Uqaujjuusiat - Gifts of Words of Advice: Schooling, Education and Leadership in Baffin Island

A Thesis

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PREFACE

> Elders often begin their storytelling by stating, 'This is my story. I will do my best to tell it as accurately as I heard it or experienced it. (Anugaaq & Baaqtita Arnaquq)
>
> Not only do stories shape and transform our thinking, but the resulting new perspectives help shape the educational worlds we live in. (Ah Nee-Benham & Cooper, 1998)

Introduction

I started school in 1965. I left in 1975. During those ten years I had to learn a new language, history, traditions, songs, writing system and customs, all within my own country, within my own community and within a few hundred yards of my home. Yet only a few months after leaving school, I was asked to re-enter the school system as a classroom assistant. I was 15 years old.

Where the two cultures clashed, was a volatile place to be when you cannot express what is happening, when no one else can seem to help you express how it feels, where you must sort out the chaos, the confusion, anger, hurt, grief and pain all at once. The impact on my family and on me was so profound that it is only as I wrote this thesis that I was able to reflect on the extent of the impact. This impact manifested itself in many different ways throughout the whole society.

I felt like an immigrant in my own country at times and an outsider even in my own community. Writing this thesis has helped me to better understand how things

happened and what it must have been like for my parents, grandparents and Elders. For many years I would try to write but could not get beyond the first few pages. Finally, it has been a healing and transformative experience to put it all in perspective in one continuous narrative, with all the unspoken hurt and anger openly identified.

When I moved on to become a student teacher in 1979 I discovered that even a teaching certificate was only a beginning. I had to put the idea of research and graduate work to the back of my mind. I received my B.Ed. in 1986, putting me one step closer, but somehow I still struggled to find time. I was too busy establishing myself as a teacher and, ironically, acting as an informant for others, in their studies.

Since 1990 I have met and talked to many M.Ed., Ph.D. students and writers who came to Nunavut to ask questions about Inuit, and our land, Elders, culture and traditions. I was very conscious of being the interviewee and realize now that I probably helped many of them acquire their degrees or meet their deadlines by satisfying their requirements for research. Many of my Inuit colleagues and friends have done the same. We have read many books about Inuit written by such outsiders. It is time for me to write as the 'insider' claiming and reclaiming that space.

This autoethnography is therefore my story, from my experiences as a young school girl, teacher and later as an educational leader. It is important that my children and their children know how our Inuit way of life was transformed through us, the first generation of Inuit that attended schools. By describing this imported school and government system as it appeared through our eyes, I want to record how assimilation of this new way of life impacted me and my peers, especially when these Southern imposed

policies and methods ignored the rich unique history, culture and legacy of my parents and grandparents.

When first considering and discussing the theme for this thesis with my supervisor, I found it difficult to accept that my own story could be research and kept asking and questioning the criteria for a justifiable piece of work. My colonial reflex is to remain apprehensive, not just because of the usual critics, prying eyes and ears, but also because of those whom I and my friends have encountered over the years who inadvertently or deliberately questioned and denigrated Inuit culture and language.

Ignorance runs deep, but colonial scars run even deeper. Education and literacy are pillars of modern society and I hope my written story is helpful to others in their search for their own answers.

As the writing process has unfolded, completing the story itself soon emerged as the top priority. Critical academic analysis can follow this thesis, something I will extend in my next level of studies. This thesis is the foundation, therefore, and submitted as an autobiographical text, as an autoethnographical text and as a history of my schooling and leadership development.

I know my own experience to be only one among many that have yet to be told. I urge my peers and friends to document their stories because future generations will never be able to go to a library and take out such journals, writings or accounts about us unless we write them ourselves! I have found precious bits of information about my own family in various books over the years and realize now how my children and their children might find this document a valuable piece of their own history.

This narrative can be read and interpreted not just autoethnographically, but also historically, critically, sociologically and anthropologically. One piece of advice I would like to give to individuals who want to read, analyze or refer to this writing without understanding Inuit culture, is to realize this is one person's experience or version. It is easy to paint one picture with one broad stroke and assume that all Inuit have experienced the same way. That is my one concern. It is so easy to take events out of context and generalize them as has often been done. Nevertheless, I look forward to reading work from other Inuit in the future. We need to have many versions of stories written down and passed on. As Marie Gomez says about her work,

> For my students, for the children and adolescents whom they will teach, as well as for myself, I hope and plan for continuing opportunities to tell our stories in the service for creating a more just world for all people. In telling stories about my childhood and my adulthood as a teacher here, I have found a way to heal some wounds, to reconsider who I am and how I am to be so, and to articulate the power of our words and the words of those with whom we live and labor in shaping our ideas, our actions, and our possibilities. (Gomez, 1998, p. 87).

Figure 1. 'Inner Child', Naullaq's drawing, 1998.

Captain Charles Francis Hall, an American explorer writes in his narrative, *Life with the Esquimaux.*

> After eliciting all the information I then could from the old woman, I left her, with great astonishment at her powers of memory, and the remarkable way in which this strange people of the icy North, who have no written language, can correctly preserve history from one generation to another. Nine generations have passed away since the visit of Frobisher, yet now, on the 11th of May, 1861, I received from an old woman, probably a hundred years old, statements which I could not otherwise than believe to be facts concerning him and his co-adventures (Hall, 1970, p. 245)!

Hall compared the facts he heard from Uqijjuaksi on that day, and the written book by Barrow, *Chronological History of Arctic Discovery.* Both were the same, three centuries apart.

My late step-grandmother, Pitsiulaalaa was interviewed often on *CBC* radio about the changing times. I came across one of her interviews that I had transcribed and she talks about growing up in her family camp between Kimmirut and Cape Dorset. She remembers becoming aware, as a very young girl being carried by her paternal uncle on his shoulders as they trekked back to their camp from being inland during their annual caribou hunting in the summer. She felt frustrated that he would not put her down as she looked longingly down onto the ground, eyeing the ripe, plump berries. She remembered muttering to herself, 'Why will he not stop? I thought my uncle loves me! He will not even listen to me.' Her story is a narrative of her first recollections. She talks about the discipline, hard work and specific roles that a woman, a man and children had to survive.

Her desire was to do the same kinds of tasks as her mother did, making clothes, tending the *qulliq* (stone oil lamp) working with sealskin and caribou fur. Everyone had to contribute, do their share and not be idle. The men were always out hunting, even on days where the weather was not nice. My grandmother goes on to say that, in her lifetime, she saw a lot of change, from a culture of hard, physical work to one of being confined to buildings where people grew to be idle. The contrast between my grandmother's and mother's way of life and mine is immense.

Figure 2. Pitsiulaalaa Kelly, early 1990's.
Arnaquq family collection. Black & white photograph.

As the elders often say, *unikkaaqtuatuinnauliqtuq* (It is only a story now). This saying captures the loss of our way of life which is more rapid today than even when I was a child. It seems that I was born at the cusp of this chasm.

My maternal great-grandmother, *Pilitaq*, said to my mother in the 1940's: "There will be many changes ahead, our world will be different, it will grow warmer, and there will be many newcomers coming up North."

The elders in my life saw ahead to the radical changes that would shape my life. This thesis chronicles that journey and those changes.

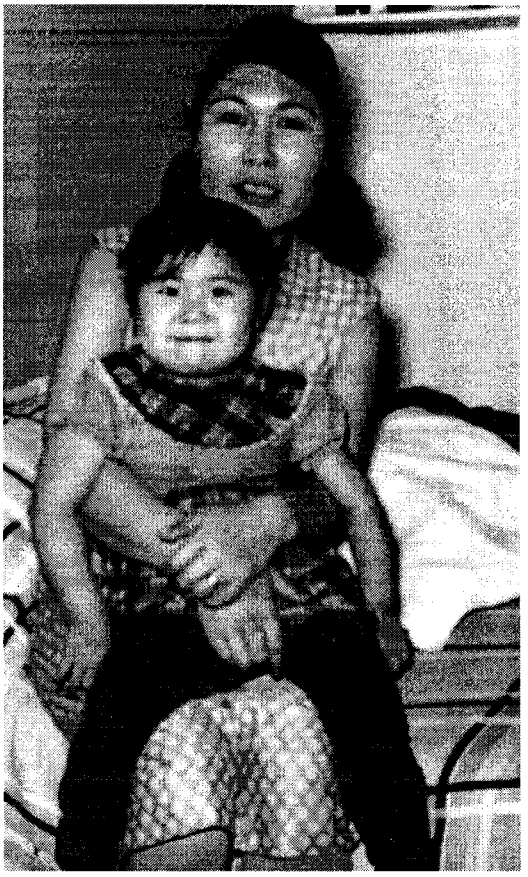

Figure 3. Naullaq and her mother Baaqtita, 1962.
Arnaquq family collection. Black & white photograph.

Unniqsiurniq - Acknowledgements

This story is for you my dear children, Aasivak and Aggiuq, who always wanted to hear 'no-book stories' and it is for you to pass on. It is also for the children in our family, whose names of our great-grandparents and relatives they carry and pass on: Pitsiulaaq-Noah, Emily-Pitsiulaalaa, Ula, Joanasie-Nasuk, Johnibou-Connor, Mitchel-Anugaaq, Pilitaq, Josie, Krista-Kullu, Pitsiulak-Joanne, Judi-Shawn, Malikto-Eric, Mikidjuk, Fiona-Baaqtita, Layla-Taqqialuk, Aimo-Saimaniq, Maya-Baaqtita, and Judi-Ulluriaq . It is a 'book story' of which I write some of the no-book stories that I heard from your dear *anaanatsiaq (aana), ataatatsiaq* and our aunts and uncles but also from other Elders I have met and heard over the years. *Irniik, paniik, aakuluk*! Your ataata, Peter, has often helped me to understand the *Qallunaaq* culture in a more objective way but also my own that changed as I lived it. Thank you!

Unniqsiurniq (expressed gratitude) was an attribute Inuit held dearly. It is respectful to acknowledge gratitude because it is welcoming and giving at the same time. I thank my mother, Baaqtitaq and father, Anugaaq for their inner strength that sustained us as a family in trying times. That inner strength is the family values they received from their parents and people. I am grateful for the support of my sisters and brothers – Pudloo, Lucy, Leeta, Susie, Tunirjuli, Eemeelayou, Gou, Salamonie, and Sandy. The words of encouragement and support from my friends have also sustained me. Nakurmiik!

I appreciate the words, *uqaujjuusiat 'gifts of' words* of advice, love and support, and stories that we heard and received through my mother, and other Elders (through my

work), have given me over the years. *Ajakulukka, atsagalu, Angaga Jonah, Anne, asingillu ilavut.*

Thank you to Fiona Walton for her constant support and words of advice, without her, this immense feat would have been even more difficult. I also want to acknowledge Joanne Tompkins, Sandy McAuley and Suzanne Thomas for their words of advice and encouragement.

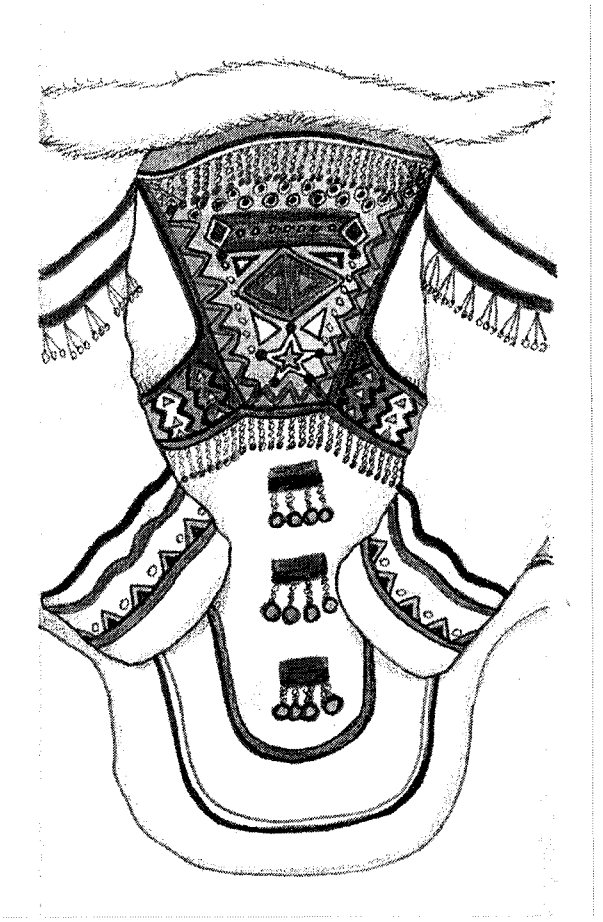

Figure 4. Front of an *amauti* (woman's parka). Drawing by Naullaq 1992.

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CHAPTER ONE

Family & Kinship

> *Ikajuqtigiiqattalangajusilli, ilagiitsiarasuaqattarlusi, saimmaqattautivallusi qatanngutigiikkatsi, atsururnaqtukkuuqattalangagatsi.* (You must help each other as family, and as siblings you have to have harmony, forgive and rely on each other during hard times.*)* (Anugaaq 1922-2003, Baaqtitaq 1933-1999).

Context - Family History

My name is Naullaq, Mary, Ungaaq, Taqqialuk, Natsiq, Anirniq and my last name is Arnaquq. I include my government identification number issued when I was born, E7-1728. My daughter's name is Aggiuq, my son Aasivak and their father is Peter. I come from a family of 11 children. I was born in Iqaluit in 1959 but my parents were from areas near Kimmirut so my story and language are rooted from these areas and I cannot speak for others from other areas. Iqaluit is located on Baffin Island in Nunavut. It was given an English name, Frobisher Bay after when it was established in the 1940's but that was dropped as an official name in 1987. The area has been called Iqaluit by the people originally from the area for many generations because of the river that spawns the arctic char every spring when the waters start to flow. The town where Iqaluit is now was originally referred to *Manirajak* by families who were from around here because of the flat terrain.

Part of my story comes from speaking with my parents, not in one sitting but at many different times since 1977 when I met my husband. He did not speak Inuktitut

(Inuit language) then and would have me interpret for him when he asked them questions about our family. His interest stemmed from reading the book, *People from our Side*, by an Inuk author, Peter Pitseolak (1976) who also happened to be my great-aunt Aggiuq's second husband. I started asking my own questions and then over the course of 25 years I picked up historical information and traditions about our family.

My father was Anugaaq and mother Baaqtita. Anugaaq was born to Arnaquq and Palluq and, my mother's father was Anugaakuluk and her mother was Naullaq. Both of my parents' families had always lived around the southern shores of Baffin Island, in Nunavut between Cape Dorset and Kimmirut. People lived in winter communities or camps consisting of mostly four or five families along the seacoast. Families went fishing and hunting caribou inland in the late summer where the caribou migrated and had their young. My grandfather Anugaakuluk had established his own camp in *Qijujjuaq* on the east of Kimmirut (Lake Harbour) after my namesake, his first wife, passed away. My father was born in 1922, the third eldest of his siblings. My mother was born in 1933. Her siblings were, brother Saimaniq who was the eldest, my mother who was the eldest of the girls; then Martha, Ungaaq, and Immilajuq. My father's sisters were; Josie, Annie, and Mialiralaaq. He had two younger brothers; Iola, and Pitsiulaaq. His eldest brother Igijuapik had died when the family went inland for the summer while they were caribou hunting, before my father was born. I was not going to mention this but Igijuapik had been born with a disability and could not walk. My mother told me in a hushed tone that my father's eldest adopted brother who was probably a toddler then, had been left on the land to die, as was custom. His parents, Arnaquq and Palluq would have been in their

twenties, and Arnaquq's father, Aasivak and grandmother Kallaarjuk would have been in their late forties. They had been caribou hunting inland when they made this life choice.

In South Baffin, my grandparents' generation was still using dogteams in the winter and spring, and the qajaq (kayak), but many were using wooden boats when my parents were born in the 1920's and 1930's. Inuit still hunted for subsistence and traded furs with the independent fur traders and the famous Hudson's Bay Company. Whaling had already disappeared by then. My great-grandparents generation was the one that hunted whales with the Scottish and American whalers in the late 1800's. My great-grandmother Kallaarjuk was said to be a daughter of an American whaling Captain named Walker.

Figure 5. Annie Kimaluk, Kallaarjuk and 'Johnibou' Saimuarjuk, 1881. Eber (1989). Used with permission of author.

Figure 6. 'Annie' Kimaluk in 1930's. Arnaquq family collection. Black & white photograph.

Figure 7. Kallaarjuk and woman in front of an iglu, 1950's. Used with permission of author.

My great-great grandparents, Johnibou Saimuarjuk and Annie Kimaluk had served whaling ships in the late 1800's. There is a beautiful, clear photograph of them in a book called, *When the Whalers were up North*, by Dorothy Harley Eber (1989). They had by fate, being witness to the stealing of whale blubber and oil and ended up in the United

States to testify in court for a Captain John Orrin Spicer in 1881.Their daughter, Kallaarjuk, was my father's grandmother and often told stories about their 'adventure'. She recounted seeing, many, many lights in the harbour when they landed in the USA. Just twenty years before, her namesake, grandfather Kallaarjuk had also been to the USA. Charles Francis Hall, an American explorer mentions in his narrative, *Life with the Esquimaux* (1970) that Kallaarjuk died on the ship, George Henry on July 1, 1860 as they were returning North from New London, Connecticut having departed on May the 29th. Annie Kimaluk's mother and sister are mentioned in the book which verifies the identity of Kallaarjuk as our great-great-great grandfather.

Figure 8. Kallaarjuk, great-great-great Grandfather, mid 1860's.

Families were scattered all along the sea coast in their family camps because of their dependence on seals for seal oil and blubber, food and clothing. The whalers and traders had impacted the lifestyle of my great-grandparents' generation from the materials and goods they traded them with in the 1920's and 1930's. Inuit had started to

depend on metal tools, wood, matches, cloth material, food such as sugar, tea, flour, baking powder, lard, as well as tobacco, kerosene, and bullets.

When I asked my mother one time if they had worn skin clothing or had skin tents she commented that most people had stopped wearing skin clothing but they were still worn and mostly by hunters. She had never even slept in an igloo. My maternal aunt who married a man from the Melville Peninsula area in the mid-1960's once told me that when she moved into that area, that it was like going back in time because everyone wore skin clothing. South Baffin Inuit had been influenced by the whalers, missionaries and other *Qallunaat* much earlier than Inuit in other areas.

My father went to live with his older sister Josie in Kimmirut upon the wishes of his mother when everyone around him in their camp, including his mother, became sick in the late early 1940's. His father had died around 1937 in Pangnirtung. He was then informed not long afterwards that his mother, cousins, relatives, and younger brothers Pitsiulaaq and Iola had all died of influenza. His sister Josie, who was the eldest, himself, and his younger sisters Annie and Mary were the only survivors of their siblings who were sent to live with other relatives. It was only in the mid 1990's that my father had returned to their family camp to acknowledge their passing after almost 50 years. My cousin was kindly able to arrange this trip with another family from Kimmirut. My mother was too frail to accompany him and commented that she wished she was able to do the same to see the land and camp she had grown up in.

In the early to mid 1950's before my father married my mother he worked for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police taking them on their patrol trips by dogteam.

Figure 9. Anugaaq's dogteam, 1950's.Black & white photograph taken by Anugaaq Arnaquq. Arnaquq family collection.

There is a film footage taken by one of the RCMP men on one of these journeys from Kimmirut to Cape Dorset and Iqaluit (Frobisher Bay) visiting and meeting families along the way in their camps living the traditional way of life hunting and fishing. This film shows a way of life just before our parents and grandparents moved into settlements. I had the privilege of watching this with my parents, aunts and uncles in 1998. As they watched this film, there was an immediate connection and recognition of the people. There was a lot of laughter, nostalgia, as well as very quiet moments from seeing many, many familiar families, Elders, relatives and people who were no longer around. Some of the people were also very familiar and recognizable even to me. I saw the young women and men and even children not as who they were but as images of their own children I grew up with or even their grandchildren that I taught in school. Seeing their eyes and faces, you could see people who knew their identity with no question; calm and confident. They knew their roles and what was expected of them. Most of the major obstacles they had were those nature put in front of them.

The 1940's and 1950's marked a time when the RCMP and the Government started to impact the Inuit way of life. Their role was to administer the society of these

Northern Canadians who did not know they were citizens and subjects of an external authority, a country called Canada. These external forces impacted Inuit families; my parents, relatives, friends and fellow Inuit on this side of the world who lived a life as they had always done with their own values, beliefs, spirituality, traditions, customs and knowledge. These were men who would become the Arnaquqs, Sagiaktoks, Temelas, Akavaks, Alaingas, Anirmiuqs, Kotaigos, Pitsiulaks, Saimaniqs, Pootoogooks, Kilabuks, Peters, Onaliks, and many other families of South Baffin. They did not know their lives were about to undergo significant change as the policy-makers in southern Canada debated how to address the Eskimos who were being reported with tragic illnesses, hunger and in a 'helpless condition': two worlds were co-existing and one was to bring about a huge change on the other.

Tuberculosis and Transition to Community

Sickness and death made their way across the land like an invisible fog affecting almost every camp and family. Inuit had never been exposed to the new illnesses brought by the newcomers. In many families, the loss of so many members altered family and social dynamics. Mothers, grandmothers or grandfathers dying caused imbalance and weakened family ties, history, and knowledge. A new way of life became entrenched through Christianity and its religious beliefs, taboos and customs, helping to foster dependency on the *Qallunaat* nurses, doctors and RCMP and the Hudson's Bay Company traders. Hunters were often too weak from illnesses and the young too young to tend to their families' well-being.

The Federal Government stepped in to deal with the health and administrative issues. Many people were coming down with tuberculosis and other diseases, Inuit were being reported as being sick, hungry and starving all across the Arctic. At the same time sovereignty was a developing Canadian issue and if Inuit were to occupy new towns, then introducing formal education was part of the answer, the key to help them adjust to a new way of life that would be better for them.

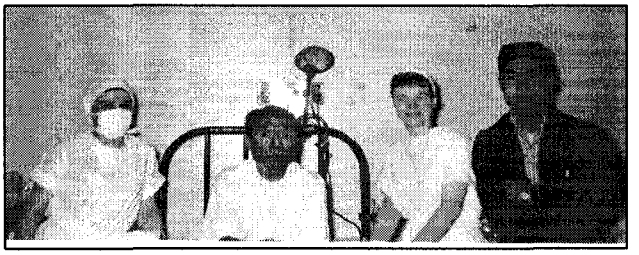


Figure 10: My father (far right) with an Elder and the nurses at the TB Sanitorium in Hamilton, Ontario, 1956. Arnaquq family collection. Black and white photograph.

Both of my parents had been previously married in the late 1940's but their first spouses and their first babies all died from illnesses brought by the newcomers. When my father was living in Kimmirut after his first wife died, my grandfather Anugaakuluk had told my father he could marry my mother. Marriages were arranged traditionally and women did not have any choice in the matter. People who still lived in their family camps started to get sick. Ships arrived North carrying medical staff to tend to Inuit. They diagnosed many of the Inuit with a highly communicable disease called TB. People were not allowed an opportunity to leave the ship to say goodbye to their loved ones or take any of their belongings with them. In our family, my mother's father, step-mother, paternal aunt Elisapee, her two sisters Mary Ungaaq and Immilajuq, several cousins, step-sister and her husband, my father's two sisters, cousins, and many, many relatives, friends, and others were sent South to a sanatorium in Hamilton, Ontario. They were

hospitalized for a year or more at different times. This happened all across the Eastern Arctic. Some Inuit never returned home having succumbed to the disease.

Figure 11. Baaqtita on right with Tapea, unknown woman, and Annie 1957. Arnaaquq family collection. Black and white photograph.

Figure 12. Aunt Josie, nurse and Aunt Mary Uungaaq with dresses they made. My two aunts died in Hamilton. 1956 or 1957. Arnaquq family collection. Black and white photograph.

Transition

Iqaluit was established and built by the American Air Force during World War II. After my father had returned from his TB treatment, he moved from Kimmirut to Iqaluit in 1957 when my mother was sent to Hamilton, Ontario to be closer to her and get regular mail. There were flights coming into Iqaluit from the South on a regular basis. He worked for the nursing station or the Hudson Bay Company in Kimmirut at the time and informed his *Qallunaaq* (white person which is not a derogative term) boss that he was moving. He was able to get a job at the Military Base while he waited for my mother to come back. He lived with one of his relatives until my mother was released from the sanatorium the next summer with my four-year-old brother and my older sister who was a few months old, having been born at the hospital. I was born a year after she had moved back to Iqaluit. By then, my grandparents and the rest of the family moved by dog-team

from their winter camp to be closer to my mother and her younger sister. The scattered family was now whole again. They lived in tents that summer and into the fall of 1958 until my father built a small hut (in which I was apparently born) made from scrap lumber from the Base. Others also built similar shelters or *qarmat* (huts).

That year in 1958, a man from the South had arrived who had been hired by the Federal Government to do research and interview the Inuit families who moved into Frobisher Bay to find out how they were adjusting to town life. Mr. Toshio Yatsushiro also recorded the genealogical information for each family. When Inuit moved into the Iqaluit/Frobisher Bay area they came from family camps between Kimmirut and Cape Dorset areas and southern Frobisher Bay.

The government issued a new policy that houses in the new settlements would be built for the Eskimos so their children could attend school and they would be cared for. This was a new beginning for Canada and its northern most inhabitants. Our family of six was moved into a small pre-fabricated one-room house. I would have been about two to three years old.

Naming, Family & Kinship

At home, I was called Naullaq, or by a kinship term according to the relationships that a person had with my namesake or one of my other names, *Mary Ungaaq, Natsiq, Taqqialuk, Anirniq* who had passed away before or soon after I was born. As customary, being one of the first couple of daughters, I was named after my maternal grandmother who had died when my mother was a young girl.

The kinship names I was referred to included, my father's *atsakuluk* (paternal aunt), my mother's *panik* (daughter, not just because I was her biological daughter but because I was her namesake's daughter), my great-aunt's *angijukuluk* (older sibling), my aunts' *nukaq* (younger sister), my other aunt's *anaana* (mother) and I was also referred to as *irniq* (son) through my name Taqqialuk by a couple not directly related to us who had lost their baby son after I was born. Whenever I saw this couple in public, the husband called me *irniq* and kissed me on my cheek in the Inuktitut way even as I grew older and had my own children. I referred to them as my *anaana* and *ataata* (mother and father). So, I was not just Naullaq, but *anaana, atsak, angijukuluk, nukaq, irniq* or whatever relationship one of my namesakes had with certain families.

My maternal uncle called me *najakuluk* and *anaana* (sister or mother) because of my names, Ungaaq and Naullaq. He was affectionate towards me and acknowledged me through these kinship terms. I called him *anikuluk* (brother), whereas my siblings referred to him as *anga* (uncle). My mother's sister's husband referred to me as his *sakik* or *sakiruluk* (mother-in-law or dear old mother-in-law) and acknowledged me with respect all my life now that I look back and reflect on this. I was expected to refer to him as my son-in-law, *ningauk* (nee nga-ook). He would give me Christmas gifts he would probably have given my namesake when I was in my teens because these were women's tools; an ulu (woman's knife), a wooden box, and a shelf, all of which he had made.

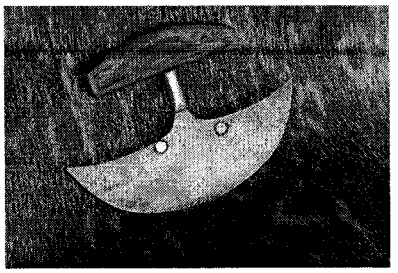


Figure 13. *Ulu* – woman's knife, gift from my *ningauk* (my namesake's son-in-law). Colour photograph.

