision how to spend my money. Where the kids in my house, the people I'm gonna feed, plus my husband's diabetic type II. So lot of things I gotta do.[280]

The decisions that people like Angutingunirk have to make when buying food to meet their budgetary needs, care taking needs, and health needs require very difficult, yet very thoughtful strategies to cope with the reality of food insecurity in Kugaaruk. The culmination of factors such as food prices, ineffective programming, and the increasing inaccessibility of getting onto the land creates a reality in which caring for and feeding relations is increasingly restricted.

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[278] Columban Pujuardjok, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[279] Katherina Qirngnuq, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[280] Lutgarde Angutingunirk, in conversation with the author, May 2016.

In addition to the everyday strategies that the community employs to help meet food needs and mitigate rates of food insecurity in the community, there are also longer term strategies to consider. The Kugaaruk Research Advisory Committee can strategically collaborate with researchers to ensure research is being done in the community that can provide beneficial outcomes. The elders on the advisory committee were eager to partner with my research project because they are very concerned about younger generations being able to meet their food needs with high prices in the Co-op, declines in country food consumption, and barriers to traditional hunting practices. Collaborations such as Robertson's ongoing SSHRC project help fund land camps which support elder and youth knowledge transmission, while also harvesting food for the community.

Accounting for Community Food Needs

When it comes to implementing changes in policy that determine available programming, it is time that the voices of those that are most invested in the services offered are centred, rather than the voices of policy-makers who are more invested in bottom lines than full bellies. Accounting for community food needs must account for how community economies inevitability resist and come up against forces that by their very nature act to weaken and override community economies. Gibson-Graham theorize such forms of economic systems as involving "ethical considerations and political decisions that constitute social and economic being."[281] In Kugaaruk when a hunter harvests a caribou to bring to the HTO for the community, or when someone answers a radio call for a little extra rice to feed their little ones, or when a teacher brings some *muktuk* to class to feed their students, or when dedicated community members use their limited bingo earnings to restock the food bank, the "recognition of economic co-implication,

[281] J.K. Gibson-Graham, *A Postcapitalist Politics*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, (2006):83.

interdependency, and social connection is actively occurring."[282] I want to be clear that when I highlight the vulnerability and interconnectedness of community economies in Kugaaruk that are constituted through the sharing of food and survival, that it is not done at the cost of forgetting the forces that restrict and impede these practices on a daily basis.

I did not talk to a single person in Kugaaruk who thought that with all of the current programming available in their community, that it was *enough*. Joyce Nartok told me that she did not think that the government programs were doing enough to help with the price of food: "most certainly not here . . . If they actually, like if I was buying that milk and they actually put it down like, from nine dollars to five dollars, it would help. Yeah. But they're not putting the price correctly, or taking subsidy off through Nutrition North."[283] Not only does Joyce Nartok think that the Nutrition North program is ineffective, she recognized that community programs such as the HTO and the food bank are doing their best to help the community, but definitely need more support. Joanne Ruben agreed, noting: "I think the government really needs to see how much, even in a day, how much we spend. Like just for a small Co-op bag [of groceries], goes up to hundred, two hundred. I think the government needs to see that . . . So I think more organizations try look up, looking to that. About the food prices at the Co-op."[284] A common theme in my conversations with people in Kugaaruk is that they want the government and Southerners to really know what it is like to go to the Co-op to buy a bag or two of groceries, because that experience makes it clear that there is something very wrong with the food prices.

Ineffective programming for helping people meet their food needs, such as Nutrition North, has radically different impacts on different families. Katherina Qirngnuq illustrated this

[282] Gibson-Graham, *A Postcapitalist Politics*, 83.
[283] Joyce Nartok, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[284] Joanne Ruben, in conversation with the author, May 2016.

when she explained how she thought the subsidy provided by Nutrition North was ineffective: "Maybe for the people, both the man and the wife, if they're both employed, yeah. Maybe that would be a-okay little bit. But for the unemployed, which [is] most of the townspeople, a lot of the people in town unemployed. I know it's not easy for them."[285] Tom Kayaitok mirrored this sentiment when he said, "when it comes to food because even the food that we buying at the Co-op, the price is sky high right now today. And lot of times, lot of people, poorer people can't afford those kind of good food that are in the store. And lot of people, like myself, want to know if they could lower the price down in some products. That would help."[286] Dolorosa Nartok also raised an excellent point when she asserted: "I think cost of food should be supported because I'm not thinking about myself, I'm thinking about the younger generation. And they only buy food. They buy food at the Co-op because they don't have any skidoos or hunting equipment to go hunting, that's why."[287] The different needs of different families and generations reinforces the fact that a multitude of programming is required, or programming that is more tailored to the unique needs of each community.