Another family acknowledged me through my namesake Natsiq so I was their *atsak* (paternal aunt) to their sons. I remember as a young child when my mother and I would visit that household and I would have to greet my namesake's old mother and her daughter's mother in-law by putting my face and cheek towards them so they would kiss me on that cheek, so I would feel their faces all wrinkled and soft. These were greetings of love and affection, an acknowledgement of their daughter through my name. I can picture old Oo Alainga sitting on the bed with her legs stretched before her with a tobacco pipe in her hand or mouth and her hair braided in the traditional way around her head with her strong voice resonating in my ears and pouring with love. I also knew when I visited my great-aunt's home that I would be greeted with the same affectionate tone of endearment because of my relationship with her. I was her older sister after all and she was my younger sister through my name Naullaq.

Figure 14. Oo Alainga
Arnaquq family collection.
Black and white photograph.

Figure 15. Ningiuraapik (my nukakuluk – my namesake's younger sister, and my anaana – mother). Arnaquq family collection. Black and white photo.

All my brothers and sisters also had several names like I did and had close kinships with other families. They connected with them often with the same kind of

affection and sense of belonging. Other families were just as interconnected with one another but as children some of us shared the same namesakes so that also connected us. There were four of us girls who had been born a month apart the winter my aunt, *Mary Ungaaq* died so our parents and my great-aunt always referred to us as the *Ungaanguqatigiit*, ones who share the name, *Ungaaq*.

I now realize as I am older that our aunts and uncles as well as this namesake's close relatives acknowledged us not just through our direct relationships but would remember their loved ones who lived on in our names. I came to understand more about the emotional connections that are made with names and memories after my own mother and father had passed away. There were many babies born after they had died who were given their names. Following our naming custom, whenever I saw the babies I felt obliged to acknowledge them as my *anaana* (mother) and *ataata* (father). At first it was hard because of the pain of loss and memories associated with using the name I had used all of my life. Each time I see these children, I feel a tug in my heart with memories of my parents. Their parents often remind them to acknowledge me as their daughter. Now I know what my mother or father and others of their generation must have felt when they remembered their loved ones who had passed on when they called us by our kinship names. There was a lot of love in their eyes and faces.

Beliefs and customs related to naming are still practised - *atiqsuqtuq* (resembles namesake's characteristics), *atiqtaarumajuq* (a young baby's continous cries indicates it wants to be named after a person who has recently passed away), *tuqsurarniq (*to refer to someone by kinship term,) *atikuluk, sauniq* someone who you share a namesake with, and *kinamik atiqaqpit* (we often ask, 'who is your name' – not, what is your name).

These unique concepts and terms contain meanings that denote respect, spirituality, legacy, family connection and relationships. In 2002, my little mother, Fiona-Baaqtita as a four year old, remarked to her mother, my sister, as she pointed out my parents' former house, "Look, that is where I used to live and look out from those windows." No one had ever mentioned anything to her before because my sister and her family live in the South. It was their first time to pass by the house. This is referred to as *atiqsuqtuq* (follows her namesake's characteristics). Inuit traditionally believed that this is a sign of the namesake's spirit living on.

Inuit kinship customs and naming are complex and there are variations of the terms, customs or beliefs in the different areas in the Arctic. One is not more correct as some may deem them to be, just different. However, one universal aspect in this cultural oral tradition is the feeling of connection and belonging that it brings to a family and individuals which was essential in 'community' and kinship ties to ensure there was harmony, sharing and survival. Passing this tradition on reminded people who they were related to and instilled in them to share, love and give in order to survive.

This naming system is still practiced in the Baffin and other areas and even where it has weakened it is still strong in the older generations. It was starting to weaken when schools were established but finally the school system has started to acknowledge it in the curriculum and programs now that there are more Inuit teaching and more school material which promote and explain this custom. The overall collective knowledge and how the naming works has been weakened, generalized or lost because of people moving to other communities, acquiring of Western kinship naming customs such as using only

Qallunaatitut names and middle names so younger parents do not pass on the usage of kinship terms to their young ones right from birth breaking the tradition and knowledge.

The names and naming process were slightly affected each time a group of newcomers came up North at different periods starting from the whalers in the 1800's who gave nicknames to Inuit because they could not pronounce their Inuktitut names, for example, my great-great grandfather Saimuarjuk was given the name Johnibou, from John Bull, (Hall, 1970, p. 100) and the name was passed on to the grandchildren as a given name. Then the missionaries in the late 1800's with their teachings about Christianity influenced our great-great grandparents to acquire names that were not just names from the Bible like John, Mary, Elizabeth but names that referred to religious concepts like, *Qilabaq* (ascended into heaven), *Guutiliaq* (towards God), *Baaqtita* (baptized). This name was my mother's who was named after her grandfather who had been a shaman, then became a Christian. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police who acted for the Government of Canada started to assign Identification Numbers to 'Eskimos'. My great-aunt and her husband were the first to be given ID numbers in their area so theirs were E7-1 and E7-2, and my mother's was, E7-33 and my father's was, E7-122. Every family had registration numbers. I used to know all of my siblings' numbers but have forgotten them over time. These numbers stopped being used in 1970 after we officially acquired surnames.

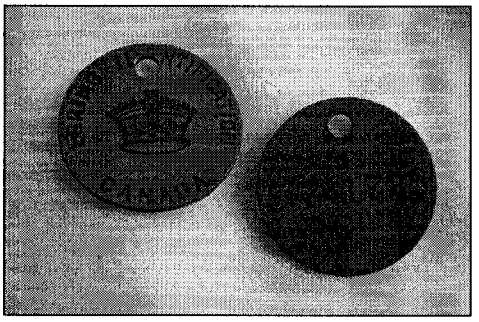


Figure 16. My (Naullaq's) identification disc number: E7-1728. Colour photograph.

Little did our parents know that our names and kinship customs would start to be altered forever when we went to school.

CHAPTER TWO

Schooling

> When there is a school in the community all children between six and fifteen years of age must go. It is the duty of parents, guardians or other persons having charge of any child to send that child to school. The purpose of this law, besides making sure that everyone learns to read and write, is to provide enough schooling to help people that employment, to understand the way our country is governed, and to prepare themselves for higher education. (*Qaujivaallirutiksat*, 1964, p. 62)

Schooling

My family's experience with schooling began in Iqaluit (Frobisher Bay as the Southerners called it until 1987) when my cousin and oldest brother started at the school built in the late 1950's in Apex, three miles from Iqaluit. They were expected to walk there every day and back. One day, according to my cousin who lived with us, her parents having died of sickness a few years before, she was kept home soon after either I or my younger sister were born and as was custom, being the eldest female child was expected to help care for the young ones. Suddenly a *Qallunaaq* woman came charging into the house very upset at my cousin for not showing up for school. She invaded our small home and without any discussion with my mother told my cousin to put her jacket on and go to school. She took her by the collar of her jacket and marched her to school. The whirlwind came and went probably leaving my mother behind in a state of

bewilderment and powerlessness. This turned out to be a blessing from my cousin's point of view years later because of the educational advantages she gained. Nevertheless for my parents, it was an indication of the power and authority *Qallunaat* had over Inuit especially early on in the schooling and community colonization process. My mother had never, ever related this story to any of us or spoke about to anyone.

Over the years, my parents entrusted ten children to the schools in Iqaluit from 1959 to 1982. We became different people before their very eyes, acquiring a different language, customs, values, beliefs, history, knowledge and ways. Hence, this story I now tell in my second language.

I started school when I was five years old in 1965. This was just something I expected as my older brother, cousin and sister went to school every day. I was anxious and very excited to start school like my close friends and cousins who were the same age. It was a sunny day and I was to go with my brother and sister. My mother braided my hair tightly in the traditional way with the plaits braided along the sides of my head and wound at the back of my neck. I was impatient and annoyed with her pulling my hair too tightly. My mother stayed at home with my younger sister and my baby brother and with another baby along the way. I remember my brother urging me to hurry up so we ran up the road and met my cousin and other children with their older siblings. Someone wanted to race to the school so we all ran. I remember the shortness of breath I felt trying to keep up with them along the dirt road, past the old sealift tugboat which I always found a bit scary, towards the *Qallunaaq* side of town and finally through the playground to the school. This was a long trek for me being six years old. I remember one of the young boys my age starting to cry, he did not want to be left behind, but I also remember he

didn't want to go any further as we neared the school. His cousin and older sister tried to reassure him that it was not a scary place, "*Kappianannggi! Sujaujjaangittutin*!" (No one will do anything to you), his older sister was yelling at him to stop crying. Our cousin was also trying to console him too, '*atiingaaq*' (Let's just go).

We walked quickly up the sandy slope towards the entrance of the school where the Kindergarten class was. There were several long buildings for the different classes. We entered the porch of the school, our sneakers or rubber boots scraping the sand on the linoleum floor and echoing against the empty walls. There were many children being led by their siblings like me. The older ones impatiently told us to keep moving, '*Kiiq! Atii*!' (Go on, go ahead). Either my brother or sister dropped me off in the Kindergarten classroom. I remember entering the room slowly but as I looked around, I saw all the shelves full of toys, chalkboards, books, desks and other children. Most of us were being nudged or pushed in as we just stood still near the entrance too scared or leery of the *Qallunaaq* teacher. My mother was not with me to offer protection and I never went anywhere without her.

Entering a foreign building where the *Qallunaat* were the authority was always a different feeling, whether it was the hospital, post office, store, government office, airport, and now this, the school. This was a place for children. *Qallunaat* were different from us and they were in charge. We did not speak a word of English, except maybe the word hello and or bye bye that the *Qallunaat* always said to others they greeted at the hospital, store or post office.

We were now in the world of the *Qallunaat* and in the hands of the teacher. Our mothers and little brothers or sisters and grandparents seemed so far away. Each time the

teacher acknowledged one of us we looked down shyly averting our eyes. We were sitting or kneeling on the floor, squirming as five or six year olds do. As we settled down, the teacher took a pad and started to call out our names at the circle and she called out my name, 'Nowdluk', and my 'Eskimo Identification' number, E7-1728. I did not know it was my number yet. The others had numbers too. She then called out a name I did not know. Then the teacher pointed out my cousin from the name she had just called. I did not know her by that name! At first I was confused because we never referred to her by that name. It took me a long time to get used to her 'new name'. There were a couple of others we had to learn because they were now also called by their English names. She called out many of our names so differently and it sounded funny. Such names like, Leetia became Ly-d-i-a, Ungaaq – Own-ga, and Pitsiulaaq - Peetsee-oh-laak in her pronunciations. We looked at each other and laughed at the ones that sounded so odd coming from her lips. Our teacher looked at us sternly. We immediately understood her as being annoyed at us for laughing at her and it shut most of us right up. If someone's name was called we would look towards that child and someone would urge him or her to acknowledge the teacher.

As we sat around the floor, the teacher sang songs to us and then read a story from a book but we did not understand her words so I remember just looking at the pictures. She did not speak Inuktitut. She spoke to us so differently from our parents or how we talked with one another. It made us shy. There were some louder kids like 'Timi' who was more boisterous. He understood more English than we did having been to the South because of polio. He wore leg braces. Timi was often the one to tell us what the teacher was saying.

If one of us burst out laughing from seeing and feeling the cultural disparities it was an opportunity to laugh together! We would put our hands over our mouths, look at each other, raise our shoulders and squirm in our spots on the floor. If we did laugh out loud, Timi or one of the other kids would blurt out, "*ijuriaqanngi*" or "*nipiqariaqanngi*!" ("No laughing allowed!" or "no talking allowed!"). However, over time we learned to understand those looks or that tone of voice. We knew when to stop what we were doing when our names were called. Sometimes we had to be herded back to the group physically. We also learned what we were allowed to do and not to do from seeing how others were being dealt with. The days that followed must have been easier for us and I expect for the teacher too as we learned about each other and way of communicating. We would learn the 'routines' over time, taking our coats and shoes off in the hallway, walking in a straight line, going to the bathroom together, learning how to use the flushing toilets and running water in the sinks, washing our hands after using the toilet, putting the toys away, sitting in a circle on the floor, listening to the teacher, acknowledging her, learning her songs, words and manners: very different from how we behaved with our parents and one another, very different.

Each day we went to school we learned new words, come here, sit down, look, book, crayon, chair, desk, table, pencil, red, blue, very good, no and so on. I am sure each of us that first night after the first day of school started to dream differently from our parents with the beginnings of a new language, words, concepts, new ways of behaving, doing things, and, a new way of *thinking*.

Figure 17. Pudloo and Naullaq, 1965. Courtesy of Jonah Kelly. Colour photograph.

During the early school years we had to be in bed by 8:00. I remember waking up to the sound of howling dogs at the first light of dawn many mornings in the winter. There were still a few dogteams in Iqaluit in the 1960's but most families did not have them anymore. My father had given his dogs up when he moved here. As I lay there with my head on the pillow, I'd look up at the small window in our sleeping area and see the dark blue dawn's sky above my head. When we arose, my mother always expected us to run to the door and look outside up at the sky. This was a custom called *anijaarniq* which was to step outside and look at the sky to see how the weather was and might become. My parents were raised with strict customs, and this was one of them. They had to immediately get up, get dressed and not lie around in bed, go outside and see how the weather was. This was to instill a sense of awareness of the environment, weather, and also to teach children to grow up to be quick to respond. You did not have time to dwell on lazy thoughts or learn to dally and put things off. To motivate us my mother would make us race to get dressed first. I never ever wanted to be late and would not miss a day of school.

We lived in our small one-room house with a partition separating the sleeping area. We did not have any electricity, running water or a separate bathroom. There was a

water tank near the oil stove. During the day when we were in school my mother stayed home and would be there at lunch time and after school. We spoke Inuktitut at home with our family, cousins and friends. My mother would always be working with sealskins or sewing parkas, mitts or *kamiks* (sealskin boots) and expected my older sister to help care for the younger children. My cousin who had been the eldest child in our home had moved away. All of our aunts and uncles lived on the same street including our grandparents so our daily interactions were still tied closely to family and kinships. In the summers we often went fishing or camping to the same area across the bay with our relatives so we were a very close knit for the first ten to fifteen years of my life.

School was fun for me because I was learning new things, a new language and there were activities such as reading books, singing songs, and playing with toys, blocks and colouring. I loved to draw and colour and play with the plasticene. I probably quickly acquired the schoolish way of being because I remember my younger siblings became my students and I became the teacher early on pretending and trying to be like my teachers. I was always a Miss somebody! Play and role-playing was a large part of our activity as children with none of the distractions kids have today because there was no TV. As kids we played mother and father, hunting, sewing, scraping skins and we played outdoors a lot more. We still played the Inuktitut traditional games like the Inuktitut hide and seek. I remember playing hide and seek when it was getting dark with kids from our area near the beach; Saniijja, Lucy, Pitseolak, Simigaq, Mary, Uaqta, Aitii, Niivi, my brother Immilajuq, and many other kids. We would get into in a circle, swing both of our arms onto the next kid's shoulders and hunch over singing the song while moving clockwise in a circle while one child went to hide;

Uquutaa, quttajaa
Alirannii, aijaa
Suttaa suluk
Juusi, uqqurmiut
Annurait, qaqulluit
tikisivuq
Uuttuq kananngat
Qijjaarialik, iluani, kanna
Aggaligaarjuk, iluani kanna
Umiligaarjuk
Qimmimauna, alurutaani
Tulimaaq atausiq,
Kujapigaq atausiq!

As we sang the last word, we quickly spread apart to look for the kid who had gone to hide. He was somewhere among the sheds and canoes scattered along the beach. Whoever found him first was next to go and hide. I would be scared to go and look too far when it was getting dark. To discipline and keep us safe from falling in water or ice-cracks, we were told scary stories and sayings such as the *tuurngaaluit* (bad spirits), *Qunngalukkakiit, qalupaliit, aggajaat, tarriatsuit, angakkuit, (*troll like tickler, sea monsters that put you in their parkas, hands, shadow beings, shamans) and many others we heard from other children. Imagination would play with our minds, a shadow or dark object in the dark became those beings lurking nearby.

We also played Inuktitut versions of catch, baseball, Inuit physical games, and sang Inuktitut songs until the late 1960's. These games were sometimes the exact opposite of the *Qallunaatitut* (way of *Qallunaat* - English) games with an emphasis on collectivity, playing the game and not just having one person winning. If you did win, that was an extra benefit. However, these games were quickly replaced with the *Qallunaatitut* hide and go seek, hockey, baseball, hopscotch, marbles, and songs as we learned them from our teachers and our *Qallunaat* classmates. My sister and I were

hardly ever apart, often playing with our cousins who lived on the same street. Our house was not far from the stream so as children we would often go and look for little fish. I remember one time my sister, cousins and I taking big cups or water dippers and going into the cold stream with our rubber boots on. I waded a bit too far into the deeper part of the stream and felt the pull of the water. It was probably only a foot and a half deep. One of my cousins squealed, "*Iqaluralaaq*!" (Little fish). I saw them and bent over with my container and tried to fish one out. After catching several, we then took our boots and socks off and waded into the stream. If we wanted to we could drink the clean, cold water. I can hear the gurgle of the water as it flowed down the creek against the rocks. We would sometimes bring a yellow bar of Sunlight soap so we could wash our socks and often go home with clean, white feet and socks.

Home Life, Family Traditions – School Years

During the summers as I got a little bit older, we often went bird or lemming hunting and berry picking along the hills but sometimes I was allowed to go fishing with the older kids to the river which was a few miles away from town. We would walk along the road hoping for a lift from someone who would happen along in a vehicle. There were not too many cars or trucks in those days. Sometimes my brother and the older kids would run too far ahead and those of us who were younger would be running along, gasping for air trying to keep up among the dust and pebbles. Finally we would get to the soft, mossy, carpet like tundra and rocks. Then we would have to hike down the hill towards the falls if we went that route or just to the flowing water if it was at *Qangattaalik* (name means area that has shore ice and high), which was further down the

river. We were always told to not walk onto ice stuck to the shore in case it came off or else you would go with the ice into the moving river. This area was dangerous because of the high and low tides. Several of my brother's friends had perished only a few years before in this area.

At the end of each school day we would come home and often have a cup of tea with a biscuit or bannock. My mother was always busy, washing diapers and clothes by hand, scraping and cleaning sealskins or making something. My older sister and I would be expected to play with younger siblings. Being close in age and with her role in being the helper I was not really expected to take on that role because she was also my helper. She was my right arm and leg in everything and my protector. Our mother expected her to be the guardian. We often played with our cousins who lived on the same street. We would visit our grandparents, uncles and aunts every single day entering their houses usually only for a few minutes often at just the entrance because all the houses were very small. Sometimes we would enter our friends or playmate's houses. This daily contact with our extended family was normal and expected. This had been the custom in the small family camps only just a few years before.

Houses were never locked even if no one was home. We were not allowed to enter an empty house when the inhabitants were not home. One of the sayings we as children would be told was, the *qunngalukkakiit* (the small smiling, perhaps, troll-like beings) would come out of the edge of the sleeping platforms and tickle us to death or if we took someone's belongings, we could encounter *aggajaat* (hands). That kept us in order. I remember as a young girl I was going through a pile of papers and things in our house on a high shelf and I unexpectedly saw a small four fingered hand wiggling its

fingers! My whole body froze and my head went hot and tingled as if my hair stood up. I immediately jumped down from the table without saying anything to my mother. I was too scared and embarrassed from making a mess. For years, I never told anyone what I had seen.

There were other unnatural occurrences that I experienced like the time I was walking towards the Base area with friends. I looked towards the old tugboat and I saw what looked like a skeleton walking and then it disappeared but as it did there was a glow of light. Another one was where several of us, including my sister, when we were about seven to twelve years old were playing outside between our houses. An older girl whom I will call Ittu, not much bigger than we were, who was from the house behind ours came over to us telling us about a *tuurngaq* (monster or spirit) in their shed. My friend and sister and I looked at each other. One of the other children egged us on to go and see even though we did not believe 'Ittu'. We ran around the shed as she went closer and threw her necklace in through the small glassless window without letting go. As she pulled out the necklace, up came long, black, hands with long nails! Every one of us ran away screaming! Ittu was an odd girl anyway whom some believe was influenced by the shaman who lived nearby. In her household she was like a slave who tended to the family's chores. She had been orphaned and taken in by relatives as a very young girl. I never took the shortcut near that shed again.

Our grandparents still had indirect influence on us as a family. My grandmother would come over even if briefly while my aunts would visit more frequently. Sometimes whole families would come and visit us. I remember it was always my father who got the tea kettle after my mother had put it on the oil stove to boil and he poured the tea into the

tin cups. For this he would just take charge! He would put the sugar bowl and spoon on the table with the bannock, butter and jam. Then he would sit down at the table with the male visitor and pour his tea and put the sugar in, stir and clang the spoon against the tin cup. He would then spread the butter and jam onto the bannock talking all along as he performed his tea ritual. There would be the hum of their voices as they talked with the occasional agreement, '*ii*' (yes) as they sat there sipping their tea. My mother and the man's wife would be sitting on the cot against the wall as the children sat on the floor playing. Cigarettes would be lit and dangle from their lips or he held in their fingers creating a cloud of blue white haze above them. We would often be told to go play outside so we could be as noisy as we wanted but were told not to stray far, "*Avungaaluuttaililusi*" (don't go far).

My father was a very social and talkative person. He would have long conversations with people who visited him. My mother and her younger sister were much more reticent and quiet like my grandfather. My step-grandmother was also very talkative and was often interviewed on the radio about traditional customs and practices. She was also an accordion player. During special events and at Christmas she would be asked to play for the square dances. Ironically, these dances started being called Inuktitut dancing even though they had been introduced by Scottish whalers in the 1800's. My father's grandmother, Kallaarjuk had also been an accomplished accordion and fiddle player. She passed on her musical skills to her children and grandchildren like my aunt Josie who apparently learned to play well. My father always had an accordion and a guitar even though he was not much of a musician. He often strummed to himself in the bedroom. He always had a big interest in music and revered musicians for their discipline, art and

creativity. We would be subjected to loud fiddle or accordion music when any of it came on radio or TV and my father would start his jigs and dancing. My mother would then mumble her seeming dissatisfaction 'not again', or 'here he goes again' and as the music tapered off, my father would hug her, smile and chuckle.

I remember my grandfather carving and etching figures on walrus tasks. One time my cousin and I had gone to visit our grandparents and saw our grandfather outside the house. It was summer time and he was sitting outside with a box full of tusks that had been given to him by either the Hudson's Bay Company or someone else. They had been flown in from somewhere. He would be etching figures of people on a dogteam or hunters with their harpoons, bow and arrows or some hunting scene. There would be beautiful etchings of animals like walrus, caribou or seals. He would hold the tusk in his left hand and a tool in his right one as he carved out a line. He would not say much as he worked. He was not very talkative anyway but his quiet presence commanded respect.

At home, someone was often creating or doing something. My mother was always making or fixing things and so was my father. There were few electronic things then so most things were done by hand. During the times my mother sewed or cleaned seal skins I would watch for a while. If she was making a duffle parka, amauti or socks (and she was cutting out a pattern) she would have her material all spread out on the floor. My sisters and I would watch her cut the duffle material with the scissors snipping away. I can remember the snip, snip as she traced the pattern of the coat. When she started sewing on the hand crank sewing machine it was a thrill watching her and listening to the sound of the thrrrrrr….. thrump, thrump as the needle went up and down as it sped through the material and faded down after a few cranks of her hand and she would then

have to adjust the material. We would pick up the scraps of thick duffle or cotton material and play with them and sometimes we could cut them up until my mother told us to stop creating dust or strewing the scraps too much. I did not know that I was learning from watching her and doing little things with her scraps but I know that her patterns for everything from duffle socks, slippers, amauti (woman's parka for carrying babies), and kamiit (sealskin boots), to wind pants, parkas and mitts are imprinted in my mind, including the quality and standards she held to her work. She was a very good seamstress like most women, as they all had to know how to make clothing for their families.

There were many *Qallunaat* who asked her to make parkas, duffle socks, amauti, mitts and kamiit over the years. These provided her some income for the expanding household. Other Inuit women would often ask her to cut out amauti patterns. As the years wore on, the Hudson's Bay Company store started bringing in clothing and footwear that people could just buy and wear off the shelf, which helped women with large families from having to make new kamiks and parkas every other year. Most of our clothing was now made from imported material except for the sealskin kamiks. The cloth was easier to maintain and sew than the skins. When the seals were more plentiful in the 1960's and 1970's and the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) was still paying people good money for the skins, it helped our families buy food, clothing and other useful things. The fur activists had a negative impact on the only extra source of income that Inuit families relied on in the 1970's.

When my mother made kamiks, the girls were expected to chew and soften the skins cut out for the soles of the boots. We also helped scrape the dried skins that were to be used for the legs and then trample on them by folding them over and over to soften

them. My father always had a pair of kamiks and usually got new ones every other fall. I would watch my mother bring in her *avvik* (wooden board platform with two wedge-shaped supports sloping downwards) and put a plastic bag and cardboard on the floor under it, and then put a sealskin still with a lot of blubber on it fur facing down, then take her ulu, sharpen it with a shwack, shwack, shwack and start to scrape the blubber off close to the skin. As she kneeled on the floor with the skin on the board, flippers on the bottom end, holding onto the top part she would start scraping the blubber first, then the *mamik* (membrane close to the skin). The sounds, smells and sight of the many skins she cleaned through out my childhood also are seared into my memory. My sisters and I would watch her, often keeping the younger children away from the sharp implements. I would sometimes eat some of the scraped parts while watching my mother.

Figure 18. Drawing by Naullaq Arnaquq, 1992.

When she went to do something else I would sneak and take her ulu, try to scrape the blubber or membrane but it would be difficult. She would get annoyed with us from getting too close to her as she worked. I can hear the sound of the ulu scraping the skin

against the wood platform (*avvik)*. This memory was to help me years later as an adult to do my own sealskin without my mother around. I had to close my eyes and remember the sounds to do a more effective job on the sealskin when I tried one by myself. It took me a few holes to get the hang of it. I asked her years later why she had not let us do any skins and she told us she had not wanted us to endure hardship like she had as a young girl but also because the skins were precious and she did not want any holes in them to get the best price possible when they were sold to the HBC.

Our food at home was mainly seal or caribou meat or char that our father had caught. In the summer and fall we would eat clams, seaweed we got from the low tide and *ujjuk* (bearded seal), *qilalugaq* (beluga whale) or even *aiviq* (walrus). My mother would hang the char or whale meat outside to dry. On our father's pay day he would bring home a big blue sack full of canned food, sugar, flour, and other store bought goods. During the winter, on the days he went hunting he would go by ski-doo really early in the morning when it was still dark with several other men. I remember my father's words spoken to my mother asking for help to find his socks or thick mitts, "*uummaan, nauli aliqsiikka*" (dear, where are my socks)? My mother would put out his socks and wind pants onto the floor sometimes with a remark of 'well, you would find them if you put them in the same place!' One of us children would ask the obvious, "*Ataataak, tuttulialangavit*?" (Father, are you going caribou hunting?) Sometimes they would be gone for several days and come back with a loaded sled full of caribou meat. If he went seal hunting it was usually just a day or two. He would smell of ski-doo gas as he brought in large pieces of the caribou meat. My mother would put the tea kettle on right away. Relatives and neighbours would be invited for every catch he brought home.

The people would enter with their knives and ulus with a container to take meat home. The women would be seated separately from the men. They would kneel on the floor in one area where a basin would be placed in the center and the men at the other end where my father was cutting up the seal as was custom. I would be standing or kneeling beside my mother or father with my hand on a shoulder. My father would put the seal on the floor face up then he would sharpen his knife, 'fwitfwitfwit' quickly against the metal sharpening rod, and he would at first put the tip of the knife against the middle of the seal, then make a slit up to the chin of the seal down the center to the tail. I know I could do this myself from having watched him many, many times. As he butchered the seal he would cut up the specific parts intended for women and put them on the tray or basin; ribs, liver, brain, heart, and other parts of seal meat that had bone whereas the men would eat the fleshier meat of the seal. Children would usually be given a rib with meat to hold and eat. Little children would be given a bite size piece to chew on. My father would give the seal eye to my mother for her to cut it up for me! This was a delicacy. Then the head with the skull cracked open would be given to the women for them to eat the brain.

As we ate, the men would talk about the hunt and describe the conditions on the trail to the floe edge if it was a seal hunt or the conditions of the trail in land if it was a caribou hunt. This was imparting useful information for the other hunters next time they went in that direction to know what to expect. The women would be talking about women stuff like someone having had a baby, so and so's aunt and uncle were in town, someone being sick, and so on. They did not gossip too much or talk about adult things in front of men or children. Gossiping was usually done when the men were not around. As they left

they would take home a few ribs and meaty parts with blubber to their households in a basin. This was before plastic bags were common.

We had moved from our one room house in the winter of 1968 to a slightly larger three-bedroom house where we lived until 1977. When these prefabricated houses were built, the town expanded and families were spread further apart. We were no longer living in the same area as our grandparents, aunts and uncles. It was still an extremely small community of about 1200 to 1500 but older people, mothers with small children and people who had more difficulty to getting around were now not able to see their relatives as easily by just walking next door. This had an impact on families and their ability to maintain close kinship connections. The lifestyle was different enough now that even though they were living in the same town and not a day away by dogteam as it used to be for some families, the intimate family activities and feeling of closeness was fading. The only times this returned to a large extent was when we went camping together in the summers.

During the day when my father was out working, my mother's friends or some of the neighbourhood women came over to play cards. We would usually play with their children outdoors. I remember my sister and I would often play with our cousin who was about my sister's age. They were a couple of years older. We would pretend to scrape skins by using the top of cans. Our mothers would bend the tops and fold them over making a half moon. Then we would take a piece of cardboard and put it on a wooden board and pretend to scrape it. We would also take old cigarette butts and put them into the edge of our lips just like out mothers. My cousin would become my *illukuluk* (paternal cousin) or *ukuakuluk* (sister-in-law). As I pretended to scrape the sealskin, I

would pretend to wheeze and cough with the cigarette in my mouth like my mother. A baby doll became a real one on my back inside my jacket as I pretended to rock it back to sleep working on my sealskin. My sister or cousin would be stacking up empty cans as we played house, store and mothers.

Figure 19. Itee, Naullaq and Lucy, 1963. Arnaquq family collection. Black & white photograph.

Our 'tent' or home would be rocks arranged in a circle with pieces of wood for a sleeping platform. Empty cans, boxes, seeds, plants and sticks became food and utensils. My sister, cousins and I played for hours on end. I would often direct if we were playing near our house but if we played near one of our friends or cousin's houses, they would be more in charge. Sometimes we would have old sheets for a tent or an actual pup tent which was even more precious. This was our world and close to my parent's way of life then. Sometimes we would pretend to be hunting and camping. Pieces of cardboard, wood, rocks and objects would become boats or seals. Sticks became guns, hooks, or harpoons. Boys would be the hunters and we would be the mothers. It was not often we played with the boys in our make-believe. We played with them in Inuktitut baseball, hide and seek, catch or other Inuit games.

Figure 20. Aggiuq, 1980. Arnaquq family collection. Colour photograph.

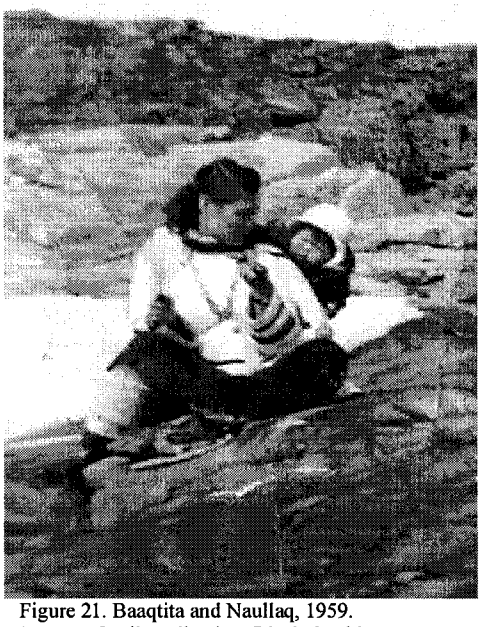


Figure 21. Baaqtita and Naullaq, 1959. Arnaquq family collection. Black & white photograph.

As we got older, we would carry a baby in an *amauti - amaootee*, (woman's baby carrier parka) our younger siblings or someone else's baby. This was a way to babysit and called *amaaqtuaqtuq* (caring for someone's baby in an amauti). We sometimes would get a token of appreciation like a piece of candy or even a coin. There would be several young girls wearing large amautiit with the sleeves folded up and the tails tucked up behind and under the pouch to prevent it from touching the ground because they were too big for us. The mothers of the babies would often be happily playing cards or visiting their friends. A baby would get heavy when it fell asleep. We would pretend to be someone we admired as we rocked the babies or pat them on our backs. They would warm our backs as they snuggled against us.

I would sometimes come home from school to find my mother scraping a seal skin on the floor. It would be draped over the *avvik*, a scraping platform on cardboard with a garbage bag spread underneath it to catch the fat and blubber. I would often ask my sister to get me a cup of tea and biscuit as would my brothers and sisters because she

did it so well. She knew how much sugar to put in the tea. We did not have supper like the *Qallunaat*. If my father was eating some seal meat or something we would eat too. We ate when we were hungry if there was something to eat. Often it was a cup of tea with a biscuit or bannock and sometimes a tin of meat from the store. When bread became available, it was sometimes tea with a slice of bread. A treat of candy, chips or pop was more common when we had money.

In the fall of 1970 my mother was diagnosed with TB again so she had to leave for treatment in the South, to Ste. Agathe, Quebec. She was gone for four long months. There were seven of us who had to be split up between our various aunts, cousins and grandparents. My little brother and I went to my step-grandmother and grandfather, while the others went to three other households and our father stayed home with my older and younger brother. I did not stay long at my grandparents, and moved from one aunt's household to another over a couple of weeks and eventually ended up back at home with my younger sister, brother and father. One night I slept at my older cousin's house with my older sister. Our cousin's children had fallen asleep. I was a bit scared because the house was not familiar to me with its different creaks and noises. I looked out the window into the dark starlit sky and wondered what the stars looked like up close but I also thought of my mother who was so far away and missed her terribly. Dr. Moss who lived a couple of doors away from us came over one day to show my father how to call my mother. Since my oldest brother was not home, and I spoke English he instructed me what to say when someone answered at the hospital. He dialed the number and called my mother. So, when on another day my father asked me to call her, I dialed the phone and called the operator and said, "My father would like to speak to my mother." "Well, where

is your mother? What is the number?" she asked. I gave her the number. The phone rang and another stranger answered, so I said, "Can I speak to my mother?" Finally, another ring, and someone else came on line again so I said, "I would like to speak to my mother." But it was my mother. I had not immediately recognized her voice. I got through at last! I gave the phone to my father. He told her that his *Atsakuluk* had managed to get through via the operator.

Parents of all groups anywhere the world over probably affectionately sing 'pet' songs to their babies. My father used to have a song for my youngest sister, "*Tunirjuulikallak, babikallakuluk, Tunirjuulikallak, babikallakuu* (My dear little plump *Tunirjulik*, plump little baby *kuu*), and some of the times as he chanted that to her, she would nod her head to the beat and often make a little sound almost like a grunt which was her way of saying, "I want my bottle of milk." This was their little affectionate ritual. As my younger siblings grew older, he would have little sayings for them which were other terms of endearment. For my second youngest sister he would always say, "*Angijuruluillikiaq, qanuitturuluuttaqqakiaq*. (Your little older sister, I wonder how she is doing)" This was about our sister *Nukaapik* who had been adopted out to another family, a couple who could not have any children. My sister had been born a year after my brother so they were very close in age and there were already eight of us. This *nalliturniq* or terms of endearment or affection was and still is common to Inuit. A lot of Inuit would gently tease young children they were fond of in this manner. My father always talked to my sister *Nukaq* about our adopted sister which was a way for us to never forget about her and it was his way of showing his affection for my sister without directly saying he loved her, even for *Nukaapik* for that matter. Though she was not in

our household, I always felt she was our sister and I know it was that way with my siblings for her.

My mother gave birth to my third youngest sister, in July 1972. The family that was to adopt her lived in another small community but they were late because of the ice that prevented the float planes from landing. The baby was with us for about three weeks and we were getting close to her when my mother's cousin and his wife arrived. My brothers and sisters were playing outside and ran in to say someone was coming. We looked out the window and it was them! For those of us who were older, it was a dreaded day because our little baby sister was going away. Sue had her amauti on when she came in. They usually visited for several hours but it was not the case that day. Sue kneeled down to put the baby in her amauti as we watched. It was heart wrenching enough already but my little two year old brother had to make it harder when he started crying and tried to pull the baby out of the amauti! Looking back, it must have been difficult for Sue and her husband to take away a baby that everyone was bonded to now. I remember my mother saying, she had to keep suppressing her feelings for our sister knowing that she would be given to Sue and her husband. They already had several other adopted children. We knew them well because they visited Iqaluit every year and stayed with my grandparents. They would come into town by dogteam every spring with the whole family from my mother's childhood home-camp which was about 100 miles away. My grandfather had been the leader of that camp before he moved to Iqaluit to be close to his daughters. There were just a few families left in that camp led now by my grandfather's cousin who had taken over the head role. It was always fun to see our cousins and I am

sure it was good for my parents, aunts, uncles and grandparents to see their close relatives. These visits would be a good time for the visitors to do some *qallunniaq* (buying goods from the store or more literally, getting goods from the *Qallunaat*) to take back with them to their camp.

Open affection was shown to babies by kissing them, and to small children by putting your nose against the cheek of the baby and giving a 'sniff'. Each baby had a special song/chant called an *aqausiq* and would start jumping up and down or nod his or her head with glee feeling the warmth of the affection. The baby displaying this behaviour is said to be, *qaqajuq* which shows she knows she is acknowledged, loved and 'babied'. This is considered to be 'baby behaviour' but young females who are flirting with males are sometimes referred to using the same word. In the South Baffin area, the words to express affection or terms of endearment and love to babies, children and older children is, *aakuluk* (dear one) and *ain* which we still use today. When we saw *Qallunaat* who had not seen each other for a while hug each other or kissing cheeks with their lips, it was a very different custom because we never did that. We would also notice *Qallunaat* men and women walking hand in hand which to us was also different because Inuit only did that with their children.

When you met a familiar friend, relative or someone you knew who had been away for a long time, you shook hands with them and smiled. Today, people are now hugging one another when they meet a friend or family member which until only recently used to be a very *Qallunaaq* gesture. It was once very common to see teenage girls and their best friends walking arm in arm. This started to change in the late 1970's and early 80's. We started seeing youth *piqannaaqtuuk* (boy and girl youth French kissing like

Qallunaat in the public). It was considered very intimate by the older people and it reflected the signs of social change that was happening.

My parents' generation like many other people in the world, married young. Marriages were arranged and often young children would be 'promised' (in the South Baffin), little boys were *uiksaq* (husband to be) to young girls and they were *nuliaksaq* (wife to be). An older woman once told me about her arranged marriage and how in resistance, she had thrown a huge rock at her new husband and hit him on the back. My aunt also described her good friend's marriage to a man who arrived in by dogteam one day from another camp and took her away. Her cries and sobbing were heard as they drove off on the dogteam and *qamutiik* (dogsled) leaving her friends in tears for her plight and their loss. Many stories of young women who were still playing with dolls and their friends and were then taken away by their new husbands are common. They had to adjust to living with their spouse's family, mother-in-laws and new husband. Sometimes a woman was not always happy that the man was unattractive or not to her taste but over time grew to love him. The important thing was he was a good provider and loving. An Elder or another older female from the new family would recognize the new wife's situation, offer support and advice helping her to adjust.

Most of my friends and cousins had a *uitsannguaq* and we all knew who the supposed intended partner was even though marriages were no longer arranged for my generation. There were probably a handful of arranged marriages or partnerships which were 'endorsed' that most of us were aware of because the communities were small. I wonder what it was like for my parents and especially my grandparents' generation when the young people started choosing their own partners. The parents did not have much

influence as more time went on and the youth became more wild and liberal in their actions. I am sure it must have been very strange for our parents and grandparents to witness these changes and feel powerless to do anything about it. Most young people would enter into relationships of their own choices. It became very common and their parents did not have much say anymore. Strangely, some young couples who did not know they were related entered into relationships but luckily were informed that it would not be wise to go any further. That is how it was during the 1960's and 1970's when so many families had settled into a large community and parents could no longer be aware of all of their children's activities. Perhaps one of the reasons for the arranged marriages being discontinued was because the youth were still in school and parents felt powerless in taking their children away from the school authorities. The closest to an arranged marriage was when parents demanded that their son or daughter discontinue a relationship with someone they did not approve of but then was free to choose someone else.

New Customs - Assimilation

The *Qallunaat* organized events customary to their culture in the South. At Christmas, we performed concerts and sang Christmas carols. We learned about Santa Claus and his reindeer. Hallowe'en, Valentine's Day, Easter, Mother's and Father's Day, Remembrance Day were new customs to us. My mother accompanied me and my younger siblings one Hallowe'en and she dressed up with us. We walked in the dark along the road towards the *Qallunaaq* residences. We went around to each household in those Butler row houses. There was a feeling of excitement as many children ran about

with painted faces or wore masks. We would go to each house and a *Qallunaaq* would open the door holding a container full of wonderful candy. Inuit really did not hand out candy except during *parlak* which was during Christmas or the Toonik Tyme event in Iqaluit. *Parlak* is when you throw candy and other items from a rooftop in celebration of a child or person' first kill of an animal and people try to catch as much as they can. At Hallowe'en some of the porches were all decorated with candles, pumpkins, ghosts and other scary stuff. We went home in the cold and dumped our treats on the floor. My, there was so much candy! Hallowe'en was fun. We ate our candy with delight and compared what we received with one another. The school reinforced and taught these new customs and traditions. At first it seemed stiff and awkward for us because we were not used to them. Each year that passed by they became a tradition which we looked forward to.

Birthday parties and giving of gifts was another new custom. They were things you read about in books or stories and you heard about them from your *Qallunaaq* classmates after they had their parties. I was invited to parties by my friends. My sisters and I started baking cakes for our younger brothers and sisters who came to expect them. My own first birthday party and cake was when I was 13 years old when my best friend Cathy and our *Qallunaaq* classmate girlfriends surprised me at one of their homes. They had baked me a cake and gave me a gift. That was very special for me. On June the 8th, 1973 Cathy told me we were going to our classmate Madonna's house. Our other friend accompanied us as we ran to the Base area which was quite far from our houses in the Iqaluit area. I had been there before and this would be my second time to visit. Their house felt bigger compared to other houses I had been in. They even had their own swing set in their backyard. When we entered the house, our other girl classmates were already

inside, chatty and noisy as usual. Then Cathy showed me into the dining room and there was a cake! They started singing to me. I was not expecting this. It was the first time my birthday was celebrated with a party although my older cousin baked me a cake once which was also very special.

During special events like holidays, Christmas or Thanksgiving, my parents would get invited to my father's workplace for the dinners. They would get ready a couple of hours before the function. My mother would wash and curl her hair during the day with bobby pins or curlers. She would sometimes iron their clothes then powder her face, put bright red lipstick on her lips and dab on some perfume. My father would polish his shoes until they shone and walk back and forth around the small house, talking, often annoying my mother. He would then chuckle at her annoyance, and kiss her on her cheek. A cigarette would be dangling from her lips or held in her hand. This was their routine. Finally, they would go and we would then let loose. While we babysat we would turn the house upside down. Chairs turned on their backs became snowmobiles; tables became houses with sheets hung on them. Then when it was almost time for our parents to come home, we would scurry about, putting things back in their place. The littlest kids would have fallen asleep before. When our mother and father came home we would expect their *minaq* (food brought home) which was a custom transferred from the old ways. Prepared in different ways, the *Qallunaaq* food was always a special treat.

As a kid I liked to draw and write what I was learning at school. I would use the backs of cardboard paper from cereal boxes, biscuits, or other food containers. Early on this was my drawing paper. My father would sharpen the pencils for us with his jackknife. He would take a pencil and sometimes his carpenter's pencil and shave off the

end to expose the lead. I can remember the smell of the fresh wood shaving and carbon of the pencil. Sometimes he brought home used paper for us to draw on from his workplace at the Ministry of Transport. I would relish these papers and often would be the first one to get a hand on them! Now that I look back, I can imagine my father muttering to himself as he picked up the papers to take home, "*Atsa-kulu-rulu-gain-na titi-ra-rumat-tar-niar-mijuq*." (My dear little *atsakuluk* (aunt) will want to draw or write.) As he came in the door I would ask if he brought home anything for me as he put his bag on the table or floor. One time I remember he brought home a pile of carbon paper which was different and special! My father took out an 8x11 shallow green box from his bag and gave it to me with a smile. I opened the top to it and took out a sheet and asked for a pencil right away then lay on my tummy to start drawing on the floor.

The Christmas after my cousin had married, she and her new husband gave us colouring books and crayons. I remember we were told to go to sleep early because there would be a present for us in the morning. I was so excited and could barely go to sleep. However, that next morning, I remember waking up with sleepy eyes as I lay on my tummy. I lifted up my head as my mother told me to put my hands under my pillow. It was smooth to the touch and as I pulled it out it was a colouring book with brand new crayons! I had my very own unbroken crayons that were not retrieved from trash at school or anywhere. We had never received a brand new gift at Christmas before. I do not remember what kind of colouring book it was but it was wonderful. The crayons were smooth, bright clean colours, unused and waxy. We were all smiles.

Over the years in the 1960's and 1970's, the new technology entered our homes and lives: electricity, telephones, TVs, snowmobiles, record players, washing machines,

clothes dryers, furnaces, flushing toilets. I do not remember how old I would have been when we got our first telephone but the number is clear as a bell. The man that came to install it put it on the wall and told us the number would be 383. I think my mother called my aunt with a big smile and said, '*Uqaalautitaaqtuapiujugut*' ('We now have a telephone'). My father was one of the first Inuit in Iqaluit to get a Bombardier snowmobile that had one ski and, earlier than that he got a little red motor scooter. I was always eager to go for a ride and apparently annoyed him until I did. Years later my mother told me that I would be very insistent and stubborn when I wanted to be taken for a snowmobile ride.

Television entered our lives and homes in the early part of the 1970's bringing the outside world to our faces. Everyone was getting a TV and one day we got it or maybe it got us! We had just come home after school when my father came in with a box. He had bought a TV from the store. He took it out of its box. My little brothers and sisters were very excited with wide eyes and big smiles, "*Tiiviitaaqtuguun*" (Oh look we got a TV)! Of course the younger kids were unsure what all the fuss was about. Normally we were not so loud and all jumpy at once even though we were a large family. One of my brothers ran in with some of the neighbourhood kids, threw his jacket on the floor and tumbled out of his shoes and exclaimed, "Wow!" My mother made some room for the TV and pushed aside some boxes in our already crowded little house. As she helped my father set it up, we were anxiously waiting but nothing came on when they switched it on except little dots that looked like snow and just a sound like rushing water. We had to wait until 6:00 for the programming to start. Finally after what seemed like a long time and many questions from the younger kids, "*Qanga pigialangamman*?" (When will it

start?), a picture came up of an 'Indian' and afterwards, music. It was Sesame Street with little puppets. I can still see all my brothers and sisters sitting cross-legged or kneeling in front of that black and white TV, eyes glued to the screen. Other kids came in the house, hesitantly at first but their curiosity and pull of the sounds were too great so they somehow crowded in. Usually kids who were visiting were very quiet and stayed near the entrance. My mother's strong, quiet presence always commanded that kind of behaviour often intimidating to those who did not know her too well. The TV was the beginning of the big language shift where English became more dominant now that it was reinforced in our homes.

Being a product of an education system based on Southern ways made it easier for our generation to adapt to *Qallunaat* ways as time went on compared to our parents and those who had little or no schooling. For example, the way you dressed, the way you walked, the way you spoke in tone, the way you made gestures and especially the English language had already shifted though it had taken place unconsciously for the most part. These patterns of behaviour were reinforced in school. Those students who were more verbal and adhered to the teachers' wishes were often praised more often and became representations of the model Inuk student as they became more like the *Qallunaat*. The teenagers acquiring *Qallunaat* ways inadvertently reinforced new customs in their younger siblings and households through language, and technology they used or watched that were captivating like southern music, fashionable clothing, TV sitcoms and movies.

The adaptation process was sometimes subtle and unconscious but for the most part explicit for a child because he or she was at the age where she is being shaped and is learning, forming, acquiring, becoming, doing, thinking, and playing. The ways get set in

those formative years in school from age five to 12. It is easy to follow and conform to a critical mass. It is also not difficult for a child of another culture immersed in a different one to acquiesce to the dominant ways from peer and social pressure. No matter what social background or hierarchy a child comes from, the odd one out can be mocked, sneered at, stared at and even rejected because of differences.

One time, I remember my father saying to one of my uncles, "*Suliqtuugaluallimakua surusiit*" (I wonder what is happening to the young today.) This is expected between generations in any group of people across any cultures anywhere but the difference and change must have been immense from my parents' point of view. The teachers had us during the day and were in effect co-rearing us, trying to teach us skills and knowledge to be able to become self-sufficient. They had taken over part of the parenting role and in effect stolen us from our parents.

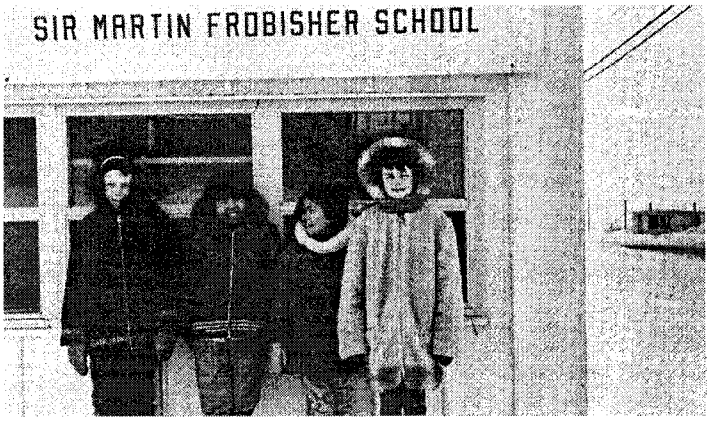


Figure 22. Naullaq in Grade Two and her Grade Three classmates. My grandparents house in the background. Arnaquq family collection. Black & white photograph.

Sir Martin Frobisher School – Federal Day School

Our school was called the Sir Martin Frobisher School (SMFS) after the English pirate explorer who had sailed in the *Tasiujarjuaq* (Frobisher Bay) in the 1570's and supposedly 'discovered' our ancestors. The four school buildings were old Butler

buildings (renovated from former United States Army Base units) spread along the main road in the area of Iqaluit that was called the Base. The other Butler buildings were homes for the *Qallunaat* while Inuit lived in the lower Iqaluit area towards the beaches. The main building with the principal's office was the largest, consisting of two same-size buildings as the others connected at each end making an L shape. There were three portable buildings. The Arts and Crafts centre is the only building remaining today from the old school. SMFS went up to Grade 12 and most of the students were Inuit. There were a few dozen *Qallunaat* students who were the children of the 'transient workers' for the various government services such as Ministry of Transport, Power Corporation, Health/Hospital, RCMP, Social Services, teachers, and construction companies. They always migrated back to the South to their cottages or grandparents in the summer time, return in the fall, and went on holidays at Christmas to Bermuda or some place hot. I could only imagine what that was like from the books I saw or read.

The second year I went to school I was excited to be back after a long summer holiday. My sister took me to school but as I tried to go back into my Kindergarten classroom the teacher kind of pushed me out the door and told me that I was not in that class anymore. I remember feeling confused and upset. I just stood there near the entrance for a few moments until someone told me to go into the next classroom. I think our new teacher was now a Mrs. MacDonald. My classmates were mostly my friends, cousins, and kids I had always known. In this class we started to learn how to read and write. I took to it like wind to fire. This was fun! Worksheets and books were gliding through my hands. At school, we were expected to stand in line, take turns, raise our hands if we wanted something and have our work checked with x's and checkmarks. I

remember often standing first in line when I finished assigned work in Grade 1. A handful of us would be taken out of the classroom to do SRA kits with several *Qallunaat* children from their class. I don't know what SRA stood for but these were boxes of colour coded cards with stories on one side and questions on the other. There were separate long answer key cards with the same colours. As I went through each card daily I progressed to the next colour so there was a feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment. In these stories there were different worlds that I could enter.

I also loved going to the library a couple of buildings away and enjoyed looking at the books with even more pictures. I especially loved story time when the teacher read us stories. We heard about and read stories like fairy tales. *Ali Baba, The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, Winnie the Pooh, Beatrix Potter tales,* and the *Dick* and *Jane or Tom and Betty* readers taught us to read and learn about wagons, apple trees, airplanes and birthday parties. My world was 'slightly' different from that! At school, this new world and its different values started to shift our way of thinking. There were little, if any, references to my way of life in school other than a few in books about Eskimos in their skin clothing and igloos, none of which I was totally familiar with though I came across a book one day about a story of little *Ashoona* who was an 'Eskimo' boy. There were photographs of him and this was someone I knew. He was my cousin's older half brother. That was the only occurrence about Eskimos in a book that was familiar but it talked about a way of life we were not really living anymore.

Figure 23. Picture of Eskimo.

We learned about nutrition and good food based on the Canada food guide. The *Qallunaat* kids would snicker at our different ways with crinkled noses and eyes showing their distaste. Their food was different from ours. We did not eat vegetables or fruit other than berries, roots, and plants in the Fall from the land, and seaweed in the summer. We never ate store-bought eggs the way they did. In the late spring when the birds migrated back up North we ate duck and geese eggs, not chicken. I remember when the teacher asked us, "Who ate breakfast and who had eggs this morning?" Even though we did not even eat any such thing for breakfast just to conform and not be different some of us raised our hands looking around with our eyes as most of the *Qallunaat* raised their hands. The only times we ate *Qallunaaq* food was at Christmas and when my father brought home canned foods. They would *minaq* (food that is brought home) during special occasions when they got some from work. This food was so tasty and unfamiliar. As time went on my siblings and I started expecting canned soup or food for our lunches and if there was none we would be quite unhappy and sulk.

In my third year in school in 1968, I was moved into the combined Grade Two and Three class. Many of the students were *Qallunaat*. I was now separated from my friends and classmates. The kids were a lot bigger and there was a new boy in town named Leonard who was from the West and he had a different registration number from

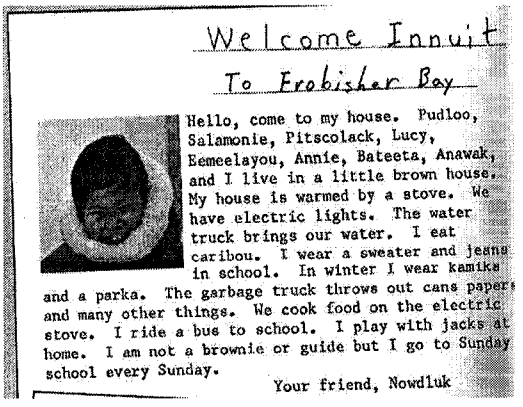
ours. Ours started with E7 and his started with W3! We thought he was the weirdest because he was the only one with a 'W'. He became my playmate that year because his mother would come over to our house to play cards with my mother and other women. Leonard's parka style was slightly different from ours and the fur was trimmed differently. I remember at recess time one day, a girl was not very happy that he played with me and told me not to play with him anymore because he was her playmate. She was a bully and often took other kids' coins. She said, "*Pinnuaqatigiqattanngilauruk*!" (Do not play with him!) as she chased me around the swings and teeter totters.