Community members have an abundance of strategies and theorizations for appropriate approaches to attaining food security. Stephan Inaksajak was clear when he shared that the government needs to provide more support:

> Cause they're the ones wanted us to go out of our culture, sending the young people out of the community to go have school, and now after we became a community, why don't we get the same prices as down south. The food, I know it's expensive to fly it here but the government should be helping a lot more if, uh with the shipping with all the food, that would help a lot. Cause people with living in income, it's not enough for their family with the high price of food right now. It would be good if the government could help more, if we could get same prices as down south, that would help a lot for the smaller communities that always have to get their food by plane.[288]

[285] Katherina Qirngnuq, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[286] Tom Kayaitok, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[287] Dolorosa Nartok, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[288] Stephan Inaksajak, in conversation with the author, May 2016.

Inaksajak's comment about going out of their culture speaks to policy initiatives that led to the permanent settlement of Inuit communities and the increasing complexity of community life with the import of modern technologies, foods, and practices. Inaksajak provides an important distinction that must be considered in the community's food strategies — the community exists within a multitude of experiences that are rooted in tradition, but are still being practiced and evolved to fit contemporary Inuit life. So while community efforts to have food policy reflect the need to support hunters and access to country food, Inaksajak reveals that for many community members, accessing imported Southern food is now a crucial part of everyday life that must be supported.

In a conversation with Columban Pujuardjok, he voiced his concerns that if there was more support for food in Kugaaruk, he would hope that the Co-op would be able to have lower prices, but he would also want support for community food programs. He put it succinctly: "If we get money from the government again, I want the people to get some food from the HTO. It would help a lot. They were saying that to me this winter that they help a lot for the food. And that's what I know . . . It was helping a lot of people this winter . . . that's what I know."[289] While it is a priority for all people in Kugaaruk to see lower prices at the Co-op, my conversation with Columban Pujuardjok established that in the race to lower food prices, it is important not to forget all the of the hard work that is already being done by community members to help the people of Kugaaruk meet their food needs. Both Stephan Inaksajak and Pujuardjok recognize that it is not enough to have a one dimensional approach to mitigating food insecurity. For any strategy to work for Kugaaruk, it must be multidimensional and account for the needs of all generations whose lives contain a multitude of needs.

[289] Columban Pujuardjok, in conversation with the author, May 2016.

The people I spoke with in the community are not asking for new programs to remedy food insecurity, they are asking for improvement, or additional support, for the programs that are already in place, including those that enhance community strategies for dealing with food insecurity. Even if food prices were lowered drastically through federal programming, the programs that currently exist in the community are still equally important for providing food, employment, learning opportunities, and socialization. Erin said that with all of the programs the community currently runs, they all play an important role, "cause some peoples don't even have a job, they don't have anything to go out hunting with. And you hear on local radio or on Facebook, asking for food, that their kids got nothing to eat. This really, these help. They all help."[290] Laura went on to explain that "pretty much all of it prevents it from hunger. From one family or another. That helps them for that day. Cause some times I know that there are some family, they say that they had water, just plain water for few days . . . So all that stuff helps. Anything helps."[291] Most significantly, Laura stated that "it gives them communication to help one another . . . Cause you have to work as a community, in order to make things happen."[292] If there is one thing that Kugaaruk does well, it is working together to care for each other. Moreover, the community is able to maintain a limited amount of autonomy over their food systems when programs in the community economy are informed and shaped by Inuit values.