After recess one day as I was scrambling to get inside there was a scuffle beside me. The on-duty teacher for recess quickly herded the two kids and me down the hall and I became quite upset trying to tell him that I had nothing to do with what had happened. The other children from my class and the class next door were taking their coats and boots off. To no avail, I was shuffled along and started to cry. It felt like I was in a river, unable to get out of a current. We climbed up the stairs to the next level to the principal's office was. I had never been in that office before except to hand in the attendance slip for our class. We went inside the office. It felt small and cramped. The *Qallunaaq* secretary with the brown, puffy hair was in the office sitting at her desk. Then the principal in his dark brown suit and tie came out of his office. Adamie was the culprit but I forget who the other kid was. We were all told to, "Put your hand out!" by Mr. Jones. I started to cry and put my left hand out reluctantly but he gave me a slap with a ruler and it stung. He said, "No more fighting." I tried to defend myself, "But I didn't do anything, it was them." No, he wouldn't hear from me. Adamie was a bully and had not even flinched when his hand was slapped.

As we were told to get back to our classes, I walked back down the steps to the lower level back through the door with the glass window to my classroom crying. I felt so defenseless, powerless and unheard. Adamie bumped my right arm as he passed me and ran down the hall without a care in the world it seemed. I remember telling my mother when I got home. Neither she nor my father would have gone to see the principal at all. No one did that, no, Inuit did not go to see *Qallunaat* who ran the school and our lives during the day.

In the spring of that year, a woman came to tell our teacher about someone who was coming in to photograph children. Overhearing them, I said to my classmate sitting in the next desk to me that there would be someone selected. I said to her, *Pijaujjaanginnivunga taima.* (I probably won't even be picked). I sat still, hoping but certain I would not be chosen listening to our teacher explaining what was going to happen. There would be four children chosen to be photographed and write something. She called out the names and I was one of them, me from Grade Two and the other three from Grade Three. I looked at my classmate next to me and gasped, "Me!"

Figure 24. Arnaquq family collection. Black & white photograph.


Welcome Innuit
To Frobisher Bay

Hello, come to my house. Pudloo, Salamonie, Pitscolack, Lucy, Eemeelayou, Annie, Bateeta, Anawak, and I live in a little brown house. My house is warmed by a stove. We have electric lights. The water truck brings our water. I eat caribou. I wear a sweater and jeans in school. In winter I wear kamiks and a parka. The garbage truck throws out cans paper and many other things. We cook food on the electric stove. I ride a bus to school. I play with jacks at home. I am not a brownie or guide but I go to Sunday school every Sunday.

Your friend, Nowdluk

Figure 25. Arnaquq family collection (1968) Black & white photograph.

Meeka, Brigitte Plouffe, Gary Richards and I got up from our seats and went to get our parkas, boots and mitts on and were taken outside. We stood in front of the school and were told to stand still. Then we were also driven to the airport! We were told to pose at the gate to pretend that we were waiting for someone to arrive on an airplane and wave. When we returned to our class, we were asked to write a story about ourselves, where we lived, who lived with us, what we wore, ate, played and also describe our homes.

I found out years later as an adult that this photo shoot and writing had been for the Gage Publishing Company. They had put together a booklet about Northerners as part of their series, *A Gage World Community Study*. It was about 'Eskimos' and their lifestyles and changing culture. It compared a Southern city like Montreal and how people lived in two different parts of Canada. After the booklet was published I was given a copy but it got torn up a bit and misplaced but I came across a copy in another community years later when I became a Supervisor of Schools. There are a couple of pictures of me with the other children and our little stories on one page. The editors had inadvertently included a photo on the inside back page with me as a three or four year old with my sister and cousin playing outside which came from another book called '*Eskimo Townsmen*' which was written by a couple of anthropologists, John and Irma Honigmann who had been in Iqaluit in 1963 studying the new inhabitants of the new town Frobisher Bay (Iqaluit) and observing how they were adjusting to living in a 'large community'.

At the end of that school year, on our last day, my sister and I were on our way home and saw the metal garbage barrels overflowing with books, students' notebooks, papers and teachers' books. This was recycle paradise for us and other girls! I remember bending down as we looked through them and picked out the ones with a lot of blank

pages. There were a few teachers' daily planning books. I now had plenty of writing and drawing paper and wanted to take them home especially if I was going to be Miss Smith at home. We lugged a big box home.

My sisters and I would often play school where someone would be a secretary, teacher or principal. We would take on the different roles. If I played the secretary I used my father's accordion player as a typewriter and inserted a piece of paper in one of the folds of the accordion and used the round button keys as typewriter keys then my younger sister would be a teacher and the younger children would be the students. I would take on a tone when I spoke in English, "I'm Miss Smith or Ms. Jones, or Mrs. Herbert" and my sisters and brothers would be the students. I would hand out pieces of paper and they had to do the school work. I remember one time we played 'hospital' and dentist when we were babysitting. I was the dentist so I subjected my poor adopted brother to treatment as the patient. I told him to sit in the kitchen chair and tilted it against a box to make it seem like the dentist's chair. I then told him to put his hand out so I could pour into his hand the Pepsodent tooth powder and then brushed his teeth. I took a piece of string and tied it to his loose tooth and pulled it out effortlessly.

Best Friends

In Grade Four at the beginning of our school year I walked into our classroom. All my old classmates were there with some new *Qallunaat* and Southerners including our new male teacher with reddish wavy hair greased on the sides and top. His eyes were big and round as he called out our names during his first roll call, "Nowdluk (nowd look), Nowdluk E7-1728. We were smiling and giggling as he continued his roll call but we

corrected his pronunciation of our names. "*Mitee*" he said but mispronounced it horribly which made some of us burst out laughing probably much to the dismay and the embarrassment of *Mitee*. It was not his fault that his name was spelled that way. With the way Mr. Stad pronounced it he said a certain body part. We yelled at him with the correct pronunciation. He continued on. He massacred our names like a knife, chopping them up until he eventually learned how to say them more correctly. At the time of my writing this thesis I happened to meet up with one of my cousins who told me that he remembered this year as being violent. It was, especially for boys who were often pulled by their ears, pushed against a wall, made to feel ashamed in front of the whole class and aggressively forced to sit down in a chair.

There was a large group of newcomers, Siila, Kris, Matt, and Kaati who was not a *Qallunaaq* but not an Inuk either but looked almost like one. My cousin and I were at least in the same class this year. At recess time, the boys were rowdy and made fun of one another. Older boys and girls were tougher and mean, often separating themselves according to whether they were *Qallunaat* and Inuit. We were called Eskimo even though we called ourselves Inuit. During one of these scuffles after school, I defended my cousin against the new *Qallunaat* and Southerners. Usually I was a well-behaved girl but my cousin was my best friend and she was being attacked! As we ran around the end of the school to catch the bus, I pushed a girl and punched her in the nose. She looked taken aback and put her hand to her nose. I realized what I had done, and yelled out, 'Sorry!' and ran to catch my bus.

The next day I went to school and went into the classroom. I saw Kaati looking at me from her desk as I sat down in my chair. Mr. Stad called our names and said,

"Nowdluk, Kaati, come with me." I slowly got up from my chair and felt my face go hot and my chest tighten as I walked out the door. Mr. Stad closed the door and said, "What happened yesterday?" Kaati started to explain that I had given her a bloody nose. I spoke up and said, "But I said sorry to her already and she was hurting my cousin." He just said, "Well, you're not to hurt others. Apologize again." Kaati and I shook hands and said sorry to each other. We went back into the classroom.

From that day on, Kaati and I were best friends. I found out later that she was part Chinese, Ojibwa and *Qallunaaq*. We were buddies from Grade 3 to High school until she left town in Grade Ten. We had sleepovers, camping out in each other's backyards, making paper dolls, eating stacks of pancakes at her house until I got sick of them for years, and played with her *Qallunaaq* friends. She would visit our crowded three bedroom house and even slept over. None of my friends had ever slept over before. I remember my mother brought home French fries one day. She worked as a housekeeper at the Frobisher Inn and must have saved the fries from her meal. She opened up the paper bag and brought them out for us to eat. We shared this rare treat with Kaati.

I would visit her home which was quite different from ours. I ate a few times with them but I felt very shy and out of place so I never liked eating with them again. They sat all around the table, with the plates, cutlery and glasses at each person's setting. I was not used to this custom with them asking me questions or talking to me. I often declined to eat when I slept over at her place. My father always called her, *Qallunaaralaaq* (little *Qallunaaq*) or *piqatiruluit* (your little friend). During the summers Kaati often went South and came back with new clothes and, stories about her grandmother and relatives we never saw and her fun holiday with her family.

My friendship with Kaati made me see the Southern way of life, customs, rules and traditions they had in their home which were different from ours. I do not think I would have played with the *Qallunaaq* girls outside school if I was not friends with Kaati. We would sometimes visit their homes. Most of them lived in the Base area in the residential units where *Qallunaat* lived. Her father had decided that his family would live in the Inuit side of town. The *Qallunaat* parents were far more 'chatty' with their children than my parents were with me and my cousins and friends. They ate different food and had table manners which I found very formal, different and 'stiff'. I found it uncomfortable. The *Qallunaat* kids were often more hyper and outgoing than we were. Being friends with Kaati I had a better indication of how *Qallunaat* lived. Kaati and I would sometimes visit our *Qallunaat* classmates' homes. I remember we went to a girl's house and it looked and smelled differently. The *Qallunaat* homes always had a distinct smell compared to Inuit homes mostly because of differences in food. They had running water, flushing toilets and lots of matching furniture with everything put neatly away in closets or dressers, usually.

One of my other cousins, Mari was also a close friend. We would spend hours on the phone if we were not together. We were often able to get out of taking care of younger siblings because we had sisters who took on the babysitting role. Perhaps we were considered spoiled because of that. We shared the same names. She never called her father, *ataata* like I did mine and called him, *airaapikuluk* (brother in law) because of her name. Her father always called me *sakiruluk* (dear little mother in law) because of my name. On Sundays we went to church together and usually visited at her place afterwards. During our summer holidays, I went camping with her family once for a few weeks when

our family was not able to go because my mother was working. I was able to get my mother to say yes probably from whining and pouting. That camping trip by boat was a different experience because we went much farther down the bay in their large Peterhead boat. On the way down the bay Mari's eldest brother spotted something on an ice floe. It was a lone walrus sleeping! There was a flurry of activity and excitement as the men prepared the guns, float, harpoon and line. We had to sit still. The walrus was shot but not without struggle on its part. It went under our boat and as it did, Itiitiq scrambled to the other side with the harpoon and finally harpooned it. The men did their part to bring it in as it lay lifeless now, buoyed by the float. It had one tusk. Somewhere it had been in a fight with another walrus. It was quickly butchered when we went ashore. If I had not gone with my cousin and her family I probably would not have seen my first walrus. I felt like I was watching this from outside my body when I remember back to this hunt. My father and brothers often went hunting farther down the bay without the whole family so as girls we never got to see any polar bears, large herds of caribou or walrus.

Substitute Teacher

One day in Grade Three, our teacher was sick and there was a substitute teacher filling in for her. She had short, curly reddish hair and wore a skirt. I have forgotten her name. She was with us all day and when it was language arts time, she gave us our scheduled spelling test. I used to love taking spelling tests and remember the little green speller. It was about 5x7 inches and not too thick. The substitute called out the spelling words from the spelling book. When the student behind me asked about one of the words that had been just called out I told him what it was. The students were a bit more rowdy

than usual because of the substitute stranger so it was quite noisy. I was eager to tell my classmate the word but as I did, the substitute called out to me to turn around because I had 'looked at' the work of the other student. She told me not to cheat. I tried to explain to defend myself and told her I was only telling and helping the student what word she had called out. She didn't seem to believe me and reprimanded me. I started to cry because I felt so hurt. I don't remember ever being told by anyone that I was cheating or lying even in my usual sibling squabbles. This was one of the only couple of times I remember ever crying in school about something that I felt contradicted on, which was why it was so memorable.

When we were finished we were asked to check our words and see how many we spelled right and wrong. Usually we handed our slips of paper to the student behind us to be corrected but because she was a substitute teacher and did not know our routines so she made us correct our own even though we told her. She kind of consoled me a bit afterwards which said a lot to me about her empathy. After school there were several kids who asked if they could go to her house and eat cookies for a treat. She said yes and so several of us went with her. We went over to her house in the old butler buildings. As the *Qallunaat* lived in this part of town the only times we entered them was when it was Hallowe'en or by special invitation like this one so it was a special treat.

The substitute teacher reprimanding and not believing me hurt my feelings. We were taught not to lie or cheat at home and church so it was an unpleasant experience for me and I also probably became more wary of helping other classmates. There were always kids who had more difficulty and all of us, at one time or another, needed help.

The classroom settings back then were not conducive to a 'group or team environment' where you could work together.

Between Two Worlds – Home and School

Quiet hallways were at times disrupted by a single child's echoed footsteps, with the squeak and slam of a door or an adult female's clip clop footsteps. When a door opened, the sound of a teacher's voice citing a quote from a book or instructions for an academic concept would leap out then be quickly muffled when the door closed. A child looking up at a clock, time and again, squirming in her chair, sometimes with a brief intake of air and then a sigh as she tries to stay focused on her task and concentration.

At times, the angry voice of an adult would be heard through the walls, scolding a child for not working or paying attention. If you looked in you could see a boy with a frown on his face, grimacing or with a resigned look. Normal school incidents perhaps to children from afar but to us, deep, internal changes were happening without our knowledge, nor that of our parents for that matter.

Recess time was an escape, a chance to let go for a few minutes then back to the classroom until it was lunch time. Home was a refuge. When you entered the school in the morning and you took off your boots and jacket or coat, your home life and your identity were not a part of your school life. Your food, language, clothes, customs and family were separate. Your teacher's and *Qallunaat* classmates' ways were the unwritten rules to follow. They were the way. The way they talked, moved, thought and dressed – what they ate, sang, and lived in and how they disciplined became what we absorbed in school. My history, stories, language and customs were captured in the primary picture

dictionary with a drawing of an igloo with the word beside it. This did not weigh on us except through our actions at times with the resistance and confusion coming out as anger and hyperactivity.

Boys were often the ones who were reprimanded, disciplined, scolded and put in their place. But sometimes it was a girl. One time after recess, 'Myna' spit at Denise, the *Qallunaaq* girl in the porch. Denise yelled at her to stop as the recess bell rang, clanging loud in our ears. Myna did not have a mother, and was taken on by a cranky aunt, and was often aggressive, probably because she tried to stand up for herself in school as she could not do that at home.

In class, if a student did not pay attention or did not have his work done, a scolding took place. "Now what did I tell you?" a teacher would say in exasperation, disciplining a student. The student would be looking down at his feet or the desk with his mouth and chin looking grim and unhappy. As the teacher turned towards the front, the student would take a quick look up at the teacher with an intake of air and sigh. As I saw this, like my other classmates, I would keep on working, and take my pencil and maybe erase a mark on my paper, brushing or blowing away the eraser bits. Some students who were late were reprimanded rather than being welcomed. Late slips were accumulated over time and tallied up to be recorded in the report cards. Everyone knew these were black marks.

Qallunaat had different ways of doing things and they had a different way of communicating or acknowledging people with a hello, good morning and other forms of verbal greetings that we did not have. I can remember in the late 1960's and early 1970's a *Qallunaaq* would say 'hello' or 'good-bye' to anyone but we Inuit did not do that,

especially with one another. A smile was enough or a small acknowledgment with kinship term like, *nukakuluapiga*, (my dear younger sister or brother). Sometimes someone would visit our home, have a cup of tea, and, barely even saying a word, would just leave. This was normal and some people were just not talkative. I remember when a *Qallunaaq* would say, 'hi' or 'bye' and expect you to say it but it felt awkward. But as children, we started to use it amongst ourselves, "see you later", in English but not in Inuktitut because there really was not an expression to comfortably capture it. It was awkward at first because it was only *Qallunaat* who did that. I was walking up the road towards our house one day and one of my friends and I said, "See you." it felt kind of stiff because we really did not do that with other Inuit. However, we eventually started to pick up the *Qallunaat*itut (way of *Qallunaat*) way of communicating.

At school, the cultural tension was the strongest. As we conformed to the *Qallunaaq* teacher's directions, expectations and commands, unbeknownst to us it had been eroding our parents' way of life. I was learning about Sir Martin Frobisher, Jacques Cartier, Samuel de Champlain, Christopher Columbus and other 'explorers' rather than about our history, legends, traditions, and stories. The cultures and peoples we were probably closest to that we learned about were the Iroquois and maybe a reference to 'Indians' in South America in one of the Social Studies classes, but the Iroquois were the bad guys who warred with the newcomers to America so they were not really on 'our side' as they were portrayed in the textbooks.

The books I read in school were about other people. I entered the world or worlds of the *Qallunaat* through reading. I remember a book from the developmental reader series, *Above and Beyond* and it was a light green book and the book before or after that

was blue. The storytellers' words were in a different language, drawing me pictures, showing me new concepts and a way of being. I loved reading and always borrowed books from the library. Sometimes when I read stories that had funny parts I would laugh out loud and that would bring out a chuckle or smile from my parents. My teachers all through the primary grades would read stories to us out loud. I remember Miss Smith in Grade Three reading a children's bible storybook, *Winnie the Pooh* and other glorious stories. We sat on the floor or sometimes in our seats as she read a story. I can see the hardcover with paintings of a biblical scene. It was a fairly thick, large book. Miss Smith read the story out loud as we knelt on the floor listening in earnest, but much to my dismay would have to stop and mark the page with a bookmark. She would stand the book up against the blackboard. I would have to wait impatiently until the next day to hear the rest of the story! At the time I did not even know that there were legends or epics like *Kaujjajjuk* or *Kiviuq* that my parents or grandparents had heard when they were young.

We could buy books through a Scholastics book order. One day, I brought home the order form and looked through it carefully and chose ten books. Fortunately my mother agreed to pay for them. I waited and waited for what seemed a long time and they finally arrived. I was so excited and proud to take them home! They were my very first books, my own. I relished these books and read them over and over. So did my brothers and sisters. I still have several of the books; *Snow Treasure, Sara Crew, The Littles, Pippi Longstocking,* and *The Case of the Mystery House*. My brother also loved to collect and trade comic books – *Superman, Flash, The Fantasic Four, Spiderman, Ironman, Thor* and many others. We also collected the Archie Comics. I read every book and made sure

to put them back in my brother's room. We lived right next door to the public library and my sisters and I would go there often. Mrs. Cooper would be at the desk as I signed out the maximum number of books. This building housed different worlds that I could enter anytime I wanted. This took me further from my parents' world into a new one that was wide open to me.

In Grade Four, there were four of us who were Inuit amongst over a dozen *Qallunaat* students. This was a new school year with rotary classes with all of the subjects taught by different teachers. What a different feeling that was. I felt so out of place but at least my two very best friends were my classmates, Kaati and Piita. There were such rowdy boys in our class who were always getting into trouble, especially in math class. In this class I remember one of our teachers talking about World War II during Remembrance Day week. Miss Dykeman was from Holland and she told us a story about her family and the Germans. She described her family having to run and escape from the soldiers. We would have music and singing with Mr. Fitzgerald who played the guitar. I remember singing songs like, *Red River Valley, This Land is My Land, My Bonnie Lies over the Ocean and* a French Canadian song*; Un Canadian Errant.* Our Inuktitut songs were getting fainter and fainter if they were at all audible anymore in my memory. Some of the words had already disappeared and faded away from not being voiced for so long like this one; *Aijaajurujunii, ajiijaajurujuniiiiiiiii* (words of a juggling song).

The math class was the worst with a crabby, gum-chewing teacher in the portable building. There were a handful of *Qallunaat* boys who constantly egged each other on, often igniting the teacher's foul moods. Wham! Thwack! He would hit his desk and

sometimes a student's desk with his ruler almost making the student jump out of his chair. Sometimes a chalk would go whizzing by aimed at a misbehaving boy who was turned away at a moment when suddenly, he would be hit with the 'bullet'. 'Corbin', 'Matt', 'Edward', or 'Damian' would be the culprits. I would see them with their heads bowed down at their textbooks but their eyes would be peering at each other. The rest of us would be trying to quietly do our fractions, decimals or long division. When the bell rang, everyone rushed out as quickly as they could and of course the boys would be crashing, banging their way out the door. Many a beer can was sighted on a shelf, in the bathroom cupboard or in the bathroom trash those years. The teacher never had to discipline me directly or most of us for that matter except for those boys but I just remember the violence and tension in that class. We were scared out of our wits most of the time.

I enjoyed most of my classes but constantly struggled internally with the disparities between home and school. Peer pressure was enough as it was but each tug and pull of the different things at school was trying to conform or shape me to the *Qallunaaq* standards and ways. Home was always the safe haven where I could be myself. I started to hear other kids in these grades, "*Qallu-naa-ngu-gasuaq-tupa-ruluung*!" say to others who tried to do something in the way a *Qallunaaq* would do it or say it, it; being an expression, a look, a mannerism or action. Our Inuit peers would recognize these things and call on them. Some of them would just be jealous of someone who could read better, or know their fractions or hung out with the *Qallunaaq* kids. This expression, *qallunaangugasuaqtuparuluung* (really trying to be a *Qallunaaq*) was one of those conscience sayings that reminded us that we were not *Qallunaat*.

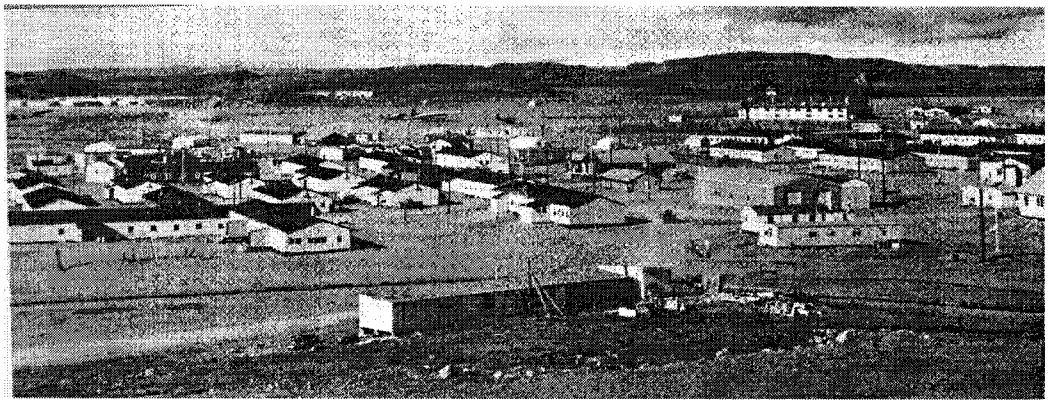


Figure 26. Iqaluit, 1960's. Arnaquq family collection. Black & white photograph.

The school buses took us home at lunch time and after school. I would get on with my sisters and friends. The bus driver was an Inuk, whom I found intimidating (*iliranaqtuq*) who had such a 'mean' look it seemed. Maybe he wasn't really mean but as a young girl I was always fearful of him because he always seemed to have a scowl or glare on his face. One time I got on the bus and it went all around lower Iqaluit dropping kids off to their locations and my stop was the last one. As we neared where the bus usually stopped the driver was still going fast so it seemed like he was not going to stop which meant I would have to walk home back from the school but I was too scared to get up. There were just a few other children left in the bus. Finally he looked up through his long rear-view mirror, his eyes peering up wearing that mean scowl. At last he stopped short with a screech of the brakes, a few yards from where I usually got off. The other kids from my neighbourhood had not been on so I was the only one. Charlie opened the door, squee-ak as he pulled the lever. Whew! I ran down the aisle of the bus, down the steps and out the door as quickly as I could. After being quite tense I let out a sigh of relief as I ran home.

As my younger siblings became old enough to attend school, my sister and I would often help them with their homework. My mother would speak disdainfully of the work knowing it was expected by the teachers and say, "You have to do it." It was probably an indication of 'power' to her, the upper hand of the *Qallunaaq*. She did not want her children to be disciplined negatively if they did not get their work done. So, we tried to do our work as best as we could.

In school, our desks and our classrooms were our spaces. Our teachers were not just teaching but also conditioning and raising us during the school day. Recess time, gymnasium time, math time, social studies time, geography time, science time, music time, and library time were slotted, specific areas of study to teach us certain knowledge, skills and attitudes. I learned about Africa, Damascus, Peru, and Germany and did not learn the geographical names or terms about our own immediate countryside except in the summers when we went camping. I learned that the Iroquois were the enemies of the new Canadians and that the newcomers like Jacques Cartier, Samuel de Champlain, Christopher Columbus, Hudson, Baffin, Davis and others like them discovered the new lands that we lived in and that our ancestors had lived in for thousands of years. This new knowledge I learned in school was something I never remember talking about at home. If one of my siblings had homework that may have referred to any of them, that would be the only context to bring it up in. Perhaps some of it came out when we pretended to play school. Our parents did not know what we were learning. The teachers usually provided generalities at report card nights. Fathers rarely attended these parent-teacher events nor did many parents for that matter. More started coming in the 1980's when the younger

parents who had attended school began having children. Once my sisters and I were old enough around 11 or 12 years of age, we accompanied my mother as her interpreters.

My parents would receive mail which would be written in English. If my brother was not around (which was most of the time) I would be the person to translate and if a *Qallunaaq* came around, one of us would act as the interpreter. We quickly became the conduit for information for our parents and others who could not speak any English. If we did not understand something, then my father would rely on my older cousin when she came by.

We were not learning any Inuktitut in our classes and speaking more English every day. Years later, my mother mentioned that an Anglican Minister from a smaller community had visited us in the mid-1960's and noticed that we were speaking a lot of English. The children younger than me who had been born in the early 1970s had more broken Inuktitut and were not as fluent as my age group anymore. Their speech in words that had sounds like the 'g' was now pronounced with an 'r', for example; *anaanaga, ataataga* became *anaanara and ataatara.* Instead of saying *taanna pilaguuk* became *taanna pilaraa*, and they were no longer using the dual marker to indicate two of some things; *kamiik, pualuuk, ijiik, siutiika became, kamiit, pualuit, ijiit, or kamikka, pualukka, siutikka.* They were also replacing noun and verb stems with English inserted into Inuktitut sentences; *Teacher-mut tuniguk, My friend takulauqqiuk, colour-llugu taanna.* As the years passed by, the less Inuktitut our younger siblings spoke making it harder for them to communicate and express their ideas to their parents and the older people. The twenty years of schooling without any Inuktitut during the day was now felt in a whole generation of children and youth. Those who stayed in the school the longest number of

years did not speak their mother tongue fluently anymore. They in turn reinforced the usage of their second language with their younger siblings. Television added to the impact of the loss at the same time. *Qallunaat* teachers did not have any time nor any incentive to learn the language of their students.

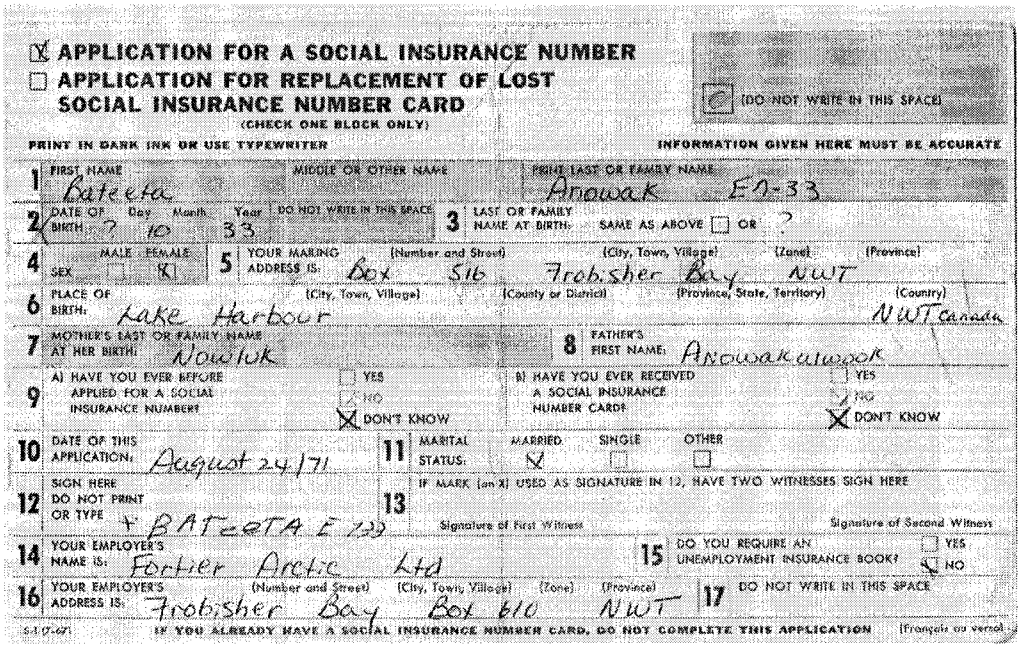
It was hard to try and make any of the teachers, other *Qallunaat*, and family, relatives or others outside school understand the 'other's way'. Losing our Inuktitut or not learning the words to describe an idea or concept made it harder to bridge the two cultures and languages. I always felt, and I am sure my peers felt the same way, that you were caught in the middle of both worlds. We did not really talk about issues and ideas with our parents or other adults because that was not the custom. Conversations with children and youth were not common. Adults could tell stories, legends and tales but it was not customary to have discussions unless it was from an adult to adult or peer to peer. The communication breakdown was not just an inter-generational and language issue but a cultural one as well. The language shift added to the cultural loss. Sometimes a teacher would tell students to talk to their parents or grandparents as part of schoolwork but that was very awkward for us. How could you explain to the teacher or our parents?