I hope that the Nutrition North community engagement sessions will recognize the fact that communities like Kugaaruk have necessary frameworks for combatting food insecurity in place and ready to succeed if food prices are lowered, and support or additional collaborative help is made available for existing services. Stephan Inaksajak conveyed that support for the

[290] Erin (name changed), in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[291] Laura (name changed), in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[292] Laura (name changed), in conversation with the author, May 2016.

food bank is necessary, saying: "But it's just hard trying to keep it, I guess trying to keep it going. They were helping a lot of families. But it would be good if they would get more support to help with that food bank, cause it really helps lots community members when they had no food or nothing, they go there. And it would be good if they, if they could get more help."[293] Mary Aklah cited the need for more support for the food bank, and noted that if the food bank had access to consistent support they could "order from the barge . . . cause they're a lot cheaper. So we can store them and when they need we can easily give them out."[294] Added support would allow the food bank to run more efficiently to meet the food needs of the community. Katherina Qirngnuq spoke about the benefits of the programs in Kugaaruk that help people access food, and *more*: "Well the CPNP, for the pregnant ladies, I know it's helping. Especially for the young mothers that aren't employed, either her or her partner. Because I know eating country food is important for the mother and the fetus. And also for the elders too. I'm glad they got somebody having elder's lunch on every Tuesdays. And of course the money runs . . . the money do run out."[295] Unfortunately, when the money runs out, the food runs out too. Running out of food is bad enough, but when programming is disrupted so is conversation, connection, sharing, and essential nutrients for those in need.

Conclusion: Seeing the North Better

[293] Stephan Inaksajak, in conversation with the author, May 2016.
[294] Mary Aklah, in conversation with the author, May 2016. When Aklah refers to ordering from the barge, she is indicating doing a sea lift order which is a bulk order individuals and retailers can make from Southern retailers and have it shipped to the community once a year by sea. Sea lift orders can only provide non-perishable or non-food items. It is much more affordable to order such items via sea lift due to the lower transportation cost. However, for the majority of community members it is an infeasible process due to the requirement of purchasing with a credit card, and needing to have a large amount of capital to order everything you need in bulk at one time.
[295] Katherina Qirngnuq, in conversation with the author, May 2016.

All of the conversations I had with the people of Kugaaruk about their experiences with food insecurity provided richer stories, theories, evidence, and knowledge greater than anything I had encountered elsewhere. I have aimed to present the knowledge that was shared so generously with me in a way that does their stories justice, and in a way that gives Southerners and settler Canadians a lens to see the North better. After sharing so generously and openly with me Lutgarde Angutingunirk expressed, "I hope this help. I hope the government help the people in Nunavut which don't have access to roads, to ship up here by truck. I hope they look into that, to help family that needs the most food in right now. Everyday there's somebody with no food all the time. They're selling their stuff in their house just to get food on the table for their kids. And I hope the government look into that."[296] It is significant that when times are so hard and it is nearly impossible to share food, people like Lutgarde are willing to share all that they can, including their experiences in the hopes of bringing attention to the food insecurity crisis in Nunavut.

My research is the result of stubbornness, of demanding a better standard of care, of yearning for answers to a different set of questions. I began by thinking that vulnerability could simply lead to the theorization of a new (to settler Canadians) way of meeting food needs. But of course, the thinkers, theorists, care-takers, and knowledge keepers of Kugaaruk produced a case study, intervention, and record of commitment to community beyond anything I ever could have imagined. I wrote earlier in the chapter about my decision to carefully engage with feminist theorists in order to produce research that was more generative than just focusing on the injustice of the forces that create such high rates of food insecurity in Nunavut. Throughout my research process I have tried to highlight community theorizing and agency as much as possible, as well

[296] Lutgarde Angutingunirk, in conversation with the author, May 2016.

as identify specific actions to support the work happening in the community to mitigate food insecurity. I have aimed to distance myself from what Critical Race and Indigenous Studies theorist Eve Tuck identifies as damage-centered research that "is a pathologizing approach in which the oppression singularly defines a community."[297] Tuck notes that many communities "*tolerate* this kind of data gathering because there is an implicit and sometimes explicit assurance that stories of damage pay off in material, sovereign, and political wins."[298] Tuck calls for the suspension of damage-centered research and a turn to research that captures desire, arguing that "desire, yes, accounts for the loss and despair, but also the hope, the visions, the wisdom of lived lives and communities. . . Desire is about longing, about a present that is enriched by both the past and the future."[299] I hope that this research accounts for despair and injustice, but also the hope, wisdom, and desire that the community enacts through their steady work to mitigate food insecurity.