Our parents did not understand where we were coming from so our generation started to think they knew more than their parents. They saw our limitations too because we were not learning or mastering what they knew as well either. Which one was right? The teachers also saw our limitations. Who were we?

New Names – Surnames

One day I came home from school to hear my father saying that we now had last names. This was in 1969 or 1970 when I was ten years old. He and my mother were sitting at the kitchen table as usual drinking their tea with cigarettes in their hands. My sisters and I were standing around, listening to them talk. We asked, 'what name?' He replied, '*Arnaquq'*. Eew! What an awful name I thought. How come? Why? I said it to myself, '*Ar-naq-quq. Nowdluk Arnaquq.*' How terrible it sounded! My sisters thought the same thing. We looked at one another with frowns on our faces. Who was Arnaquq? It meant a woman. We were already unofficially using my father's first name, Anugaaq. Then my mother explained, "*Ataatavit ataataminiga."(*It was the name of your father's father.) A man had come around earlier in the day from the Government. He was visiting communities and talking to the men of the households and asking what names would they like to choose for last names. The Government had a task, in giving Inuit official surnames. Ours was from a dead grandfather. I was embarrassed to have a new name and it took me years to get used to it. In school I would still use *Anawalk.* We went to school and our teacher talked about our names with us. I remember how strange it felt. Some of the names were very unfamiliar and my classmates and friends were visibly affected too as we learned each other's new names. Some of them made fun of the names and embarrassed one another. As the teachers said our names, you could see a *Qallunaaq* student roll his eyes, fidget, and snicker at the 'funny' sounding names. Usually a name was a name was a name. Meanings had not mattered before but with the introduction of so many new names all at once, there was a lot of mental adjustment. *Tuqsurarniq* – use of kinship terminology was weakening as we lost daily contact with our relatives who

otherwise would be calling us or referring to us by our kinship terms. We now had last names like the *Qallunaat* and this reinforced Western ways, adding to other customs that we were acquiring and learning. I remember filling out forms for my parents and stopping at the surname box wondering what to write in as well as for the box that asked for a maiden name if the application was for my mother. My mother or father would sign their names with their E7 numbers in place of surnames. I can only imagine what the *Qallunaat* must have thought when they received applications from the Eskimos who put numbers instead of surnames.



☒ APPLICATION FOR A SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER
☐ APPLICATION FOR REPLACEMENT OF LOST SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER CARD
(CHECK ONE BLOCK ONLY)

(DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE)

PRINT IN DARK INK OR USE TYPEWRITER — INFORMATION GIVEN HERE MUST BE ACCURATE

1 FIRST NAME: Bateeta — MIDDLE OR OTHER NAME — PRINT LAST OR FAMILY NAME: Anowak E7-33

2 DATE OF BIRTH: Day 7 Month 10 Year 33 — DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE

3 LAST OR FAMILY NAME AT BIRTH: SAME AS ABOVE ☐ OR ?

4 SEX: MALE ☐ FEMALE ☒

5 YOUR MAILING ADDRESS IS: Box 516 (Number and Street) Frobisher Bay (City, Town, Village) NWT (Province)

6 PLACE OF BIRTH: Lake Harbour (City, Town, Village) (County or District) (Province, State, Territory) NWT Canada (Country)

7 MOTHER'S LAST OR FAMILY NAME AT HER BIRTH: Nowtuk

8 FATHER'S FIRST NAME: Anowakiwoor

9 A) HAVE YOU EVER BEFORE APPLIED FOR A SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER? ☐ YES ☐ NO ☒ DON'T KNOW

B) HAVE YOU EVER RECEIVED A SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER CARD? ☐ YES ☐ NO ☒ DON'T KNOW

10 DATE OF THIS APPLICATION: August 24/71

11 MARITAL STATUS: MARRIED ☒ SINGLE ☐ OTHER ☐

12 SIGN HERE DO NOT PRINT OR TYPE: † BATEETA E 733

13 IF MARK (an X) USED AS SIGNATURE IN 12, HAVE TWO WITNESSES SIGN HERE
Signature of First Witness — Signature of Second Witness

14 YOUR EMPLOYER'S NAME IS: Forbier Arctic Ltd

15 DO YOU REQUIRE AN UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BOOK? ☐ YES ☒ NO

16 YOUR EMPLOYER'S ADDRESS IS: Frobisher Bay (Number and Street) (City, Town, Village) Box 610 (Zone) NWT (Province)

17 DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE

IF YOU ALREADY HAVE A SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER CARD, DO NOT COMPLETE THIS APPLICATION

Figure 27. This is my mother's application for a social insurance card in 1971. Notice her signature with her E7 number. Arnaquq family collection. Colour photograph.

High School

Going to the Gordon Robertson Education Centre (GREC) high school in 1971 was a matter of fact for me and my peers. It was just another level to go to after elementary school. By then, our lives were well established in Iqaluit. My mother or

father's home camps and traditional way of life were not in our consciousness. Our collective memory was now about life in and of Frobisher Bay. If my parents or aunts and uncles referred to their former life, it did not mean much to any of us children. Perhaps the closest parallel was summer camping. We did not really think about how it was when we just living it except hearing about it would make us think about what we believed we could not live without, for instance, electricity, oil furnaces, telephone, TV, toilets, a shower and store bought food. There were many moments when the dominant culture was making its presence felt, slowly eating away at you, but sometimes it squashed you or pulled you on its invisible leash through customs, policies, procedures and rules.

The classes in Grade Seven A and the high school were very different from the elementary school. I remember the chaotic behaviour of my pre-teen classmates, their snickering and constant badgering of one another, mostly the *Qallunaat*, a couple of girls and a handful of boys. They were more talkative, aggressive, competitive and whiny. There was so much tension between girls and boys, Inuit and *Qallunaat* ways, teachers and students, rules and timetables. The physical rotations of the Day One to Day Six classes in a larger school were a big change and having so many teachers in one day and having to be in such a large school with so many new students walking to and fro from one class to the next was difficult. It also felt like being around noisy or restless harp seals. There were so many strangers from out of town; Pangnirtung, Cape Dorset, Rankin Inlet, Resolute Bay, Igloolik, Clyde River and many other communities. This was a lot of adjustment for us, all of us. There had never been so many hormone-ridden youth under

one roof until these first few years of GREC in the Eastern Arctic. Our parents certainly never lived life as we were living it.

All of our teachers were *Qallunaat* or Southern Canadian transients except for one Inuk who was originally from the Western Arctic who spoke a slightly different dialect from ours. He spoke mostly in English to us anyway. There was an adjustment because of the larger class sizes and so many new people. My teachers were for the most part, respectful towards us. The teacher I referred to before had moved to the high school with us so we still had to contend with the negative discipline issues and approaches he used, and our learning of that academic subject was probably forever affected. Our attitudes, skills and knowledge in that area were lacking because of his teaching methods. These 'transient' teachers and the one Inuk from the Western Arctic shaped part of my view of the world through their lenses, expectations, standards and acceptance of me. Like many Inuit I did not speak against my teachers and their teachings. Others expressed their resistance through their behaviours or actions which often led them into trouble. That does not mean my Inuit classmates and I never spoke our minds. However, the classes did not lend themselves to interactive learning. We learned from textbooks, sat in straight rows, copied problems from the blackboards, read assigned books and were expected to follow instructions from the teachers. The creative and developmental classes we had were in the art, music, shop and home economics (sewing and cooking) classes and, the English class where we did drama and skits. I enjoyed these classes. GREC was a vocational high school and there was a sense of choice in the different programs which also taught us useful life and coping skills.

We ate our lunches at the school which introduced a whole range of new foods for us Inuit. I remember the line-ups and the smell of food as we moved up the line. There were over 150 students being fed in the large cafeteria. We were to pick up our trays and cutlery at one end, then a drink of milk or juice and then walk along to be given our plate of food. On different days we had macaroni, spaghetti, liver, chicken, fish, other pasta dishes, hamburger, hotdogs, and so on. There was always salad, and desserts too. Many students who normally did not eat large quantities had abundant food to select from during these lunches.

Figure 28. Naullaq Arnaquq, 1973. Arnaquq family collection.
Black & white photograph.

Peer pressure was the biggest issue, the need to fit in, to conform and be part of a group or 'herd'. Suddenly, our hair had to be a certain length, clothes a particular cut and we learned to behave certain ways to fit in. The opposite sex was also now paying attention to us and we were paying attention to them. I was really rather shy and did not like the attention. I also had certain expectations of what kind of boy or male I would like to be with. My male classmates from town were more like cousins and brothers because I had known them all my life.

We would hear about teachers who were considered to be 'a mean or bad teacher'. They were the ones who were either overly strict, aggressive, always sent children to the principal, inflexible, spoke in angry tones and some spoke of bad things about Inuit in front of the students. They would inadvertently force misbehaving students to drop out of school with their disciplinary methods by making them feel unwelcome. The parents would never confront them because the school was the *Qallunaat*'s place and of course the parents were unilingual Inuktitut-speaking so language was a barrier, but most of all it was the dominant culture's ownership of the institution. Sometimes those students who left school did so without their parents' knowledge. As children we always knew and referred to them as *ilinniannguaqtut* (pretending to be in school). I did it once and it felt awful and never did it again! One day after lunch several of us were walking towards the high school and someone mentioned that we should skip our classes. I got talked into going with them. It was strange to do something that was not right. When I got home, I did not let my mother know about my skipped class but I expect I behaved a bit oddly because I felt guilty.

Since art was my area of interest I felt I did well. My classmates commented on my artistic capabilities but I rejected their praises. It went against what we were taught at home which was not to stand out or boast. Years later, one of my former classmates told me that I had not liked it when other people praised my artwork. All through my school life I heard teachers praise my work but often tell me how modest I was. Modest was a word I struggled to understand. I would try to explain that it was not the right word, because it never totally reflected my cultural values. It was very difficult to try and

explain to the *Qallunaat*. It was one of those words that did not capture the difference in concept and attitude.

GREC had very structured programs and schedules, loud bells to announce the end of a class and for all to hurry to the next one. In our music class at school, I learned to play the recorder, flute and guitar. We learned to read and follow music. One day I looked at the Eaton's catalogue and eyed the musical instruments. There was a $29.99 guitar with nylon strings! I just had to order it and asked my mother if I could. It came a few weeks later and so I learned to play a few chords during those three years in high school even though I could not sing a tune. My best friend, Kaati and I studied the flute for extra hours outside of school with our music teacher. I would subject my poor family to my flute playing. I do not remember if it was that first year of studying music that the Symphony came to town but it was a big deal for us. They played at the elementary school and the public was invited. Mostly *Qallunaat* attended the event. It was probably a big trip for the visitors themselves, to come to the Arctic.

In the Home Economics class, we had sewing in which they taught us how to make jackets, and clothing from store-bought patterns. In the cooking class we learned how to set a table, cook store-bought food and how to organize a kitchen. The students who took the shop class learned how to work with wood.

The high school years marked a period when we were becoming young adults. Some youth developed relationships and ended up with spouses from other places. Living in Iqaluit was different for them. Many parents wondered how their children fared in a big town. Their children were better cared for than some of us who lived in town. They had structure, regular meals, guided homework, free recreational access to the pool, arena

and gyms, received a weekly allowance and even had their own beds and rooms. They had rules and routines that some normally would not have at home. There was even a seamstress who mended their clothes. During Christmas and summers they went home to their communities and probably were noticeably changed people after being away for many months. Some of them never returned after the breaks, some were told not to go back to the bad influences of Iqaluit life; others did not want to leave their families again and some did not do well in school. It was better to stay home.

An imported system of education was being used to school Inuit children. It was a *Qallunaaq* way. It was probably abnormal for the *Qallunaat* when they started school as well. Grouping children in such large numbers to school them was not normal. Inuit just happened to adopt this method later than *Qallunaat* and others. We now had to learn how to survive in a different way. With the exception of one or two who demanded more attention, as in any class, the children were most often well-behaved. The weekly schedule for library, physical education and recess times also assisted the students to learn the school routines in the kindergarten classes. They were learning to belong and live in a setting that 'herded' them around. Societal expectations were still the same but were adhered to differently. Support systems that were there a few years before were dramatically weakened. Parents of those young parents were not as close at hand to advise them with subtle gestures, quiet commands, gentle and loving reminders to do more or less of certain behaviours.

As the town grew larger and more houses were built, the large community atmosphere created more than physical distances between the generations. The chasms

were deep and dividing, causing a rift and weakening of family values. Strong families were more equipped to adjust to the social changes.

Even though the societal and family expectations were the same, these were not as easily reinforced or passed on because the children were now at school all day and no longer interacting with or watching adults so it was easy to let go of these age-old and accepted customs. The changes from the old way of life to the new caused confusion on the most part for individuals and families who lost or did not have the support structures to help their children cope with this change. These support structures included the role of grandparents in guiding their adult children in disciplining their children in life choices, activities, events and difficulties.

New social activities such as drinking, gambling, and partying posed social problems such as extramarital relationships, abuse, neglect, mistrust, and jealousy, which Inuit as a society always had, but could control in smaller settings where only their families lived together. Living in large towns with many people was new and the social control mechanisms that had worked in smaller settings were now more difficult to adhere to. Individuals were becoming neglected, rejected, abused and hurt. Some families who had moved into Iqaluit from the outlying communities moved back where their families were closer and smaller and where it was easier to abstain from alcohol because it was not readily available.

Money and the concept of a wage economy were new and how it was acquired and used involved an individualism that went against the strong tradition of family, kinship and sharing values. Ownership and sharing of material objects like boats, motors or tools also became more problematic for large families because the youth were more

self-centred and less respectful towards others. Vandalism and stealing was also now common among the young people. At first, when Iqaluit was still small it was easy to know which children acted out in these behaviours but as the community grew, it was less obvious. We became more wary about leaving our belongings and even our laundry hanging outside.

Exchange Trip – Glimpses of Qallunaat Culture

In April of 1973, I was selected to go on a school trip South to Winnipeg with a couple of good friends, Sila and students from other classes. It was a once-in-a-life-time opportunity for those of us who had never been South. I remember our teacher called me into a corner and told me I was one of the students who would go on the trip. We flew down by Nordair jet and went for ten days. On the airplane, we were excited, looking about the large plane with rows of seats. My friends and I sat next to each other. I had either been to the bathroom or had gone to sit with one of my friends when a boy with long shoulder hair from one of the smaller communities grinned at me and said something. I ignored him as I moved down the aisle back to my seat and made sure to avoid him the rest of the trip. He was too short and not very good looking to my liking.

We went to Ottawa first and stayed there for the first three days. As we descended, there were so many trees, buildings, roads and what looked like farmland. We saw our first trees, highways, trains, skyscrapers, brick homes, big stores, concrete sidewalks and paved roads, all the things we ever read about or saw on TV or movies. We stayed at a hotel called 'The Savoy'. We had the grandest time going up and down elevators or escalators. I was not used to the motions and I remember on the first day

feeling dizzy as I stepped off the elevator in our hotel. I staggered and the man behind the Hotel front desk asked my friend if I was drunk as we asked for a can opener for our soda pop. We went into stores and were in awe of the variety and quantity of goods. I remember we bought toiletries like shampoo that we saw on TV ads, *tiiviikkuusuut* (they appear on TV). We found the museums, such as the aviation one, boring. I think that we not only kept talking excitedly in surprised tones but also taking in all the new sights quietly to ourselves, internalizing them. Our eyes and pupils must have been wider than they usually were those ten days.

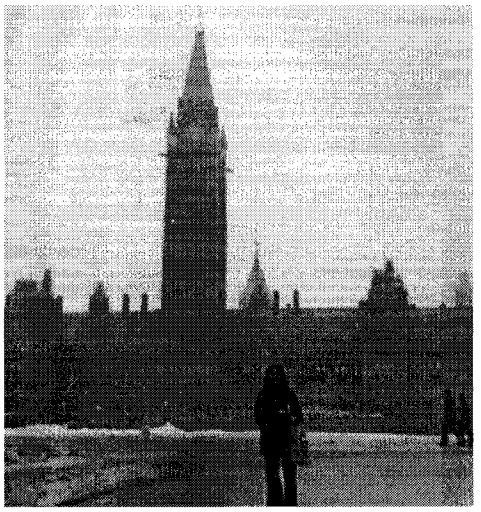


Figure 29. Naullaq in front of Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, Ontario, 1974. Arnaquq family collection. Colour photograph.

Kimmirut (Lake Harbour) was the only other place I had been when I was around five or six and it was even smaller than Iqaluit. Visiting Ottawa, the national capital, was going into another world. During one of the first couple of days, we went for a tour of the Parliament buildings and as we walked down the cement sidewalks, the brick or stone buildings were real as I saw them in books, and the traffic lights were a source of

amazement to us; I think we were all smiles or wide-eyed from wonder and awe. Crossing the street when the lights turned green was an actual thing people did and here we were doing it. We must have walked a bit differently compared to the natives of Ottawa as we haltingly stopped at the traffic light when someone told us to stop because the light was red. As we looked left to right, the many sights were overwhelming; people scurrying about, sounds and smells of cars, buses, whizzing by, honking, screeching, squealing, and tall buildings with lots of windows reaching up into the sky, and busy street signs. All these images and sounds penetrated my senses.

Then we went on a train and traveled across the country for three days seeing a vast land full of farms, farmhouses, cows, towns, roads, cars, and trees, lots of trees. We were going to eat in, walk around, and sleep on a moving train like in books or films. When we finally reached Winnipeg we disembarked and felt disoriented at first from being on a moving train all that time. The ground felt like it was swaying. We were met by the coordinating teachers for our visit and the local students who would be billeting us. I stayed with a Ukrainian family who were anxious but polite asking me questions about where I was from. Their father did not live with them even though he was still alive. That was different. Their mother's boyfriend came over and ate supper with us on my first night. They asked me lots of questions, questions I have always heard even to today, "Do you live in igloos? Is there snow all year around? Are there polar bears?" Here, I had never slept in an igloo nor had I ever seen a polar bear. The only skin clothing I had were my *kamiks* (sealskin boots).

We visited the high school, museums, a farm and all the local sites. When we saw the chicken and pig farm it added a new, strong, sensory memory to our experiences. We

tried to cover up the smell by covering our noses with our coats or mitts. So this is what a farm smelled like and how we get the eggs and milk. How could we eat or drink all that if that is what they came from? I was used to hunting and fishing but by this time in Grade Seven, many of us Inuit now drank milk and ate eggs regularly. Five to ten years before this was not the case. I had a camera and took some pictures to show my family and friends. I do not remember if I called home once during the trip. I saw so many new things and experienced a bit of Southern life. That trip verified that my book world came from a real way of life that we did not live up North. It was not fiction. We returned home with remapped brains; olfactory, visual, tactile, auditory and kinesthetic senses enriched with new experiences. It was a trip of a lifetime for many of us.

Confrontation and Dropping Out of School

Unfortunately, many students dropped out by Grade Eight and Grade Nine. Most, if not all, were Inuit who quit school. Usually it was girls who were told to babysit at home because their mothers were now working, and if it was boys they had difficulty reading and or speaking English fluently. Many boys whom I had started out with in Kindergarten had dropped out by this time.

The tension between the two cultures was great, shown in the give and take of a custom, an action, a thought, gesture and many other ways unimaginable. The newcomers' presence, the *Qallunaat*, and ways of their world trampled ours, changing our values, attitudes and how we thought. What better way to do this but through us children? Tension, sweat, bewilderment, awe, stress at first quickly changed to

compliance in the classrooms. Children being jostled, elbowed, pushed, nudged, and restrained, like herded animals.

Some parents who had never been to school and the young parents who had been to school but dropped out early lacked knowledge or discipline on the kind of guidance and advice necessary to support their children to complete their education. Routine activities such as helping children and getting them to do their homework, ensuring the homework was done at specific times, going to bed at a specific time so they would not be tired the next day, asking them what they were learning, talking to the teacher about concerns, setting goals were not part of their way of life. Inuit at that time did not have conversations or dialogues with their children about most things so there was no opportunity to discuss problems or concerns which would help identify potential issues that they could help their children with. The concept of an education, let alone acquiring a diploma, and post-secondary education or some type of vocational training to learn skills and get a job, were foreign and abstract ones for my parents' generation with no universities or colleges in sight to aim for and steer their children towards. Children just did not leave their parents. How could we possibly leave the warmth of our homes and families? These did not enter our consciousness because our parents had never been to school.

The teachers, principals, social service agencies or other *Qallunaat* only had so much power to keep children in a day school, particularly in Iqaluit. There was a communication barrier and disconnect between the educators and the homes. Once children started to quit or were taken out of school, and the more this happened, it became acceptable and an option for others. Many parents felt powerless to force their

own children to keep attending when they did not want to. There seemed to be different types of situations, those parents who loved their children too much to put them through the misery of facing 'mean' teachers and the other parents who did not really care perhaps due to lack of understanding, or just not knowing. Teachers did not understand why parents showed little interest in their children's education or failed to discipline their children to aim for higher goals and aspirations. To some of them, our mothers and fathers did not seem to care.

Many children dropped out when I went to school. Girls often missed school to take care of their younger siblings and once they then started being absent they lagged behind in their schoolwork making them feel inadequate. They started to miss more days or pretty soon just stopped attending altogether. This was the same for those children who were often late in the mornings. Others who were quite sensitive did not feel so welcome when their teachers were displeased with them so they stopped attending. Some children who were teased or bullied by others would start missing school if they did not have older siblings to confront the bullies. Parents would not even bother speaking to the parents of the bully let alone the *Qallunaat* in the school. It went against Inuit values to do so. Retreating from the conflict or avoidance of the problem was easier. There were just a few parents who were assertive enough to confront some teachers and or other children but there were not many. In our large family one of us older children looked out for our younger siblings if someone was teased or bullied. I remember a few times this happened and once you confronted a bully it usually did not happen again. My parents never called any of the parents of these children.

Unfortunately, many students who were often late, missed school, and ones who misbehaved would be taken out of school through suspensions. The system would often work against them. The negative behaviours would often be reinforced instead of negated through positive reinforcement strategies. This has always been a bone of contention for older Inuit and still is.

I left school in 1975 when I was in the academic Grade Ten class. I got mostly A's in my marks and was one of the few at the top of the class. My parents did not show any unhappiness about me leaving nor forced me to go back to school. I was young, thought I knew better and made mistakes. My two siblings had already left school before me. None of my teachers or the principal probably called my parents. Many of my former classmates had already been out of school for quite a while.

Dozens left each year, a process which continues to this day.

CHAPTER THREE

Teaching and Teacher Education

> I have also found a way to testify about my own confusions of identity, how these stalked me for more than 30 years and the ways in which storytelling about my teaching has enabled me to reconcile my uncertainties about a fixed and static self who embodies one set of seemingly polar characteristics or another. (Gomez, 1999, p. 85).

Out-Teaching / Classroom Assistant

In 1975, ten years after I had started school, someone knocked on our door at home. It was a *Qallunaaq* because an Inuk never did that. I remember those of us who were home looked at each other and asked out loud, "*Kinarjualittaurnginna?*" (Who in the world is that?) A knock meant it was a request or some kind of intent from a *Qallunaaq*. My father went to the door and a woman's voice with an English accent came through, asking for me. My father was as usual all smiles and welcoming but did not bring her in. The *Qallunaaq*'s presence created quite a bit of a stir. I went to the door and came face to face with a small woman, someone who would help influence my career in education as it turned out. My school buddy had mentioned my name to her and she came to ask if I would like to work at the elementary school. I will call her by the name *Kaalik.* Kaalik was looking for an assistant. I was almost 16 years old then. I was kind of reluctant and must have not called her back because she told me years later that she had called me back to see if I had made up my mind. I had left my school only a couple of

months before because of my pregnancy. So, I went to try this job out to see if I could handle it. I had the pleasure of working with Kaalik for a year in 1975 teaching the Grade Three class. She was kind, respectful, and an excellent teacher. The class was very well behaved and responded well to her calm demeanour. In the one year I worked with Kaalik I learned how to run a classroom, relate to students and teach them.

"Naullaq, what would you think if you had your own classroom? We need a Kindergarten teacher." asked the principal. This was in 1976 when I was 17 years old. The principal must have noticed how I had grown in confidence in the year after being an assistant to Kaalik. Although still quiet and shy in large groups of *Qallunaat,* especially in the staffroom of the school, I had started to learn to think about what was behind the mind of a teacher. Accepting this new responsibility for a whole group of children in my own classroom was a major change.

That spring, one of the teachers helped me apply as a full-time student to the Teacher Education Program in Fort Smith, Northwest Territories. I was 17 by then and was excited at the prospect of going away to become a teacher. I waited to hear from Fort Smith and when I eventually did, it was disappointing. They said I should wait another year until I turned 18. The previous year when I worked with *Kaalik* I had seen TEP students from Fort Smith practice teach in our school. A couple of them taught in our class for the few weeks they were in town. The students took advantage of them I thought! They were misbehaving and not paying attention. "I can handle them, why can't these student-teachers?" However, being young and naïve I did not know that students could be so testing towards newcomers.

On the first day in the late summer of my second year as a classroom assistant, I entered the empty classroom. The sounds I made echoed, bouncing off the bare walls as I walked around claiming my new space. This was the third classroom next to the other two rooms assigned to the two kindergarten classes. It was triangular in appearance. The children would start in a few days so I had time to set things up and plan with the certified teacher next door whom I will call *Arnakutaak* (tall woman). She was originally from the South and was a very creative, artistic person who showed a different view of a teacher than the one I was used to from my own schooling experiences. She taught mostly *Qallunaat* children in English. She had less than a handful of Inuit students most of whom were children of mixed marriages; Inuk and *Qallunaaq*.

My classroom was like a blank slate or canvas for both me and my students. Over the next few days before the children came for their first day of school I fixed up the walls, bulletin boards and desks the way I wanted to. I now had access to the storage room. I had new teaching ideas and strategies having just taken a classroom assistants' course with fellow Inuit the month before. Shelves of rainbow coloured paper, notebooks, poster boards, pencils, crayons, rulers, paints and other classroom tools called out to me. With suppressed glee, I picked up different coloured paper and other materials to adorn the bulletin boards.

Arnakutaak and I planned every week keeping to the set curriculum from Yellowknife. I taught my Inuit students everything in Inuktitut while she taught in English to her mostly *Qallunaat* students. She had a few Inuit students whose parents had chosen English as a language of instruction over Inuktitut. Their fathers were *Qallunaat*, and their mothers Inuk. On the first day of classes, most parents accompanied their

'babies' whom they were now handing over to the school, and to me to take responsibility for a few hours of their lives. Apprehension, hesitancy, wonder, mystery and many other feelings and thoughts were probably going through my new students' minds. Some started to cry or looked bewildered as their mothers walked out the door yanking some of them straight back as they were unable to cut their umbilical cords from their little ones right away. I knew all of their parents and families except for one or two who had moved in from other communities.