[297] Eve Tuck, "Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities," *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 79, No. 3 (2009): 413.
[298] Tuck, "Suspending Damage," 414.
[299] Tuck, "Suspending Damage," 417.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

The goal of my research was to address how a move away from food security to food *sharing* could produce food policy that centres interdependency and relationality, which are key aspects of an Inuit worldview, to better meet Inuit food feeds than current federal food policy. My objective was to create a case study of food insecurity in Kugaaruk, Nunavut that would provide an account contextualized by the experiences of *one* Inuit community in Nunavut. In my research I found that to actually mitigate rates of food insecurity, federal policy must 1) recognize Inuit practices, such as sharing, that are already used to meet food needs, and 2) support Inuit community economies and programs that centre Inuit values and are already doing work within communities to mitigate food insecurity. I argued that food security literature must begin to acknowledge how colonial processes of erasure of Inuit laws, languages, and livelihoods still impact Inuit access to food today, in order to avoid proposing solutions that merely serve to re-inscribe the same problematic processes that create food insecurity in the first place. I propose policy that supports Inuit social, legal, and economic orders, which I believe would result in programming that is not only more politically and philosophically aligned with Inuit worldviews, but would also result in better outcomes for mitigating food insecurity because Inuit would be able to determine and meet their specific and unique food needs.

In my research I have found that food policy must account for and respond to community needs. Nutrition North is a policy that is meant to provide access to perishable nutritious food to isolated Northern communities. However, it is inexcusable that the program does not play a larger role in the issue of food insecurity in Nunavut when it operates with annual budget of over $80,000,000.00, and serves a territory in which nearly 70% of homes experience food

insecurity.[300] During my time in Kugaaruk I was able to experience the community's thriving community economy that is based on the Inuit law of food sharing. I argue that if the government holds *any* interest in reducing rates of food insecurity in Nunavut, let alone bringing a "total renovation" or a complete "overhaul" to the Nutrition North program, they need to support the existing capacities in Inuit communities that are grounded in Inuit laws and values.[301] Pre-existing community economies and capacities work to help people meet their food needs when the government fails to provide more than ongoing precarity.

Throughout the course of my research I saw a lot of damage that is in dire need of repair, particularly ineffective food policy, endless barriers to food access, and rapidly rising rates of food insecurity in Nunavut. My investment in seeing improvement in the mechanisms and processes that contribute to food insecurity in Nunavut has meant that beyond identifying current damage, I cannot allow it to encompass the centre of my research. It is imperative that I stand with the people who desire a different future, and that I work to support them in their desire to mitigate food insecurity. In the article, "Stories of Yukon Food Security," authors Jody Butler Walker, Norma Kassi, Katelyn Friendship, and Molly Pratt poignantly expressed that "to highlight the harsh realities of food insecurity across the North is an important part to raising awareness of the issue, but sharing stories of strength is also a significant motivator for sustained action."[302] Not only should stories of strength act as a significant motivator for sustained action, they should be the bar that researchers aim for when collaborating with community.

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[300] Nutrition North Canada, "Nutrition North Canada Engagement 2016: Final Report of What We Heard," *Government of Canada*, accessed June 14, 2017, http://www.nutritionnorthcanada.gc.ca/eng/1491505202346/1491505247821. "Rates," *Nunavut Food Security Coalition*, accessed December 31, 2016, http://nunavutfoodsecurity.ca/Rates.
[301] Michael Fitzgerald and Fred Hill, "Nutrition North Canada: Real Change is Yet to Come," *Northern Public Affairs*, Vol. 5, No. 1, (2017): 46.
[302] Jody Butler Walker, Norma Kassi, Katelyn Friendship, and Molly Pratt, "Stories of Yukon Food Security," *Northern Public Affairs*, Vol. 5, No. 1, (2017): 37.