Figure 30. Naullaq and her Kindergarten class, 1977.
Arnaquq family collection. Colour photograph.

Arnakutaak taught me many teaching methods including learning centres and how to set them up. Her teaching ideas were very hands-on and my classroom was often a variation of hers. We would sit down at the small tables and chairs, lay out our planning books and note papers to outline what we would do for each week. As the days sped by, she left me more to myself. Working with her, I learned how to plan and set up a colourful and active classroom. The principal or vice-principal occasionally came in but only for a few moments just to relay a message or ask a question about something. I had

two kindergarten classes, one group in the morning and the other in the afternoon. There were fewer than a dozen students in each group which permitted me to work closely with individual students. There was no Inuktitut material to work with whatsoever so I made everything from scratch. I verbally translated stories from the English storybooks to my classes. The children were so innocent, trusting and impressionable. Such power a teacher or a parent has over the lives of children! These little beings were so easy to influence, affect, and condition being totally reliant on an adult or someone in a position of authority. There was the odd student who was more dominant than the others and could influence his classmates but was amenable to the persistent guidance and direction of a teacher.

While some of my former classmates were up the hill in the high school sitting behind a desk fulfilling Grade 11 and 12 curriculum requirements I was formulating lessons for my students. I know I missed out, but at the same time I was gaining a great deal. Letting go of my formal education probably enabled me to strengthen my Inuktitut language. I did not fully realize this until I started writing this story. Having me as their teacher, my students obviously also gained a bit more of their own culture and language. There were a few Inuit now working at the school. A couple of other classroom assistants were teaching in other grades including cultural instructors who taught sewing, carving, skinning, and building tools or making clothing. We would gather together in one area of the staff room during meetings, speaking our language in hushed tones. I did not understand some of the jargon the *Qallunaat* used in our midst; policies, program development, curriculum requirements, RRSPs, union, motions, professional

development. Little did I know these new concepts and words would come back years later and become my own linguistic repertoire to choose from as an educational leader.

Teaching a four or five-year old a new concept or skill brought me to my knees. I had to learn how to break down the hard concepts or introduce them. Making them fun or not boring was another thing to master. We sang songs, rhymes and games, adapted from English and neglected to teach our own Inuktitut songs, which I had now forgotten and others I never learned, such as *Nauli kullu? Nauli kullu? Uvvaunaa, uvvaunaa, qanuippit ullumi, qanuinngi ullumi, ullatsivuuq, ullatsivuuq* (Where is thumbkin?*)* I had to become an actor, singer, director, leader, or nurturer. Watching and learning from my two mentors, *Arnakutaak* and *Kaalik* I emulated them in my classroom without the peering eyes and ears of other adults. Being responsible for my own class in my own space, I was able to experiment and do things in my own way. I had room to make mistakes and gain confidence and understand teaching. I remember my students being eager to please and responding to the lessons. They were in a different world and setting than the one what I had experienced only 12 years before. One of my students was my youngest brother, another student was one of my youngest cousins from my paternal aunt's family. The rest were from families I grew up with. The main difference with these children and their parents' generation was that they were now living year-round in a town full of people who were not all related, and they did not experience hunting and fishing on a daily basis anymore. Families did still go camping but it was mostly men who went hunting. Some of the children did not even know this way of life as they never went out on the land.

The structure of the day for the Kindergarten class was organized into sections with the usual routines seen in Southern classrooms; talking about the calendar, days of

the week, weather and recounting the children's home activities. However, I was using our Inuktitut language. After that, there was mathematics and counting or talking and learning about family or community events when there would be sharing about whose father caught a seal or caribou. Play was another major activity where the children could be talking in their first language, something we were not freely permitted to do when we went to school in the 1960's. Shutting up or resorting to English was easier for us than being reprimanded for speaking our mother tongue. After a while there was no need for us to think in Inuktitut. The other language, English, took over our thinking, becoming our medium of voice more and more.

When I wrote on the chalkboard or a chart paper with my students I wrote in syllabics, using our phonetic writing system, *Naggajjau, Siittiivva 26, 1977* (Monday, September). The children learned to read and write their own names and one another's in Inuktitut first. They learned which direction to read and write from, and how big to write the letters and numbers. I read books written in English and verbally translated them page by page into Inuktitut. Kootoo or Robert would get so excited and often sit up on their knees blocking the book from the others as they looked at the pictures. I would have to say, "*Ingillusi" (*sit down). Meanwhile, Anita or Teena would sit in their places on the floor patiently waiting for the next page. This was probably the second or third year that kindergarten children had an Inuk teacher. There had been another Inuk classroom assistant before me who had moved away.

Sometimes *Arnakutaak* and I would combine our classes during special events in the extra Kindergarten classroom. We did not do this very often even though we were right next door to each other. Her students would often be louder and more rambunctious

causing my students to quietly stare at them out of curiosity. They not only spoke a different language from them, but also behaved differently. The behaviours in general between the two groups were often quite a contrast. Some of her students would make faces at some of my students. If one of my students was becoming rowdy and fidgety, he or she would see me move slightly and I would make eye contact with him or her and scrunch my nose to say no without saying anything verbally thereby putting him or her in her place, quietly.

One of the cultural differences between Inuit and *Qallunaat* is non-verbal language; facial expressions, body space, silence, self-awareness and communication between sexes although it is changing as we acquire more of the *Qallunaat* ways. There is an Inuktitut word, "*kiinaqsiuriniq*" which means, to look at a face for a sign. Some children or individuals who were accustomed to being treated harshly felt intimidated on an ongoing basis and were noticed quickly by adults or Elders when they kept looking at a person's face and eyes to see if the person was upset or annoyed. When we talk in Inuktitut we do not have to respond verbally with a yes or no. Raising the eyebrows indicates yes and scrunching the nose means no. When we pass a person, we do not need to acknowledge with a verbal hello, we can just smile. A quick look to see if the person says yes, no or I don't know with her facial expressions when we are talking to her is effective. Over time one learns to read subtle signs that show distaste, annoyance, uncertainty, and other expressions. The Inuktitut phrase to ask *how are you* is, *qanuippit* but it literally means asking if something is wrong so when this started to be used in the 1970's, 80's and even '90's with older people it was almost disrespectful. It was an indication that the person was not well physcially or worrying about something. So to

this day, some of us ask Elders instead, *qanuiqattangikkaluaqqiit*' or *qanuinngikkaluaqqiit* which is more hopeful, 'Hope you are not unwell', or 'Hope you are fine and not unwell.' Today, the youth do not know the traditional meaning or negative connotation the phrase brings to older people. It is merely another expression now and has become part of the Inuktitut language.

As students we would often be told to look at or face the teacher when they were speaking to us, forcing one to directly confront them which went against Inuit ways. It was disrespectful to look directly at someone, especially someone of the opposite gender. People did not 'stare' or gaze at someone directly in the face or eyes. One time when I was listening, a Southerner told my daughter that she averted her eyes too quickly like me. He chuckled and said I was shy. Over the years, especially when I became a Supervisor of Schools, I had to learn to look at a *Qallunaaq* for a longer time lest someone think I was not assertive or confident enough. It feels awkward only sometimes now.

Many of my students' parents were now of the generation slightly younger than my parents but there were still many unilingual Inuktitut speakers. Sometimes I would get notes written in just Inuktitut syllabics to inform me about something I had to know. During parent and teacher nights, I received the parents in my classroom and they would inquire in Inuktitut about how their children were doing. Most would be concerned about their children's behaviour more than anything. Having never been to school they did not really know what their children were learning. I would explain what I was teaching them and what the expectations were for the end of the year. Generally they would be pleased that their children were learning. I started to become aware of a concern by some parents

that learning in Inuktitut first might slow the children down and that they would therefore not be up to par with those learning in English. Some younger parents said they spoke to their children in Inuktitut at home so therefore they did not need the language at school and some parents who were in mixed marriages (married to English only speakers) just wanted their children to have total English instruction, and no Inuktitut. There were no workshops offered for parents to help them to understand the importance of learning in your first language.

The older children in the elementary school did not have any Inuktitut as a language of instruction in their schooling but had Inuktitut as a language arts subject at least one period a day during the rest of their schooling. The other contact hours with Inuktitut as a language of instruction would be with 'cultural instructors' at least once a week. The cultural classes were taught by a man and a woman, with the man teaching the boys carpentry and tool-making, and the woman making clothing and sewing. This model was to bring more of the Inuit culture into the school but it was an add-on program. It was a cultural inclusion model with Inuit knowledge just tacked on to the main curriculum.

I taught my students the required curriculum in Inuktitut. We talked about family, days of the week and calendar, painted and mixed colours, moulded plasticene into shapes, drew pictures and discussed what they watched on TV. In my classroom, we talked about the caribou, fish, seal or walrus the students' fathers brought home from hunting, something we never did when I was a student. We were not just reading and writing out syllabic letters that some people thought we only did because they associated learning in Inuktitut to learning the Inuktitut syllabics all day long. My parents'

generation and mine had learned to read and write syllabics through the church. People were not accustomed to thinking that learning mathematical concepts or any academic subject could be done in the Inuit language. Educators did not see Inuktitut and Inuit knowledge as having an equal place in the school curriculum.

As an Inuk who happened to be teaching, or a teacher who happened to be an Inuk, I learned classroom management techniques, tools, strategies and approaches to cope more effectively with a large number of children who were now my students. Behaviour, discipline, and emotions easily got out of control if you did not have these strategies on hand. I was used to taking care of younger ones at home and knew how to nurture or discipline them but it was a trial at first dealing with larger numbers of children. Maintaining order and keeping them interested was part of this process. The communication style I was now using with them was new for me and for them because Inuit did not talk using certain tones and inflection of voice, facial expressions that only *Qallunaat* used. Being in a formal school setting, where we had to behave differently as a child or even as an Inuk adult was changing how we saw ourselves at first but it became acceptable in a short matter of time. This bridge from one way of a life to another way was now reality for both the children and me, and their parents as Inuit started to work in this Southern way of teaching and relating to each other. One may feel a sense of loss in this change and adaptation but the new contexts and relationship dynamics imposed different behaviours and strategies for teaching children in large numbers.

Socialization and Discipline

There was now a gap, like a crevasse between the different generations in the new world of schooling. To survive in the past, one had to be with family, follow the passed-down traditions and customs, advice, beliefs and taboos to hunt, make clothes, and raise your children to do the same. Children were developing behaviours and attitudes in these large settings in school that were traditionally unacceptable or inappropriate such as talking back to adults, becoming arrogant and bullying others, being individualistic and not sharing, not being respectful towards adults and Elders such as calling them by their names instead of using kinship terms, and ignoring them when they disciplined. These behaviours have always been present in Inuit culture but they became more of a norm, or common behaviour for many children than an exception that would have quickly been dealt with in more traditional small family settings. Most of the children I taught had parents who grew up on the land in small family camps and were more respectful of their 'Elders'. Some of the children were adopted by their grandparents who were in their late 40's and 50's so they tended to be more mature and calm. Children who also spent a lot of time with their grandparents were similar in nature. The changes I was witnessing as a young teacher involved a fundamental shift in the mores of our culture. The behaviour of children was becoming disrespectful and this was very disturbing but nobody knew how to stop it. The feeling was of a loss of control. As a classroom assistant and young woman I was now helping to 'rear' many children. Instead of teaching the children how to hunt walruses, polar bears or seals, we were teaching them mathematics, language history and other subjects so the students could survive in a new way.

The disciplining and rearing of a child in Inuit culture was founded and based on

love and survival for the sake of a family. A grandmother's gentle reprimands and reminders were often through a look or tone of annoyance conveyed subtly. As a child was growing up until adolescence *uqaujjuusiat* or *uqaujjuijjusiat* (gifts of words of advice) were these reminders. They were guides and words of wisdom passed down from the grandparents. *Uqaujjuq-* is to advise, *u* – is the verb to be, *-siaq* is something given.

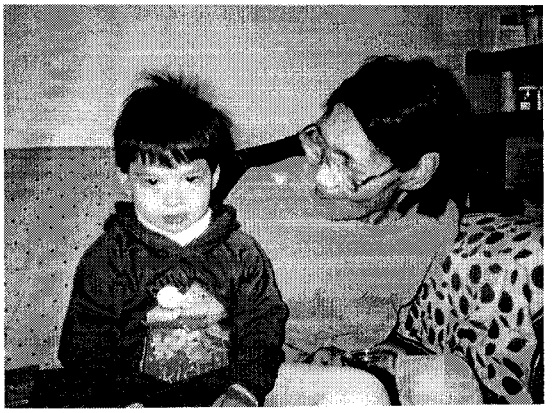


Figure 31. Mitchel and his Anaanatsiaq, 1994. Arnaquq family collection. Black & white photograph.

These words of advice were based on experience, knowledge and fact. They were part of the socialization and developmental process. Young adults became more conscious of the importance of this sage advice when they had children of their own. Elders always say they come back to you when you need them even if the person who had said it to you is no longer there. There was *uqaujjuijjusiat* in all aspects of life; socialization and kinship values, marriage, relationships, raising children, respect for family and others and caring for innatuqait *Elders*, animals, environment, physical health, hunting, making tools or clothing, and spiritual beliefs. Learning and teaching was inherent in everything you did. They were not separate.

One of my students was being bullied by her neighbour and was afraid of walking by their house so I made the point of speaking to the student one day. Next thing before I

knew it I received a telephone call from the mother who was upset with me for reprimanding her child. I was taken aback because as Inuit, we often disciplined children when we saw them mistreating others. Interestingly, this child turned out to be not very popular with others and has a habit of losing friends easily to this day. Elders have always advised us that young children must not be *sirnaaq* (defended in front of the child). They grow up to be self-centered in character, develop animosity easily, and lack ability to maintain friends.

Developing Confidence

In my classroom, I enjoyed leading and directing my students. *Arnakutaak* moved into another grade the following year, 1977, but I stayed in my kindergarten class. Another teacher took her place. He also was extremely helpful in teaching and planning with me. I will call him *Angutikutaak* (tall, thin man). He was also very artistic and creative. He wanted us to bring our classes together more often. I felt comfortable working with him and learned more teaching ideas from him that year.

Having taught kindergarten one year I learned the cycles and routines. I became more confident as a teacher and leader in my class. That year, there was a teachers' conference in February. Many teachers came to Iqaluit from all over the Baffin region. I remember all the hoopla and excitement. The Southern teachers were very noisy, boisterous and talkative sounding like wild ducks or geese all wanting to be heard, in the gymnasium. There were a dozen or so Inuit teachers and classroom assistants like myself. I recognized my Inuit colleagues who had attended the classroom assistant course with me the previous summer. As the plenary session ended, we were looking at the

conference program in the hallway when there was an announcement through the speakers, "All the classroom assistants and Inuit teachers will be meeting in the Kindergarten classroom." We proceeded into my classroom and I remember people asking what we were going to discuss. There was no set agenda or any organized workshop but after several minutes of discussion by the more confident and outspoken individuals, we started making materials to use in our teaching. The leaders were the teachers who attended the Teacher Education Program in Fort Smith. This was 1977 and I was 17 years old while the TEP graduates might have been in their twenties.

Meeting Inuit teachers was inspiring for me especially because they were certified and had studied to be teachers. I went to the summer Classroom Assistant course where I learned more teaching strategies and gained more confidence. A teaching couple were our instructors. By then, I made more friends with whom I maintained regular contact by mail. Through letters we shared our thoughts, concerns and problems at school. As each year passed the experiences became part of my acquired memory with knowledge and skills building the theories of teaching and learning in my mind. My mentors were respectful and helpful. Looking back, I think the courses I took started to help me understand and connect the theories and practice of teaching and learning.

Theory to me involved consciously articulating the meaning or understanding of practical experiences. Theory – *isumaniq* (*isuma* means thought so *isumaniq* is concept of thought) or *isumagijaujuq* (the perceived idea or what is thought about). Before something is a known theory or explanation of why it is the way it might be, the knowledge is perceived as a 'maybe'. Often I would hear people like my father use the verb affix *-vallai* or *–pallai* (meaning perhaps or something that is assumed and not

known for sure) and the phrase, *isumajunga (*I am thinking that...*)* to rationalize something he didn't know for sure.

The books, courses and teaching about in these classroom assistant courses were based on *Qallunaat* ways and thought. When some aspects of a theory clashed with our cultural values and ways there would be someone from the class who would say something like, '*Taimaisuungunngittugut'* (but, we don't do that.) I'll call this person who often spoke up in our class *Tiki*. Tiki was loud and would answer that way with a tone of voice that was matter of fact. She was able to speak up easily and confidently compared to some of us who were shy but when she did, there would be nods of agreement and yeses uttered in Inuktitut by the rest of us, "*iii*" (ee voiced nasally meaning yes). Tiki and people like her were our voices and cross cultural bridges. When they did speak up, there was gushing forth of explanations of differences. If there was a definite clash of cultural ways, there would be giggles and chuckles with Tiki often making a comment about the difference, "*Taimaangunngittuq!"* (It's not that way!) Someone else would then add an explanation to refine the translation.

Little did we know that Tiki was helping by questioning and validating the information instead of just accepting it. Her voicing the difference was not just a minor discussion in our courses but also helped us to do things *our way* in our teaching and being in our classrooms. Who knows what would have been perpetuated if she had not done this, resulting in more cultural loss than was already happening. As one example, when I followed the social studies curriculum I did not know enough to use the full aspects of kinship naming and meanings - *tuqsurarniq* in Inuktitut when I discussed with my students the concept of kinship relationships via their namesakes. The naming and

kinships concept in Inuktitut was not mentioned anywhere in the imported curriculum. Being a mere 17 year old, I did not know enough to adapt more of the content in my teaching and I also did not have a mentor who had our own cultural knowledge nor a pedagogical model to guide me at the time. The systems or procedures we followed were imported by the dominant society. They were not ours.

The role of a classroom assistant involved more than translating a language; it was a cultural bridge. Respectful and wiser teachers mentored and assigned tasks with increasing responsibility to CA's. Others who could care less or did not know any better handed off menial tasks to those they considered to be 'less educated, untrained paraprofessional assistants'. The perspective of the teacher based on his or her values, life experience, age and outlook on life made a difference for a classroom assistant.

In 1976 I had become involved in helping out at the girl guides one evening a week. Having been a girl guide and a Brownie just a few years before, I knew the rituals and expectations. In the middle of the winter I attended a girl guides leaders' workshop in Cape Dorset and met up with a few fellow classroom assistants and other Inuit women my age or a bit older. We were getting involved in social activities originally organized and led by *Qallunaat* or other Southerners. It was a good experience for us learning how to instruct, teach, lead or mentor young girls aside from teaching children in a classroom. Some of the activities were very 'Southern oriented' and originally designed for Southern settings using activities like building campfires with logs, babysitting other people's kids, cooking *Qallunaaq* food. The customs such as the recognition of holiday events were also being reinforced through Guides, for example, Hallowe'en, Christmas, Easter, and Mother's Day. I can remember trying to explain what Mother's Day or Father's Day

meant. It started to shape our thinking differently from our parents' way of thinking about relationships and kinship altering our traditional social attitudes.

Teacher Education

My unsuccessful attempt to get into the Teacher Education Program in Fort Smith at 17 years old in 1977 did not deter me from trying again. In 1979 opportunity knocked when a woman called me one day. "Naullaq? Would you be interested in applying to attend a TEP program here in Frobisher Bay this fall?" I was thrilled, jumped at the chance and was accepted with a group of 12 other students who would be my cohort. The new TEP became the Eastern Arctic Teacher Education Program (EATEP). My one-year-old *panik* (daughter) would be with my mother during the day and her dad would see her at lunch times as well as put her down for her naps enabling me to study. Our two instructors whom I will call *Kallak* and *Kutaak (*Short one and tall one*)*, worked hard to teach and challenge us. In reflecting back and having taught at TEP myself and been a Supervisor of Schools, I value and appreciate their dedication in creating a rich program that taught us to be forward thinking, holistic in our approaches and to strive for high standards for not just students but for a system. They had their share of challenges teaching us, and dealing with the powers that be who were threatening to change the program under their feet.

During the two years as a full-time student I was now reading papers, articles and books on teaching and learning about pedagogical approaches and theories. Finally, this process was helping to me to understand why some teaching techniques and strategies were more effective. Our instructors were always challenging us to do more, but more

importantly, they helped us become the best teachers we could be and to strive for high standards in ourselves. Our principal instructor always told us, "As a teacher you will make a difference in the children's lives you teach. You must make it your mission to be an excellent teacher and strive for high standards for yourself." This remained with me and has been one of my fundamental guiding principles as an educator.

I remember the children who were sometimes brought to the classrooms at our TEP campus. We practice taught in front of our fellow classmates so this fishbowl method allowed us to withstand critical eyes and ears. It was very nerve-wracking to be observed at first. At the end of each lesson we were expected to critique ourselves to learn to reflect and constantly improve our methods. Our classmates were less harsh towards our lesson than we were on ourselves. There was dialogue, questioning, comparing, and a lot of reflection.

We would also have to go and observe teachers in their classrooms at the three schools in small groups of two or three so when we returned to our own classroom to reflect and critique what we saw we would have more than one person's perspective on the analysis. When I reflect on this I feel that this method instilled in me a desire to continually refine my teaching methods to not only to meet the needs of the students but challenge them further. Teaching ideas were to be adapted and shared. I spent many nights hunched over my books and assignments after my family went to bed. I was integrating my three years of teaching experience with what I was learning as a student teacher about the theories and pedagogical approaches. If I had not arrived at TEP with that experience, I do not believe it would have had as much meaning.

When we were practice teaching, I remember at a Teachers' Association meeting, one of the older Southerners asked about her job security because of us student teachers. It sounded as if we were a threat. There were half a dozen older Southerners teaching in that school. Some of them taught the 'lower achievers' who were not as proficient in English. Iqaluit had grown so much that by then there were two classes at each grade level.

Our Inuk instructors brought in older *innatuqait* (Elders) to a couple of our courses; two of my older relatives, and others I had known since I was a child. We interviewed them about raising, disciplining and teaching children. It was novel for us to interview Elders because it was not customary to talk to them or ask a lot of questions. My classmates were more comfortable talking to the older people because they were not as closely related to them as I was.

We did not refer to the older people as Elders in English. It was not a common term for anyone until the 1990's. The term 'Elder' was used mostly by the First Nations people in the western part of the NWT and South. When Southerners or others started referring to our *innatuqait* as Elders at first it was an awkward feeling. It took me a long time to adjust to using this new term.

Figure 32. Naullaq, Mary Ilingajuq and Leena scraping and Cleaning sealskins (1980). Arnaquq family collection. Colour photograph.

Figure 33. Naullaq and her daughter, Aggiuq, in front of An iglu. Arnaquq family collection. Colour photograph.

As part of our TEP program, we went out on the land in the spring to go seal hunting. It was not common for females to be taken out on a seal hunting trip in the winter. Men usually went hunting without women. Traditionally women stayed home and looked after the young. The men drove the skidoos while the TEP students sat on the qamutiik. As we set off, we smiled at each other over the drone of the skidoo engines whirring in our ears. We made ourselves comfortable on the wooden sleds that were piled with sleeping bags, blankets, cushions and a grub box filled with food. I had never gone on a long ride or a camping trip by skidoo before this. My father and the boys went hunting during the winter. I had gone many times before by boat, but not by skidoo. The wind chapped our faces and the bumps on the ice jostled us around as we sped along noisily. We had to hang on every time we went over a big bump or turned sharply. The clear blue skies and the white snowy sea ice enveloped us all around. Only 20 or 25 years before, my grandfather and dad had run along beside their own qamutiik as their dogs chased ahead of them. I looked down on the ice seeing it differently thinking of my mother and father living a different way of life. That was a life time ago before I was born. I was 21 now. All we had to do was go a few hundred yards out of town, yet I had never had this experience before.

It seems like there was a time warp surrounding the town when I look back at this. The influx of Southerners, their ways, their machines, their technology, their knowledge and customs flooded our towns, minds, thoughts, and dreams, year by year, day by day, night by night, word by word, thought by thought, idea by idea, book by book, song by song, act by act, policy by policy, method by method, law by law and newcomer by

newcomer whether it was a policeman, social services manager, store clerk, adult educator, principal and especially, a teacher.

Teaching

In 1981 when four of us, out of the twelve students who started the program, graduated, the number of Inuit teachers increased to over a dozen in the Eastern Arctic. The graduation day came on my birthday. My parents, sister and three-year-old panik came to celebrate with me. I was selected to speak as the valedictorian. Speaking up in a large crowd was something that had never entered my mind just three years before. How different it was from whispering in a corner of a staffroom in the school. Our guest speaker was Peter Irniq, an Inuk politician who spoke proudly of our efforts. He was one of those first few Inuit political leaders. We graciously received our certificates but I still felt so inadequate and ill-prepared mentally to teach on 'my own as a recognized teacher'. I felt that the training and new knowledge I learned only showed me that I knew so little. Many of my teachers and instructors often told me over the years that I was often very hard on myself.

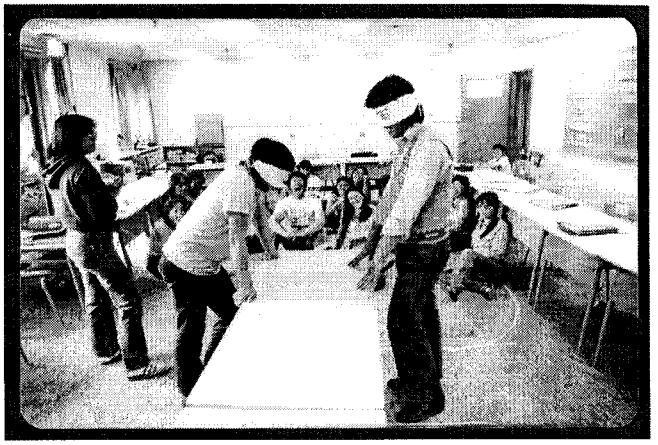


Figure 34. Naullaq and the TEP summer students, early 1980's.
Arnaquq family collection. Black & white photograph.

Not long after I started teaching I was asked to co-teach a two week McGill summer course on Introductory Teaching Methods at the TEP program for the classroom assistants. It was fun, hard work and a level above what I was doing so it was challenging. This experience helped me to learn more about planning, evaluating, coordinating, facilitating, learning and teaching from a different perspective. Indirectly it built up my confidence as a person leading others. I also worked with a very humorous individual who seemed to have great fun teaching, something which probably also affected my outlook on teaching from another perspective. This involved enjoying what you are doing, something that I think I needed to be aware of as I learned to be more conscious in making choices. As TEP students, it was at most times very serious business because we had to earn our grades so the joy of teaching did not come easily at the best of times. Some of the students from other communities were older than I was so this was perhaps another building block for my confidence. I enjoyed the thrill of seeing lights coming on in the students' eyes whether they were children or older learners.

In the fall I worked closely with the teacher next door who taught the same grade and with whom I shared teaching ideas. He taught in English while I taught in Inuktitut but I never felt inferior to him. We had a supportive principal and there were a couple of other Inuk teacher colleagues and classroom assistants so I did not feel alone. The students I had were all Inuit but my colleague had a lot of kids who were part *Qallunaaq*. Their parents had wanted them to be in the 'proper' grade and learn English. Many of these children grew up speaking only English and were unable to use the Inuktitut language fluently, if they spoke it at all.

As an Inuk teacher I did not have the luxury of ordering any ready-made teaching materials in my language from resource catalogues. I had to create everything, even storybooks, while my *Qallunaat* colleagues could pick up any book from the library and order from many sources all over the world. Through the years I spent countless hours hand writing, drawing and making materials. Being somewhat artistic enabled me to create and 'steal' teaching ideas that we were taught in our TEP training. My husband would remind me years later that I was forever working at the kitchen table or coffee table making something for my students in the evenings and weekends. It was also a creative outlet for me in a lot of ways. I gave the material away to my cousin who had replaced me when I went to TEP. I would love to go back in time and give myself a colour computer, scanner and printer! I would not complain with such valuable tools at my fingertips.