I have modeled my research after those who have devoted their work to centring community desires and strengths such as Norma Kassi and Zoe Todd. Kassi's work with the Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research as the Director of Indigenous Collaboration has prioritized health (and food security) research partnerships with Yukon First Nations communities that support capacity building and result in benefits to the communities. Todd's research in Paulatuuq centred the desires of the community when the Paulatuuqmiut "vocally and vociferously [shut down] the commercial Hornaday char fishery . . . to protect people's reciprocal and ongoing relations to the fish."[303] It is my hope that in the future more food insecurity research being done in Northern communities will actually reflect the experiences, knowledge, theories, desires, and capacities of the communities who are generous enough to welcome researchers.

My research has identified an avenue to approach to the study of food insecurity that draws on feminist theory and Indigenous studies to care for and support the desires of the community I worked with. I have used theories and methods familiar to me to further the perspectives and desires of the people I worked with in Kugaaruk, with the ultimate goal of conducting research that benefits the community. My use of feminist theories to engage with and direct the centring of Inuit theories, knowledge, and laws, has resulted in research that is unique to food insecurity research being done in Nunavut, and fills gaps in feminist literatures of vulnerability by actually collaborating with the community in question. I am incredibly excited for future publishing opportunities and have had a proposal for an original research article accepted to a special issue regarding the creation of a national food policy in the Canadian Food Studies journal.

[303] Zoe S. C. Todd, "'You Never Go Hungry': Fish Pluralities, Human-Fish Relationships, Indigenous Legal Orders and Colonialism in Paulatuuq, Canada" (dissertation, University of Aberdeen, 2016): 240.

While my thesis contributes original research to several fields, I think it is equally important to ensure it reaches an audience beyond the academic fields I am working within. I foresee a significant amount of my research continuing to support and strengthen my community research relationships. I see part of that support taking the form of maintaining my commitment to being in conversation with a wider public audience and policy makers to advocate for required change. To that end, I have published an article titled "Beyond Food Security: Accounting for Community Food Needs in Kugaaruk, Nunavut" in *Northern Public Affairs* magazine that addresses the need for community driven food policy.[304] I have also submitted online comments for the Nutrition North Canada Engagement 2016 and to the consultation process for A Food Policy for Canada.

Limitations in this research have occurred from researching from a settler standpoint, and subsequent challenges in cross cultural communication. I did not research from a position of being privy to all knowledge and experiences of those I worked with in Kugaaruk, and I would not want to be. I am sure refusal was practiced by research participants, which I am glad for because I think it allows people to maintain agency in determining the final story that is told through my research. However, in general all of the individuals that I interviewed were more than generous in sharing their experiences with food insecurity. The scope and depth of this research is limited by time and financial constraints. As a master's student, research funding is limited and the financial resources that are available are further constrained by the high costs associated with doing research in the North. The length of the research project was limited by the desire to finish my degree within the standard two-year time frame, as well as the limited financial capacity that restricted further visits to Kugaaruk. Given the fact that I was only able to

[304] Merissa Daborn, "Beyond Food Security: Accounting for Community Food Needs in Kugaaruk, Nunavut," *Northern Public Affairs*, Vol. 5, No. 1, (2017): 52-55.

travel to the community twice due to time and financial constraints, relationships and research outcomes, such as co-authoring with community members, could have benefitted from further time in the community. However, even with the limitations I faced, I was able to secure enough additional funding to support a verification trip in April 2017 that was integral to the successful completion of my research. I am incredibly grateful to have been able to work in Kugaaruk and I feel that I was able to complete a valuable community based research project.

It is a reasonable query to wonder why the Inuit would seek a relationship of vulnerability beyond themselves, and why they would potentially want to enter into this type of relationship with the state? To begin to address this, I want to reflect on a comment Margaret Suvissak made. I asked if she thought the government could be doing more to help, to which she responded that if they have a heart, if they understand, if they listen, and if they visualize it. If they put Kugaaruk under their wings, Kugaaruk could do the same for them, easy as that. I asked what she meant by putting them under their wings and she said that Inuit like to help — togetherness has been in their traditions for a very long time before they became a territory.[305] Since Nunavut has become a territory, the political stance of organizations such as the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), has promoted the concept of *togetherness*. The ICC's declaration on sovereignty positions states and Inuit as *partners*, regardless of how successful attempts at this have been in the past. Limitations to the application of vulnerability, and Inuit values and practices, to a relationship with the Canadian state could reproduce the same limitations that Inuit have faced in all aspects of other relationships with the Canadian state, namely, the co-optation of Inuit knowledge into a fresh façade for an old colonial mode of governing. However, programming that is built from the ground up drawing on Inuit

[305] Margaret Suvissak, in conversation with the author, May 2016.

everyday law and practices, in which Inuit set the terms of the relationship is at least a starting point to be able to *strategize within* settler colonial imposed frameworks of governing and move forward in a better relationship.[306]

There is a dire need for research that centres community experiences with food insecurity. With the upcoming advancement of A Food Policy For Canada, and the yet to be determined results of Nutrition North Canada Engagement 2016, the development of policy that reflects the desires and strengths of Inuit and Indigenous communities across the North will be absolutely necessary to ensure communities' food needs are being met and rates of food insecurity stand a chance of being mitigated. Future research questions should consider how policy can better reflect the communities who rely on it to meet their basic needs, how communities existing capacities can be supported, and what changes researchers can implement in their work to ensure community theories, knowledge, experiences, and desires are well reflected. If the publication of the final report from the Nutrition North Canada Engagement 2016 is any indication of future food policy in Canada, these research directives will be more necessary than ever. Jim Bell of Nunatsiaq Online commented that the final report on the engagement campaign reflects a "dizzying kaleidoscope of demands."[307] The report that comes in at just over 19,000 words has made no recommendations on how Indigenous and Northern

[306] Brendan Hokowhitu generatively theorizes that he "consciously steer[s] away from envisaging neocolonial power hierarchically – that is, as a mere function of the state's will," instead, and paraphrasing Foucault, he sees "the neocolonial context as 'a complex strategical situation.'" The Inuit refrain from engaging with the colonial state in a hierarchically situated relationship, rather, they choose to frame their partnerships as complex strategical situations. Brendan Hokowhitu, "Producing Indigeneity," in *Indigenous in the City: Contemporary Identities and Cultural Innovation*, eds. Evelyn Peters and Chris Andersen, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2013), 355.

[307] Jim Bell, "Nutrition North Consultation Sparks Dizzying Kaleidoscope of Demands," *Nunatsiaq Online*, May 3, 2017, http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674nutrition_north_report_a_dizzying_kaleidoscope_of_demands/.

Affairs Canada plans to improve the Nutrition North program, and has not revealed when changes to the program can be expected.[308] The sheer number of differing demands for future direction of improvement to the program is a result of the number of varying stakeholders consulted during the engagement process. If policy makers give more weight to community desires, rather than corporate or retail interests, they would find that collaborating with communities to create programming that meets their needs and draws on their strengths would result in a better fed Nunavut.

[308] Nutrition North Canada, "Nutrition North Canada Engagement 2016: Final Report of What We Heard," *Government of Canada*, accessed June 14, 2017, http://www.nutritionnorthcanada.gc.ca/eng/1491505202346/1491505247821.

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Appendix 1

My literature review covered **17 sources** regarding **food security, insecurity, or policy**. Of the 17 sources, 13 of the sources were explicitly focussed on the Nunavut, or the Arctic and 4 of the sources were from a broader standpoint of Indigenous peoples and food security in Canada.

Words searched were: **colonial, colonialism, and colonization**.

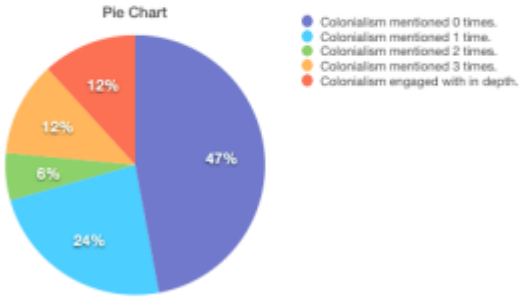
It is worth noting that the only two sources that engaged with the impacts of colonization on Indigenous peoples food insecurity were written with a decolonial framework.

I word searched all of the sources electronically, so if an article is filed as having mentioned colonialism 3 times, it means that it literally only had any of the words I was searching three times.

I will let you imagine how in-depth of an engagement the author could have with the impacts of colonization on food insecurity by only using the word three times.