Teaching strategies and classroom management techniques I had learned as a TEP student were invaluable with twenty-four Grade One students. In 1981, six and seven-year-olds still spoke more Inuktitut and not much English. There were about four children with attention problems. Alcohol had taken started to affect some families. It showed in their children and affected their learning, but luckily I had an assistant who was able to help in my class. I spent many hours preparing my lessons. At the beginning of the year, students entered my classroom not knowing how to read, write, add, subtract, and many unaware of other academic concepts, but left at the end of the school year with may skills. It was a thrill for me to see my students responding to my teaching. I loved finding different ways to make learning fun and manageable for them conceptually from

fractions, counting sets of numbers, doing two digit addition, reading, learning memorization techniques, and other skills required in a Grade One class.

Figure 35. Naullaq and her Grade One students.
1981. Arnaquq family collection. Colour photograph.

I started to co-teach the language courses at the summer Classroom Assistant school which was now offered through EATEP but continued to teach at the school during the year. Then I got a call in the summer of 1984 to let me know that the first Bachelor of Education programme was to be offered at the Teacher Education Program and was asked if I wanted to submit an application. I took the opportunity and was accepted. After an academic year of studies, I still needed a few more credits so I left my family behind and went to McGill University in Montreal in the fall of 1985 and completed five courses. I was then asked if I would consider teaching full time at EATEP. I remember telling the instructor to come back in ten years and ask me again when I felt more ready to take on the role of a teacher educator at EATEP, but after a couple of long walks and more discussions with the instructor and my husband I took the

challenge. We had students from all across the Eastern Arctic who spoke many different dialects of Inuktitut. Teaching adult students, I gained more confidence as a teacher and educator.

I taught the five McGill University Linguistics courses, *Reading and Writing*, *Introductory Teaching Methods*, *Software Applications*, and *Special Topics.* I co-taught in other courses and evaluated students during their teaching practicum. I would also assist my colleagues when they asked me to help with Inuktitut. I thoroughly enjoyed working at EATEP. It taught me more about about teaching and learning, language, critical thinking, writing and, challenging students but importantly it taught me to be more conscious and deliberate in thinking about education and pedagogy. Teaching adult students made me reflect about my own abilities, beliefs, values as well as skills. Thinking about, identifying and manipulating ideas and making them manageable for students was always a thrill for me as a teacher but most of all to see them connect the ideas in their thinking. There was so much to master, improve, develop and build upon with what we were doing in Inuktitut for children. The more we did, the more we realized that this was not enough!

Years later I realized that teaching teaches you about leadership. In teaching at TEP I gained the confidence in speaking to adults, large groups and the public. I learned to apply my TEP training in planning, organization, management, research, developing and evaluating programs, assessment of students, leading and facilitating groups, writing, and setting and implementing goals.

Learning, Tradition & Change

While I was in my own world of teaching, community leaders and parents had voiced their concerns about the weakening of our language, cultural knowledge, socialization and ways. I did not know at the time that we were losing our language. Our generation, our own children, siblings and friends were being successfully acculturated. We were especially affected in Iqaluit because it was a large town compared to other places where Inuktitut remained the language used in the community. Some people from smaller communities saw our town, and with our language and cultural loss being partly somehow our fault and our youth were sometimes ridiculed for speaking a certain way. We were just the first 'casualties' of a slow-motion war between cultures. Little did the critics know that they were also being affected by this war and would realize later that they too would be affected.

Some structural and systemic changes were happening enabling Inuit to take on more ownership of the education system. The more Inuit graduated as teachers, the more children had the opportunity to learn Inuktitut and not only acquire their language in the first few grades but also to start to develop a stronger sense of Inuit identity, culturally and socially. The period from 1970 to 1984 saw several new developments which started to reverse the language and cultural losses that had pervaded our lives like a slow flooding of water. The establishment of TEP in 1979 was a major factor in this reversal. More communities would have seen the language loss that was happening in Iqaluit, the Kitikmeot and larger communities like Rankin Inlet and Baker Lake much sooner if we had more programs like NTEP. The language and cultural losses continued to happen in the smaller communities where they did not have Inuit teachers.

Baffin Divisional Board of Education – Inuit Ownership

In 1982, the Government of the Northwest Territories moved quickly to implement the recommendations from an important major report produced by the Special Committee on Education. The report, *Learning Tradition and Change,* recommended fundamental changes to address concerns and issues raised by the people of the Eastern Arctic. People called for a system that would be more Inuit-based. "We don't want to drop the school system, we just want a system appropriate to our needs" (Public Hearing, Government of the Northwest Territories, 1982, p.11).

> Can the committee set up a culturally appropriate curriculum, using the community language as the number-one language of instruction? We realize that, since the English system is universal, we must use it to communicate with the rest of the world. But the system must be adapted for people who want to speak their own language and know their own culture. (Government of the Northwest Territories, 1982, p. 28).

The heart of the concerns focused on the need to strengthen Inuit culture, language and identity in the schools. As in any society, the families who had moved into the communities for the purpose of 'educating' their children had growing concerns about social problems that were starting to affect them. The communities and parents wanted more ownership and say in the education of their children. After all, many had been robbed of their children when they were sent away to residential schools or even the Federal Day Schools where they did not have any say on what would be taught when the schools were established.

The Baffin Divisional Board of Education (BDBE) was established in 1985 to become the first Inuit-directed Board in the NWT. After a community and region-wide survey, BDBE, developed a written vision and philosophy for the children and students of the Baffin region. *Our Future is Now* (Baffin Divisional Board of Education, 1987) articulated a simple but strong message. In essence, students would learn about the world around them and beyond using their own language, Inuktitut, with English as a second language. There was a sense of purpose, a strong affirmation of identity, history and traditions as the BDBE set out its priorities. The administration and program staff worked hard to develop and implement culturally relevant policies, curricula and programs. Parents and students also expected high academic standards in both languages, in keeping with the rapid globalization of education and growing societal awareness. The tension between the dominant colonizing *Qallunaat* culture and Southern influences and Inuit ways of living, made the efforts to balance these competing needs very challenging something which continues even to this day.

Piniaqtavut – Culturally-Based Program

In 1987 the BDBE brought together Inuit and other educators for the first time to discuss and address Inuit culturally based teaching and learning. Critical questions and concepts were discussed in the meetings but more importantly, a survey was sent to all homes in the Baffin region asking what parents wanted their children to learn, what was important to them for their future. I was fortunate to be involved in this process when I was still working at EATEP. Who we were as Inuit was finally being acknowledged by educational administrators and program consultants. Inuit teachers were finally given a

space and opportunity to voice their ideas without it just being an afterthought. The program that took shape after many hours of discussions and brainstorming was called *Piniaqtavut (pee-nee-awk-tah-voot)* (BDBE, 1989), which means 'our tasks or goals'. *Piniaqtavut* was one of the key program initiatives that helped to create a more Inuit culturally reflective education system in the Baffin.

Piniaqtavut was a culturally based program framework that teachers and educators could use to plan a thematic program and use Inuit values and cultural knowledge as a basis for learning and teaching. The academic subjects and requirements would not be taken away. Instead, they would be enriched. A Grade One teacher could teach a theme such as seals and plan all the other subjects to integrate Inuit knowledge and information on the topic where it was possible. Resource people could be brought in from the community bridging the gap between the school, teacher and parents. Students could then learn from the hunters, Elders, mothers and other knowledgeable people.

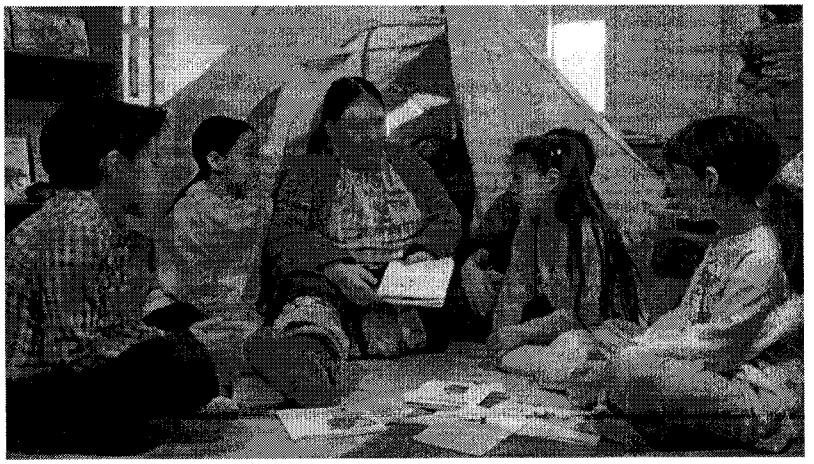


Figure 36. Mary Peter and her students in Apex at Nanook School. (BDBE, 1989). Reproduced with permission. Colour photograph.

The discussions surrounding the purpose of the *Piniaqtavut* project opened up cultural issues never previously discussed, or if they were, it was quickly and superficially. As a result, many Inuit were left feeling unsupported, misunderstood, unappreciated, disliked or even rejected. Imagine what it was or is like for a student, let alone a teacher who has authority and power to find their ideas ignored or dismissed, as happened so many times for many of us who became Inuit teachers in the late seventies and eighties. *Piniaqtavut* was only a start and much more needed to be done to develop materials to support the program framework, but it was an important beginning.

CHAPTER FOUR

Leadership

> The Inuit leaders in the past were not called "leaders" or "bosses". When we look back at them today, we now refer to them as leaders. Inuit became leaders by gaining respect from the people of their camps; not by getting elected. A respected man was someone whom the people looked up to for direction and for the right decisions when they had to be made. A man of this stature was the leader of his people.
>
> (Interview with Armand Tagoona, *Inuit Today Magazine*. (Ipeelie, 1980).

Sivumut 1990 – First Inuit Educator's Conference

As a TEP instructor and having attended teachers' conferences in Iqaluit and smaller communities I now saw the urgent need to bring together Inuit teachers to share ideas and talk about our culture and language. It was frustrating to attend teachers' conferences where Inuktitut and the needs of Inuit educators were always an afterthought. When there was an unilingual Inuk present in any workshops, the conference organizers often expected the bilingual participants (usually Inuit teachers) to translate. There was one small gathering a few years before that was organized by our Inuk instructor while we were TEP students. Some of the participants were earlier Fort Smith TEP graduates whom I looked up to as they seemed so mature, confident and articulate. I felt the urgency to do the same in the early nineties but with a gathering of colleagues from all over Baffin Island. I knew if was to happen, it had to be well-organized to be effective with carefully planned sessions offered by Inuit. We wanted to be respected and to

inspire Inuit educators to strive for and demand higher standards. In the late winter of 1989 I fed this idea to a few people and I remember mentioning it to a *Qallunaaq* administrator in one of the schools who encouraged me to put my idea to action.

I discussed the idea of an Inuit educators' conference with my Inuit colleagues from the *Piniaqtavut* committee and they endorsed it. There were enough Inuit working in schools now to help organize an event. As one of the first B. Ed. graduates and an NTEP instructor, I knew someone from almost every community in the Baffin. Some were my old classmates and others were teachers I knew from having taught them at TEP. With the help of supportive colleagues at the Baffin Divisional Board of Education we started to write letters to key people in government and other organizations requesting funding. The idea started to crystallize and took a life of its own. I called up all of the schools in the Baffin region and talked to an Inuk colleague in each location to ask them if they would be interested in helping to organize a conference for the next winter. As the person with the main idea I surged ahead with a clear objective in mind of bringing together Inuit educators. At first it was just going to be for TEP graduates but it quickly evolved into a forum for Inuit educators in general – classroom assistants, principals, vice-principals, program support teachers, student support assistants, cultural instructors and members of local community education councils. The conference calls started in September 1989 after school hours, to not take away any teaching time from the teachers. Support and interest became quickly evident from around the Baffin region but at the same time there were concerns raised by a handful of teachers who thought that an all-Inuit teachers' conference would be divisive. These concerns came primarily from some members of the Teachers' Association and from others who did not think an all Inuit

forum would be appropriate. We persevered despite this criticism. In retrospect, I wonder what kinds of discussions ensued behind closed doors. Fortunately I was preoccupied with achieving this goal and did not pause to worry about the disbelievers.

This conference was being organized before the internet and easy accessibility to computers. We would wait for the telephone conference operators to ring up the teachers one at a time. We eventually made progress and every time I thought of the impending gathering my tummy would feel like there were butterflies. Finally, after several months of organizing, planning and discussions, the big event unfolded before us. During the course of planning it acquired a name, *Sivumut*, Inuit Educators Conference. *Sivumut* (see-voo-moot means forward, front wards or towards the future).

February 21, 22 and 23, 1990 became an event symbolizing significant change, a landmark of Inuit educator ownership involving voice and inspiration. As Inuit delegates entered the school, many hugged one another, shook hands, oohing and aahing over one another not having seen each other for a while; after all they were isolated and several hundred miles apart. The South Baffiners were usually more boisterous or louder than the Northerners. It was a joy to see old or familiar faces again. My insides were trembling wondering if it was all going to work out. The school gym hummed and buzzed almost quietly and respectfully from the soft voices of a couple of hundred familiar Inuit colleagues, teachers, classroom assistants, Community Education Council members, Elders, cultural instructors, TEP students and student support assistants. There were a handful of non-Inuit or *Qallunaat*. How different this was from large, noisy, *Qallunaat*-organized conferences we were used to. Keen ears and faces faced us as we welcomed everyone.

Our keynote speaker was Jack Anawak, an Inuk politician, who told us how such an event was important for us as a group of Inuit educators and individuals who had an important job. He said this event would be remembered as one of the turning points for Inuit educators. His words were encouraging. After he spoke, my colleague, Liz Apak, challenged the delegates to speak only in Inuktitut! This sparked everyone to be more attentive to the language they were speaking. It added to the collective spirit and commitment. We were all speaking in our language, ready to go into the workshops that were also being held in our language. There had never been anything like it ever before.

As the workshops got under way, a couple of us scurried about to ensure people were settled into their sessions and to make sure no one needed anything at the last minute. Of course there were a few small glitches but it was worth every hurried breath and time. There were several workshop sessions, all offered by Inuit presenters. I stopped to let the truth sink in. Sivumut was actually in progress. We had brought together over 200 Inuit educators in the Baffin region to share ideas and plan for the future. The breaks were also valuable for everyone to catch up on news, gossip and information about friends, family or relatives. The thorough planning and 'high' expectations I had mentioned as important for us to aim for had materialized and become a reality. Like any large event, there were bound to be a few hiccups but it was only our first event. We had stepped forward without our *Qallunaat* colleagues and started to take ownership of our system of education. This involved overcoming a psychological hurdle. The gathering of a critical mass of Inuit educators signified a shift in thinking about our identity, culture and language which was too often a secondary consideration in the system.

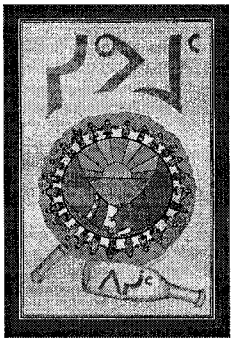


Figure 37. Sivumut Songbook, BDBE (1990).
Permission granted. Colour photograph.

The next three days whizzed along and on one of the evenings we had a social event. We had planned for a huge feast and had asked the participants to bring their *amauti*, (women's parka), *silapaaq* (outer parka covers), kamiik (skin boots) and other 'semi-traditional' clothing and almost everyone wore their Inuit clothing. It made the event extra special. Some schools had collaborated by creating a similar design for their outfits. As the Cape Dorset women shed their outside parkas to reveal their beautiful amautiit, the 'oohs' gushed out of our mouths. Then, it was time for the Pond Inlet staff and many other schools, which resulted in more 'aahs', and admiring looks from those of us with less elaborate outfits. Recalling what was an unforgettable event, and reflecting back as someone who sews, I know the amount of time it takes to make a parka or *amauti*. These outfits required many hours of hard work during the fall and early winter evenings or on weekends for already very busy Inuit teachers.

At the feast we ate food brought from every community and from the homes of the participants and shared together in celebration; polar bear meat, seal meat and liver, caribou meat, caribou fat, and stew, ptarmigan, whale, aged walrus meat and fat, mussels, clams, arctic char, dried meat, snow goose, musk-ox meat, black berries and baked or

fried bannock were all available. Many of the women brought their *ulus* (woman's moon shaped knife) as is the custom when invited to a feast.

Figure 38. Pangnirtung educators singing at the Sivumut conference in 1990. R. Metuq, R. Machmer, M.Audlakiak, I.Naulalik, and others. Arnaquq family collection. Black & white photograph.

Each school was asked to prepare for and present a song, skit or dance if they desired. As each group started to perform, it was evident that this created a sense of camaraderie and togetherness in preparation for the event. Songs created especially for the conference were sung in Inuktitut, and skits and drum song dances were performed. One of the schools sang a special *Sivumut* song. Many of the specially written songs for the conference were recorded and then published through the Baffin Teaching and Learning Centre. Many of us came away from the conference re-energized, inspired, filled with hope and grounded in the knowledge that we had the strength to make changes in education for the future. On page one, of the *Sivumut* songbook written by Leah Qaqqasiq-May is a song which reads:

Sivumut katimaniriniaqtavut
Tusatuinnaqlugu qunganngusungnaqtuq
Aja ajaja jaja

Ilisaijiujut inuinnaullutik, katimaningat sivulliqpaujuq
Aja ajaja jaja

Inuit ullumi ilinniarvingmi, angajuqqaannguqataujunnaqsijut
Aja ajaja jaja

Piniaqtavuumik katimajiujut, sivuniksamut aaqqiksuittiaqtut
Aja ajaja jaja

Sivumut katimanirijavut, sivumuattiaqtinnasungniaqpavut
Aja ajaja jaja

The Sivumut conference
Just hearing it, makes one smile
Aja ajaja jaja

All the Inuit teachers, at their first meeting
Aja ajaja jaja

Inuit in schools today, are now part of leadership
Aja ajaja jaja

The *Piniaqtavut* committee, are planning carefully for the future
Aja ajaja jaja

The Sivumut conference, together, let us make it work
Aja ajaja jaja

(1990, p.1) BDBE, Qaqqasiq-May, L. & Naulalik, I. Permission granted by author.

The preparation for an event like *Sivumut* probably also became not only a very physical goal but a deliberate and collaborative event for educators within their own schools and communities. The effort involved in organizing a conference was enabling, bringing out our strengths, skills and knowledge in the language and culture of the Inuit educators for the purpose of creating a quality of education for their students. What else is a conference for but improving teaching and learning, challenging and helping students to achieve, and bringing educators together to strive for success and quality. Teachers, or others who had not presented to large groups before, learned from their experience. They had to prepare, plan, design and organize so they used these skills in another context than the one they already knew as teachers or educators within their own classrooms.

In previous conferences, the few Inuit who were asked to help were limited to helping or co-presenting. Prior to Sivumut, there was few expectations that Inuit could present in conference workshops totally in Inuktitut. The learned experts who had the

masters degrees, doctorates and other credentials were in demand and rightly so, but they were all *Qallunaat* at that time. There would be other opportunities to get this knowledge, information and expertise. Some of the critical nay-sayers who opposed Sivumut felt there would not be the same standards, nor high quality information or materials to be presented in Inuktitut because they felt there were no Inuit experts or specialists who held advanced degrees.

After the conference I heard criticism about the event and learned that some *Qallunaat* felt left out. An Inuk teacher heard that there should have been a special invitation for some *Qallunaat* who could be presenters or speakers in workshops. We were taken aback and said it had been an open conference with no exclusion of any educators. We had sent out posters weeks before to all schools and learning centres advertising the conference. Anyone who wanted to participate could register at the conference. No *Qallunaat* or any specific groups were excluded. Letters of invitation and requests were written to presenters and speakers. Perhaps those who felt left out had wanted to be as invited as keynote speakers or presenters but had not indicated any interest to any of us who were organizing the program. The tables had turned it seemed. This was indeed a turning point for Inuit teachers when they took ownership and participated in the development of education based on Inuit history, culture and language.

Interdependence and Responsibility

Growing up, I would be put in many situations where I had to talk to *Qallunaat* adults to help unilingual Inuit like my parents. I usually had to read and translate their mail because it was all in English. "*Atsakuluuk, una qanuilijuq?*" (*Atsakuluuk*, what does

this say?) my father would often ask as he handed me an envelope. When my sisters and brothers got older they began to help with these things. Being the second oldest of the girls, I would also have to help babysit when my mother was out but I was probably not as helpful as my sisters would have liked in cleaning up the house. If my older sister had not stayed home in her early teens to look after our younger siblings when our mother went to work, I probably would not have done some of the things in my work. I value and appreciate the sacrifices my sister made to enable me to pursue my studies. We were a large family of ten children and my parents had to work. I remember many after school times when my parents were at work, my sisters and I would take our younger siblings to the playground or somewhere for a walk. My father and mother tried to instil in us the importance of work, punctuality and responsibility, including the need for looking after each other and our own selves.

In my parent's generation, responsibility was inherent in everything they did together. They were raised with strict expectations just like the generation that grew up on the land before the 1950's. Their parents' generation was the same but it was their grandparents who had even stricter rules and laws with strong taboos. The changes happened over time through the teachings of the church. Since our great-grandparents' generation became Christians, they had acquired different behavioural and social expectations but for the most part the customs and traditions were slower to change because Inuit still lived in small family camps until the 1950's in some areas, with the majority of families moving in off the land in the 1960's and a few in each region until the late 1970's. Each region had a few families left living on the land in the 1980's.

In the late 1950's and 1960's when Iqaluit was smaller and just developing as a town, many of the Inuit family groups that moved there had a grandfather or respected older men and women who acted as the main people whom their families looked to for direction. In our family, my mother's father and her step-mother were the ones my aunts and uncles still looked up to for some direction and advice. Our grandmother would occasionally come into our house, probably to 'oversee' how we were doing now that I reflect back. Other cousins, aunts and uncles would come over at least once a week or two to visit, often to eat what my father caught such as seals, caribou or other game. My father's oldest nephew would often visit with his whole family. The sharing of food was important and was still a family kinship responsibility. It brought our family and relatives closer together. My mother also expected us to go and see our grandmother occasionally even for just a brief visit. There is a belief that if you care for your Elders it will give you a longer life. The earlier you instil certain beliefs, attitudes and customs in your children, the stronger they will be. This advice had been passed onto her from her own grandmother. The sense of responsibility was not just an individual one but branched out to the relatives and their kin. Some people who did not have anyone hunting anymore on a regular basis would come to our house to ask for food. There were households and families that helped others out like this. My mother told me once when they lived in their family camp that our grandfather would often provide food to a family in another camp nearby because the man of the camp was not a skilled hunter. As Iqaluit grew, it became harder and harder for some families to survive and the bonds of kinship and the traditional values maintaining Inuit society started to fray and change. Some individuals and families started to rely on the welfare system which became a cycle of dependency

for them when their children dropped out of school early. Others did not have the family and kinship support. The schools took away that bridge for many.
Self-reliance was developed through interdependence and kinship responsibilities was cut off breaking an important link. Those who did not complete school were not proficient in either world and were left stranded as if on an ice floe.

When we went camping, hunting and fishing in the summers we would stay with our aunts, uncles and other relatives. As we got ready for the trip, we put on extra layers of clothing, socks, long-johns, coats and then the last to be put on were our rubber boots with thick wool duffle socks. At the beach, the children who were big enough had to help push the 22 foot canoe over slats of wood on the sand into the water. Usually there were other people near the water and they would come over to help. We had to pack up and were expected to help in carrying everything. My father would then carefully organize the things by weight inside the boat. Since Iqaluit has the second highest tides in the world, the canoe had to be carefully tended so my brothers would help keep it in the water and make sure it did not get stuck on a submerged rock or end up being sanded-in as the tide started to go out. We would then finally head off with the canoe very low in the water full of people and belongings. As the motor started, the waves would shape into a vee at the back of the canoe. My oldest brother was expected to be the *sivutti* (see-voot-tee front lead) standing up at the front of the boat and as he leaned over looking for ice floes and telling my father which way to turn or go with hand signals. Sometimes it took a while to get across to the other side of Frobisher Bay because of the pack ice. Occasionally a seal would pop up but there would always be herds of noisy harp seals.

Figure 39. Hunting seal in *Tasiujarjuaq,* (Frobisher Bay) Arnaquq family collection. Black & white photograph.

The children had to be quiet and still as we waited for the ringed seal to come back up while my father slowed the canoe almost to a stop. If one of the children got fidgety my mother would often say, "*Natsiq qiningaaliruk*! (Look for the seal!). I would scan the horizon on both sides of the canoe and if I saw it come up for air I would blurt out, "*Taika*! (There!). As my father aimed and got the rifle ready we would then block our ears. This taught us patience and appreciation for life and food.

Once we reached our camp site we were supposed to help carry everything up onto the shore which was often rocky and steep because of the very high tides. This did not take long but as a child, things seemed longer than they were and some things were heavy to carry! Our relatives and a couple of other families would be at the campsite. Before we ran off to play we would then have to help pitch up the tent. When my siblings and I got bigger we would sometimes help carry the canvas tent, huffing and puffing up the slippery rocks off the water to the gravel and stony campsite, throw the bag onto the ground and heave it out. We had to then get large rocks to put around the perimeter for the tent ropes and tie them on while my brother or father put the post and beam under the tent. It was a group effort. There were to be no '*iqiattait'* (lazy ones). This is how it felt to

be part of a family working together and I now see the values and beliefs that were being acquired in all these activities that had their roots in traditional Inuit practices.

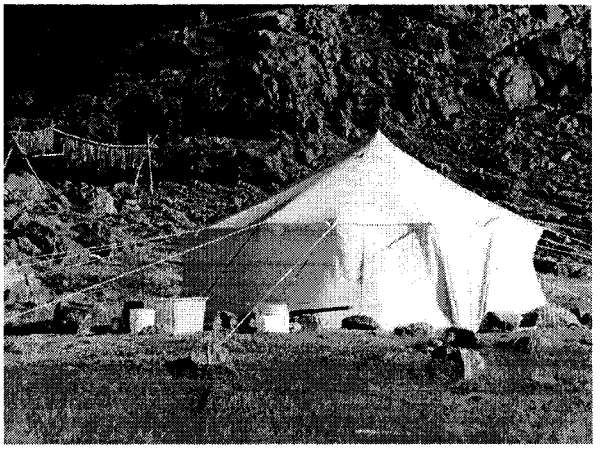


Figure 40. Camping – canvas tents. Arnaquq family collection. Colour photograph.

The older children would often be expected to fetch water from a lake, creeks, or from on top of ice or snow from a bank on the hill. "*Imiqtarialirmigitsi*!" (It's time for you to get some water now!) My mother would often tell us. Depending where we camped, you could get water from melted water on the ice, a stream or against a slow melting snow bank near a hill. I can hear the sound of the enamel tin cup or water dipper scraping on the ice, echoing into itself as I scooped up some clear, cool melted water. Other times, I remember running up a hill with my sisters carrying a water bucket and tin cup. Our little brothers would be scrambling behind us and one would start crying from being left behind making someone go back and take his hand. As I dug into the granular snow that was starting to melt, the cup would at first hit the crusty top and as it went through to the soft snow underneath it would give in easily as you scooped up the compact mush. You would sometimes have to clean the top by brushing off the soft layer that had bits of very small leaves or plant material that had accumulated from the winter

winds. We would also be expected to get heather and moss sometimes when we were going to build a fire. My mother would often be cleaning and scraping a seal skin or washing clothes and we would be expected to care for our younger brothers and sisters. These are the kinds of chores and tasks we did. Responsibility in the form of helping was on our shoulders. We were not to dismiss what was expected of us nor make negative comments when asked to do a task. My sister being the oldest of the girls and very good with kids often had the biggest load.