Food Insecurity Research That Addresses Colonization

# WORD APPEARS IN TEXT	NUMBER OF ARTICLES
Colonialism mentioned 0 times.	8
Colonialism mentioned 1 time.	4
Colonialism mentioned 2 times.	1
Colonialism mentioned 3 times.	2
Colonialism engaged with in depth.	2



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Appendix 2

Proposed Research Questions: Interviews, 2016

1) What are your favourite types of food?

2) How does eating these foods make you feel physically and emotionally (e.g. healthy? satisfied? memories of family or other gatherings? cultural importance? etc.)?

3) How do you access country food? Do you hunt it yourself, receive it from community members, use community freezer (if there is one, e.g. at Hunters and Trappers Organization (HTO)), or buy the subsidized government-approved country foods sold in stores?

-- Do you ever get country food from someone else, the HTO, or the store if you haven't been able to hunt yourself? -- As a hunter or fisher, do you share what you harvest? Does the HTO ever sell country foods? Who usually pays for country food?

4) How do you cope with the high cost of food? Do you have to make compromises between food you want to eat and food you can afford? Are you able, or unable, to eat your most desired foods? What would your diet look like if you faced no restrictions (money, hunting abilities, hunting regulations, etc)?

5) Are there particular services you use to access food (food bank, etc)? Do they meet your needs?

6) Do you think the government subsidies provided through the Food Mail Program or Nutrition North are enough to help with the high cost of food in Kugaaruk?

7) What changes in policy or social services would help you meet your food needs?

-- What changes in policy or services do you think would benefit people in the community who have a hard time meeting their food needs?

8) How do you feel when you are able, or unable, to share food? Do you ever feel like you don’t have enough food, or the foods you want to have?

-- Who do you share food with? Family or anyone? (Go to Q 11 -- who taught) Do you ever not have enough food because you are sharing it?

9) How would you define food security? Is there a word in your language that you would use to

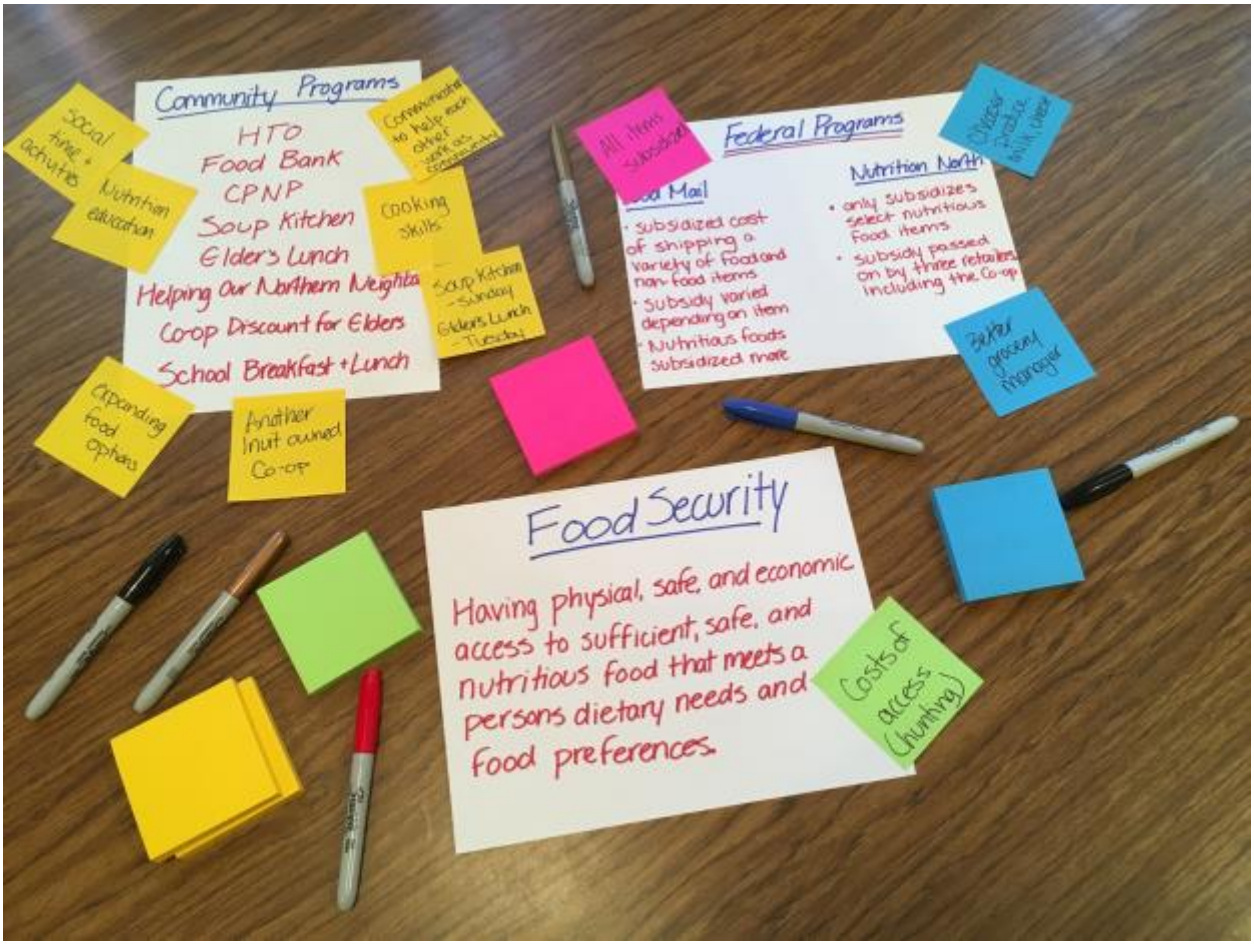
describe having all the food you want and need?

-- Or perhaps, is there a word or concept for sharing food, or a word or concept for not having enough? -- If southerners talk about food security as being able to access food and lots of Inuit are getting their food through sharing, is there a word or concept in Inuktitut that you would use to describe the sharing of food between people?

10) Are there consequences to hoarding food instead of sharing it? -- What would the community think if someone was stingy and didn't share?

11) Is sharing important to Inuit people today? What does this value require you to do? Who did you learn about sharing from? Do you teach sharing to your children?

Appendix 3


Community Programs
HTO
Food Bank
CPNP
Soup Kitchen
Elder's Lunch
Helping our Northern Neighbo
Coop Discount for Elders
School Breakfast + Lunch
Social time + activities
Nutrition education
Communicate to help each other
Cooking skills
Soup Kitchen - Sunday
Elders Lunch - Tuesday
Expanding food options
Another Inuit owned Co-op
Federal Programs
Nutrition North
• only subsidizes select nutritious Food items
• subsidy passed on by three retailers including the Co-op
• subsidized cost of shipping a variety of food and non-food items
• subsidy varied depending on item
• Nutritious foods subsidized more
Food Security
Having physical, safe, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets a persons dietary needs and food preferences.
(costs of access, hunting)

Appendix 4

Inuit + Law Research

In 2014, 2015 and 2016, Sean visited Kugaaruk for planning meetings, interviews, and to hold the sealing land camp for the project, Introducing the Emotional and Affective Geographies of Law: Strengthening Community through the Practice and Feelings of Law. He interviewed 27 individuals about historical and contemporary Inuit law or maligait, as well the associated values and feelings. The goal is to document Inuit laws, as they are not only essential to self-government in Nunavut, but also an important part of Canadian constitutional law.

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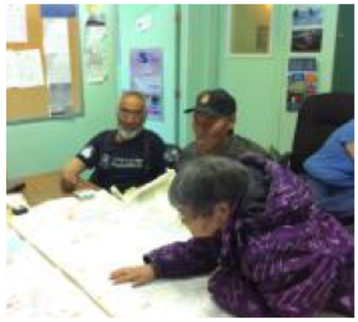

Thank You

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Levi Illuitok
Bartholemy Nirlungiak
Marie Anguti
Tom Kayaitok
Christian Nalungiaq
Katherina Qirngnuq
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Introducing the Emotional & Affective Geographies of Law: Strengthening Community through the Practice and Feelings of Law

Appendix 5

Food Feelings
-- emotional
-- physical

Access
-- hunting
-- sharing
-- buying

Coping Mechanisms
-- compromises
-- sharing
-- stretching food

Services Used

Changes
-- ID'd changes required to meet food needs

Sharing
-- feelings
-- why (what drives sharing)
-- consequences of not sharing