During summer camping, families took their radios with them. I remember as a young girl waking up to the sound of my uncle on the radio in the tent as I rubbed my eyes. He and our female cousin worked in radio in the 1960's. I looked up to them. There were not many Inuit in such jobs then. There was another woman from the North Baffin and a man from Northern Quebec. They spoke on radio with Inuit from all over the Eastern Arctic (Nunavut, Nunavik, and Labrador) and interviewed them about the old way of life that we did not live anymore and many other issues. It was a powerful medium of communication and information connecting Inuit from all over Canada who otherwise would not hear about one another. Their role was not just announcing and reading the news. They became well respected through their work as they inadvertently helped to bridge the old way of life and the new ways. New words and ways of talking entered our homes from hearing Inuit from all over talk in their language and dialects. We heard about the outside world like never before. Many radios were turned on first thing in the morning as families woke up. The sun would stream against the tent, casting morning shadows and I could hear the men outside talking or getting ready to go hunting.

Someone would walk by, making the gravel and soft sand swish from their footsteps. Birds would be chirping in the hills or sea gulls squawking their shrill calls.

The older boys would go with my father to hunt for seal, whales or caribou while the women and younger children stayed behind. When my father and brothers came back from hunting I remember the sound of the engine in the distance. We would run outside the tent and look towards the water. As they approached, I would look to see if there was a seal in the back of the canoe with its head hanging over the edge. Sometimes there would be two seals! If they had gone fishing, the big metal, square bucket would be filled with beautiful, silvery arctic char. During the times that my father had let one of my brothers shoot a seal, their faces would shine full of pride and joy. The seal would be butchered and my mother would cook some of the seal meat on the Coleman stove. It was the main meal of the day. We sat on the sleeping platform in the evening as the Coleman stove hummed on the right hand side of the tent where my mother tended the Coleman lantern if it needed to be pumped. Years before when I was much younger she had tended the *qulliq* (stone oil lamp). The tent was a circular canvas tent that my mother had made with a hand cranked sewing machine. The opening of the tent faced the water. I slept in the middle of the platform and the younger ones were between me and my parents.

Figure 41. My mother Baaqtita making tea during camping.
Arnaquq family collection. Black & white photograph.

In the 1960's many families went camping in the summers and each had their own preferred locations where they wanted to go to. My family and my mother's sisters and their families often went across the bay to the islands whereas, those who had been from the eastern side of the Frobisher Bay camped down that side much further down the bay where there were walruses and polar bears. The men would go get additional supplies like flour, tea, sugar, soap, and treats from the Hudson's Bay Company store at least once or twice in the summer. Our main source of food was still from the land. Some families did not go out on the land anymore because they did not have any canoes or skidoos so their children did not experience this way of life. This was especially true in families where alcohol took the money that might have bought canoes, motors or skidoos. A new generation, and a new way of life was really evolving as a result of living in the large communities like Iqaluit and many others across the Eastern Arctic.

Changes in Community Dynamics and Leadership

Politics and elected leadership on various councils and committees in Iqaluit was a new concept for my parents' generation in the 1950's and 1960's. My great-aunt and my grandfather were on the new Community Council in the early 1960's with other older people. In the book, *Eskimo Townsmen* (Honigmann & Honigmann, 1965) it mentions that the Council took some time adjusting to their role. I can only imagine what kind of discussions that would have gone on in many households when this new custom was brought forth by the *Qallunaat* in the new community. What did it really mean? When I was a young girl I can remember older Inuit talking about the young Inuit who were

trying to get elected onto the town council in the late 1970's and early 1980's. There was a sense of disbelief that young people could try to take leadership positions and be a 'spokesperson' for older people and others in general. There was stigma attached to a young person taking on a leadership role because of age and inexperience in life.

In wage-earning jobs, Inuit held mostly manual labour or domestic type of positions in the 1970's and 1980's. There were few Inuit in any kind of supervisory positions within the town, but I remember my parents talking about situations within jobs like carpentry, maintenance, cleaning or janitorial work, and manual labour in which some Inuit were assigned to oversee tasks and ensure certain jobs were done by their colleagues. There were really no Inuit in any managerial positions until the 1980's. *Qallunaat* occupied all positions of authority in justice, education, health, social services, housing, church and everything else. If an Inuk needed medical assistance, wanted to get a job, get counselling or any services that required assistance from outside the family, anything in fact, then it was with the authority of a *Qallunaaq* who provided access to these benefits.

By the 1960's, *Qallunaat* started getting more Inuit translators. Some Inuit gradually took on more positions of responsibility as they gained experience. The first generation of Inuit who had gone to school entered service professions in adult education, social services, or home management and were provided some additional training. Some Inuit became special constables with the RCMP helping to bridge the communication gap between the *Qallunaat* officers and the community. Families started to rely on their older children to interpret for them whenever there had to be communication with the 'authorities'.

There were many *Qallunaat* who came into town to work but they did not stay long. This created a stilted view and perception towards them. Some were well-respected for their kindness and openness and would often be known as the ones who were, *inunnuungajuaapik (enoon-noo-nga-yoo-pahpik*), *tunnganaqtupaapik (* toong-nga-nahq-too-pahpik*)*, *ikajurasuaqtupaapik* (*ee-ka-joo-ra-soo-ahq-too-pah-pik*), (really mixing with Inuit, very welcoming, very helpful). This was in comparison of others who were known for the opposite of these characteristics and were usually dictatorial, authoritative, unhelpful, aloof or distant towards Inuit. They were often rigid in their procedures or policies and not willing to learn to relate to Inuit and were sometimes said to be very *Qallunaaq* or *Qallunaapaaluk.* Some would often dismiss the Inuit ways and customs as being uncivilized or coarse, and would be disdainful. Inuit could tell who liked them for who they were and who did not by their body language and faces. Much to the dismay of Inuit, usually those who were making a difference for Inuit did not stay as long and those who were not happy to be around Inuit or the North sometimes stayed far too long! When a very helpful *Qallunaaq* or Southerner was seen positively, one could almost anticipate their departure.

Unfortunately, the clash between two cultures has often made it difficult between some Inuit and the newcomers. There are Inuit who have had negative experiences with *Qallunaat* teachers and now find it difficult to relate to *Qallunaat*. Newcomers often wonder why there is so much animosity towards them when they have 'not done anything'. The newcomers lacked knowledge of the differences in communication, customs, values, traditions and history. The assumption that their 'jobs' involved teaching

the students to conform to their *Qallunaat* ways frameworks, policies, and procedures was just an expectation in the system. Critical interrogation rarely took place.

Supervisor of Schools

This historical legacy of schooling affected both the Southern and Inuit teachers who were teaching when I became a Supervisor of Schools in 1990. I was asked to consider applying for the job at the Baffin Divisional Board of Education (BDBE) that spring. It took me some sleepless nights to find the courage to make a decision. I wrote my letter of application in Inuktitut and English and indicated that I wanted to take on the challenge and asked to be considered for an interview. I thought somehow I could channel some of my work frustrations and energy into useful outcomes for students and teachers. There had been no Inuit supervisors in education in the Northwest Territories before I took this job. This was, at that time, the highest level of position to be held by an Inuk within the educational hierarchy. It was probably a surprise for some people who had known me as a shy girl to see me step into such a job, but my inspiration and drive to take it on was based not just on the challenge, but also on developing and implementing programs and structures in the area of bilingual education that I felt were important. At 30 years of age, I knew I was very young to take on a position at this level. Some community schools were less than 30 years old. The Sivumut Teachers conference had just happened and had provided a deep inspiration to many of us Inuit teachers. I wanted to help make some of the badly-needed changes: to develop the required teaching and learning materials in Inuktilut, and help to establish some system of support for the Inuit teachers, many of whom struggled to maintain their energy because of the lack of

institutional and systemic support. I accepted the position knowing there would be some cultural, administrative, political, program and personal challenges ahead.

In 1994 in Nunavut there were three Inuit principals, five Inuit assistant principals, 40 Inuit teachers out of a total of 197, 53.5 Inuit classroom assistants in 15 communities and 20 schools. (Nunavut Boards of Education, 1995, Appendix A, p. 1). The remaining positions of leadership were held by *Qallunaat*. Each community had an elected Community Education Council (CEC) comprised of parents and a few unilingual Inuktitut-speaking Elders. The majority of parents with school children had some schooling; the exceptions were the few unilingual older parents who had adopted children. There were four supervisors of schools at BDBE and a Director of Education. The BDBE had an elected body comprised of a CEC member from each community and an executive committee. The Board met twice a year in Iqaluit. Most of the members were Inuit but occasionally there were *Qallunaat* members. A BDBE policy stated that the meetings were to be held in Inuktitut with English translations. There were several unilingual Inuktitut-speaking members and a few who spoke some English but most were more comfortable speaking in Inuktitut. So, any time that I presented my verbal and written reports to the Board I did so in Inuktitut.

I supervised seven schools and was also responsible for the Teaching & Learning Centre (TLC) with a staff of three. The TLC developed Inuktitut programs and published books written in Inuktitut and illustrated by Inuit, many of whom were training to be teachers at the Nunavut Teacher Education Program where I had worked prior to accepting an administrative position at the BDBE. The schools I supervised had Inuit, *Qallunaat* and other Southern staff and students. There were two schools with

Kindergarten to Grade Six classes and the rest went up to Grade Ten or 12. Most communities in the Baffin had classes up to Grade Three being taught in Inuktitut by Inuit teachers.

Initially, I accepted the Supervisor of Schools position for a year with a leave of absence from my teaching position at TEP. It was a good change and provided a new challenge. I wanted to help people and travel which was what the job was all about. It was stimulating to find out how to align goals, strategies and people. The biggest challenge often related to the conflicts that arose between people when there were misunderstandings because of cultural or personal differences, or lack of capacity, experience and training. My husband's shoulder was my everlasting support and he always reminded me that all the work we were doing was for the students and not to steer away from that purpose. I had to learn to balance work and family, and also quickly realized that my physical and emotional well-being were very important. The demands of travel, time and people were often stressful and in looking back now I see that my family and my daughter in particular, saw me for much shorter periods of time.

On one of my community visits, early in my role, I remember walking across a tarmac at an airport and seeing a group of people getting onto another airplane. I recognized one of the members of a Community Education Council and went over to shake his hand. He was considered an Elder. It was not until years later that I realised I had broken a taboo: as a woman I should not have acknowledged an older man first. At the time I had an awkward feeling and did not know why. Because his community was small the traditional social customs were still strong. In another small community I was also meeting with the members of the CEC whom I had known for a long time before I

was a teacher. I was now in a role as 'boss' 'over' the school principal. This required an adjustment on both our parts because of my age and gender, and the fact that I was a distant relative to some individuals on the Council. There had been no Inuk bosses before that, but we were all there to do our work and we quickly put aside any feelings of awkwardness. It took me a couple of meetings at different times for each CEC to feel more comfortable. The ones who knew our family well were always very respectful and welcoming towards me but there were a few who would say, "*Aakuluk*" which is a term of endearment often used with younger people and children because they had known me since I was a young girl. There was no cultural or language barrier to create misunderstandings which often made our job easier and so we delved into issues very quickly and got down to the business at hand.

In one school I supervised I was distantly related to some of the staff so I decided that I should put the issue of relationship on the table during a staff meeting. I did not want them to feel that this should get in the way of issues if anything came up in the future so I told them all that they should feel welcome to talk to me anytime. Putting this out in the open was important to enable all of us to do the best jobs we could for the students. I knew most of the Inuit staff in each school in the Baffin Region with the exception of a few who had not taken any TEP courses when I had taught there. I also made a point of meeting with all staff during my first community visits to talk about my role. In one school I asked the staff what they thought a Supervisor of Schools does and should do. They had never been asked that before so they learned more about the role. I also stressed that we were there for the students, to do the best job we could for them and

that each of the individuals on staff had a very important job for the whole school and the community.

I got to know the schools, meet teachers and understand students by teaching occasionally in their classrooms or speaking with high school students. I felt that this was important and it kept me in touch with the schools, students and the teachers. One school in particular helped me with this understanding. The school had a *Qallunaaq* principal whom I will call *Umik* (beard or mustache). He had a very strong program and a student by then centered leadership style. *Umik* helped his staff develop leadership skills by allowing them to take ownership in the running of the school. Of all the principals and schools I visited in the seven years as a supervisor, he was the strongest program leader I met and we collaborated as equals in our discussions about the school. He worked well with the students, staff, Elders and parents. The staff of this school also had strong programming skills and knowledge. They were very artistic and creative often working long hours in developing learning materials. I would frequently go to the school in the evenings and find some had returned after supper to complete school work, and I also saw them working together on the weekends. Students in this school were fluent in their first language and developing strong literacy skills. Inuktitut was the language of communication in this school. Some of the strategies *Umik* used included posing questions on the blackboard in the staffroom about issues that needed decisions. He could very well have just made the decision quickly by himself, but he had the staff discuss them and come up with ways to address them together. *Umik* would have staff co-lead or co-chair events which helped individuals to take risks and challenges and gain leadership skills. Staff also volunteered for different events involving Elders, parents and the

community. Elders came in and out of the school not just to teach. They also were on hand to counsel students and advise, and support the teachers such as when there was a crisis or a death. The students learned to relate to the Elders and were often put in small groups to help make teaching more manageable. The school was calmer when Elders were around because they were nurturing, mature and experienced in life. *Umik's* leadership style was culturally appropriate using strategies which included facilitation techniques, team problem-solving and collaborative program planning. Inuit were accustomed to doing things together in family groups which was fostered by *Umik's* approaches. This created opportunities for indirect learning, training, and mentorship among the staff. I often pulled up my sleeves and got involved in this school and in teacher activities and learned a lot more about program-centered leadership.

In another school there was also a principal who dedicated her time and effort to creating a community school. I will call her *Arnaralaaq* (small woman). She also worked constantly to bring Elders and parents into the school. There were fewer trained Inuit teachers in this school so *Arnaralaaq* established team-based structures to bring in more of the Inuktitut language and culture by using existing funding and staff. Classroom assistants and student support assistants were mentored and encouraged to take TEP courses. They worked closely with trained teachers and acquired stronger teaching skills from this type of relationship. A principal trainee was also being mentored to take on a leadership role. The staff worked closely together to bridge the school into the community encouraging students, parents, and CEC members to take more ownership by involving them in many aspects of the school program.

Education and schooling was still very much an imported system in the early 1990's and many communities, parents and grandparents carried negative experiences from their time in residential and Federal Day schools. There were still many drop-outs in the junior and senior high classes all across the region, especially in the Grades Nine to 12. Changing this pattern and trying to shift the mindset so students would stay in school took a lot of effort for educators like *Arnaralaaq* and the teachers at this school where a history of poor attendance and high drop out rates created a cycle of school failure. She would ask me to go and speak to the high school students about my own schooling and work experiences which I also tried to do in the other schools. I deeply appreciate and value the respect I felt from this school staff and *Arnaralaaq*. They taught me a lot and I tried to instil in other schools these approaches, strategies and ways of thinking. There was an investment made by caring, dedicated and professional school leaders like this who took the time to create a community school. Inuit staff and those who remained when individuals like *Arnaralaaq* left learned positive and effective strategies to draw from after she was long gone. They also developed a stronger voice to try and steer new principals back to the methods they had learned and liked, but that was often very difficult to maintain especially when the staff replacements had very different pedagogical philosophies and approaches.

I also supervised another school which had a principal who was very effective as a facilitator and enabled her staff to take ownership in the school. She was sensitive and very respectful of the culture and language of the staff and students. The staff members were culturally strong and not shy to speak their minds on issues. Parents had also become more involved or informed in this school. The CEC took on a strong and

supportive leadership role. Most of the staff in this elementary school was Inuit and there were some of them I had taken TEP summer courses with early-on in my career so I had known them a long time. They were all older than I, with the exception of one or two. It took me many deep breaths to forge ahead, and take ownership in my role as a supervisor of schools and become more assertive, opening up discussions, and dealing with program as well as staff issues. The people I worked with in this role had never had any Inuk supervisors before me so it was an adjustment for all of us.

My father's, mother's or grandmother's voices were never far from my mind as I spoke with staffs, principals, individuals and DEA's. My *uqaujjuijjusiat* (gifts of words of advice on Inuit relationship values of fairness, integrity, honesty, learning, respect for others, animals and the environment which in effect reciprocates self-respect) from them were ever present as I counselled, advised or listened to people. This was not any different with the students I had taught as well. Being true to myself and being reminded by my family about these gifts kept me centered in my daily work decisions. When I did not know some of the staff from before, I sometimes knew one of their relatives. My role and new relationship with them was not just a one-time experience. Nunavut may be large but the population is related in many ways so it was not just important to build strong and positive relationships but to maintain them. Of course there were policies, procedures and public accountability, but these were people with a shared history, concerns, life stories, problems and aspirations. In light of these, I ensured we abided by the rules and did not take away any integrity, respect and dignity from anyone when counselling a person even if she may have been deliberate in actions that were inappropriate or unprofessional. Most of the time conflict arose because of

misunderstandings. I could not just go into a situation and take my authority whip out and lash policies or accountability procedures into place without taking into consideration the context and the individual's situation or history.

Some of the student support assistants who were considered to be at a level 'lower' than a teacher's position were grateful to be included and told me after the meetings that they felt acknowledged for the first time with an official from the regional office. I took the time to speak with all staff in the schools I worked with. The janitors were often relied on for counselling students during a community crisis or deaths. They were sometimes asked to teach a cultural class. I enjoyed seeing and talking to two older janitors in one community every time I visited. They were always very welcoming and exuded warmth. I think the staff in their school did their hardest to make sure students were tidy and clean because of these two gentle souls! My unilingual English-speaking colleagues missed so much. Language can be like a steel barrier and educators in the schools should really try to take the time to speak to others with the help of language-gifted people who speak two or more languages. I remember with appreciation the support of my Inuit colleagues and CEC members who encouraged me with their words. It was embarrassing at times though for me when someone would point out, "*Takuuna angijuqqaaraapivut! Inuulluni angijuqqaaq! Pijariiriaqaqtutit aturumajarnik aturunnalaaravit.* " (ta koo-nah, angee-joo-qqaah-rah-loo-voot! Enood-loo-nee angee-joo-qqahq Look at our boss! An Inuk boss! You must finish school so you can do what you want to do in life like her).

Figure 42. Naullaq and Oleena Nowyook with the members of the Baffin Divisional Board of Education.Early 1990's. Arnaquq family collection. Colour photograph.

My supervisor colleagues would sometimes ask me to help with their schools when conflicts and language or cultural differences became a barrier. I would also get phone calls from schools or communities I did not supervise, from parents or CEC members asking for help or clarification on issues or policies. One time a couple of us went into a community to address a conflict. It was apparent that the principal was not helping with the issues due to lack of knowledge and sensitivity to cultural differences. This person was alienating the staff and DEA by wanting to control issues and having them do things his way. His communication style was also very confrontational and intimidating in light of the cultural differences. We listened to this principal, his staff and the DEA and all they wanted was for things to be dealt with consistently and fairly for the sake of the children. The Inuit staff felt uncomfortable with his directness and body language which they considered to be very pushy. I was intensely aware of the need to provide professional development to individuals who accepted positions of leadership in the school system.

During the time I worked at BDBE my colleagues and I found that visiting our schools, sometimes with other BDBE staff, was usually helpful for everyone including CECs, school and Board staff because you would have someone to problem-solve with when you discussed issues. It created the feeling of being supported and made it more uplifting as the decisions would be more carefully made and based on a range of experience. As an Inuk BDBE employee I had to be aware of where the Southerners were coming from with their concerns and problems. They saw themselves as visitors and the fact that they would not stay long often gave some of them a mindset that there is not much point in investing in the system or be part of the community, effecting positive change or making a commitment. This created issues because problems were not addressed.

Teaching and Learning Centre – Inuktitut Progams

One of the other responsibilities I had at the Baffin Divisional Board of Education was overseeing the Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC) and developing Inuktitut programs and resources. There were two Inuktitut program consultants and a secretary working at the TLC. The Learning, Tradition and Change report (GNWT, 1982) had recommended that Boards and TLCs be established in each region of the Eastern Arctic to address Inuktitut programming and curriculum development. Since its establishment in 1987 until the creation of Nunavut in 1999, the TLC staff produced over 200 books in Inuktitut. We worked hard to refine the editing procedures to ensure their quality so that students could read attractive books that were comparable to children's books written in English. Inuktitut contact teachers were established in each school to streamline

communication between the TLC staff and Inuit teachers. We would bring contact teachers in for workshops on terminology development, materials development and to share ideas for programs. We also established terminology binders colleagues could use to collect new or traditional words. Our aim at the TLC was to establish structures and procedures to help teachers share and develop teaching and learning materials which was a critical need. It was important to support each other and cut costs, duplication and time. As a teacher who spent an exorbitant amount of time creating my own teaching and learning materials for students, I knew the stress and pressures Inuit teachers often faced. So I took this opportunity to establish strategies to make their work easier. The education system had tremendous gaps and it was crucial to develop more Inuktitut materials.

After some administrative changes at BDBE there was a structural change in program and administrative support to schools. The two TLC staff were expected to do more community visits to provide program support and act as consultants to Inuit staff in the Region, instead of focussing on program development. This took away from developing materials and books and it became very frustrating for the TLC staff. Teachers and schools were demanding that more materials and books be produced at a quicker pace, just as we suffered a cutback in our ability to produce these much-needed materials. Budget cuts by the Department of Education in the mid-and late-1990's did not help us at all. When were the bosses in Yellowknife ever going to understand the real needs of teaching and learning in Inuktitut? How many times were we expected to explain our needs to produce an entire curriculum and all the program supports in a different language? If we were going to have a high quality education system, and that meant teaching in Inuktitut, we needed more staff to produce

curriculum, books, learning materials and resources so that new teachers could have them at their fingertips. Those teaching in English also needed culturally relevant material. The gradual increase of Inuit TEP graduates was not paralleled by the resources that were required. Parents, CEC members and students' belief and confidence of learning in Inuktitut were shaky enough without having that concern be reinforced by newspaper articles on national academic standards and statistics on national tests.

The system has lacked systemic and financial supports (Berger, 2006) to ensure it was developing in all areas to meet the educational needs of the students. Some teachers teaching in Inuktitut were not challenged to strive to do better or do more by principals who did not speak Inuktitut. Inuit teachers wanted to be just as supported as their *Qallunaaq* colleagues, but language was seen too quickly as being a barrier. I saw some principals I supervised go past this 'barrier' and challenge their staff (even though they did not speak Inuktitut) to do better because they could see what the students were doing or not doing. I knew of many *Qallunaaq* teachers who encouraged their students to speak and write in Inuktitut in their classes. They did not just try to meet their contractual duties to implement programs but went beyond that and tried to inspire their students to aim for higher goals. This is true for many principals and educational leaders I worked with and met. Those who not only had high expectations, but provided support for their staff have been more inspirational and brought about significant change.

Inuit Leadership – Kajungiqsainiq (Encouragement)

It was difficult attracting Inuit teachers to come to Iqaluit to work at the BDBE and the TLC or in other education jobs like NTEP because of the requirement for travel, but also

because it meant uprooting families from the core of relatives they relied on for family support. Housing could become a problem for some if they moved away. Iqaluit was a larger centre which had social issues that many people did not want to negatively affect their families. Most TEP graduates returned to their home communities to teach. For this reason I suggested that we put positions into the communities rather than expect teachers to come to us in Iqaluit. It meant there would have to be thorough planning to establish support mechanisms for the individuals hired because they would not have colleagues to work with directly on a daily basis. The main priority initially was to develop *Piniaqtavut* thematic units, learning materials and more books, in particular for the higher grades. Elders finally started to become more involved in developing the content of this material. I suggested that we hire Elders to work at the TLC offices in Rankin Inlet, Kugluktuk and Pond Inlet. At different periods, Elders were hired half-time using federal and Board funding. This required some planning and training since they had not worked in an office setting before. They were now established in the TLCs offering advice, developing materials, and using computers too!

Figure 43. Inuktitut book launch at the annual meeting of the Baffin Divisional Board of Education, mid-1990's. Arnaquq family collection. Colour photograph.

Inuit teachers did not want to take on school leadership positions in their communities because of the demands of the job, relationships, community dynamics, lack of training and or education, and lack of opportunity for individuals to learn and be mentored and often because of family responsibilities. Any of these issues by themselves or any combination created an uphill battle. To be a school leader, one needed to almost, or actually be, better than a Southerner or *Qallunaaq* because you were going to be unsupported or criticized just because you were an Inuk by all people alike, other Inuit as well as the *Qallunaat*. This type of position required a mental paradigm shift because it was and always had been held by Southerners, many of whom were men. One did not just develop into a school leader overnight. It usually happened gradually with responsibilities increasing as a person moved from program support teacher to vice-principal to committee consultant or coordinator and then to principal, or supervisor.

A person in authority has to be assertive, organized, skilled; communicate effectively, offer program and administrative advice, mentor, advise, counsel staff and students, and so on. There is a great deal more of *silatuniq* (see-lah-too-nik) or *silatujuugasuarniq* (see-lah-too-joo-ga-soo-ar-nik) (Catching or meeting up with something before it disappears or changes. This can be a certain time, era, or person) involved. *Silatuniq* means wisdom or the ability to think more broadly. The latter word, *silatujuugasuarniq* means trying to be wiser. *Sila* also means outside. A person who helps deal with issues is often thinking outside the situation and dealing with them more abstractly to resolve them. Inuit cultural attitudes and customs, as well as lack of opportunities to develop leadership skills, were also probably at the root of a lack of confidence that Inuit teachers had which prevented them taking on leadership positions.

Leadership requires one to be outspoken and assertive including being confrontational, and that was a cultural no-no. This does not mean all Inuit lack this trait. Some individuals are naturally more assertive or aggressive. In general, older Inuit tend to be more reticent and less aggressive than the younger people. The small communities in Nunavut meant the Inuit teachers were related to many of the people which often created some kinship tension. A principal's job often deals with conflict, tension, or problems so this was also not very attractive for many Inuit. Men were traditionally more assertive publicly and seen as community leaders more easily than a woman, though women were often the guides or source of advice in the home. Some women were matriarchs and well-respected in their camps.

In a couple of communities we tried to establish co-principal positions where two individuals were designated as principals. One of our Inuit colleagues had brought this concept from another place in the South where it was being used and it sounded effective for our situation. A co-principal partner could address issues that the other co-principal would not want to because of relationships or conflicting interests. This type of principalship model could work if the two co-principals were Inuk and *Qallunaaq*. This worked well in situations where there was very careful planning, role delineation, collaboration and strengths in administration, and program. It worked well in some communities. In some communities aspects of the power relations and sharing of responsibilities between co-principals were not explicated or understood which led to role confusion and tension. Co-principalships were established to help the Inuk leader be able to manage program, staff and management issues more effectively in the long run, but due to the lack of a guided strategy it had many weaknesses.

Early on in one of my community visits someone asked me, "What training do you have that you are a supervisor of schools?" The person asked this question with an interrogative tone. Ironically, in the same community a couple of years later during an official school event, another person in a very high level position also questioned me about the schools I supervised and when I told him he added, "The high-schools too?" These two people who questioned my abilities were both aboriginal. Others were not quite so forthright in their questioning but were more subtle in their way of questioning over the years. Some were blatantly against Inuit and refused to address issues directly through me and going straight around me to the Director of Education, but my co-supervisors were supportive of me and involved me in the meetings anyway probably to the dismay of these individuals. In the 1990's there were few Inuit in management or government positions. People still went up against many, unvoiced, invisible barriers and faced a lack of support and racist attitudes from some Southerners. In the early 1990's an Inuk from the Government tried to organize an informal support group for Inuit in management positions. Less than a dozen Inuit attended these sessions and the topic of discussions were centered on the need for support in training, cultural orientation and mentorship. What was often at the root of issues was lack of cultural respect for Inuit in the workplace by some colleagues. Some Southerners and *Qallunaat* did not even realise how they were being racist, exclusionary, condescending and hurtful. Many of our generation had not finished school and there were minimal training opportunities so most Inuit were in paraprofessional positions. The sessions were helpful in finding ways to problem-solve as well as inspire and support one another.

As I accepted increasing roles of responsibility in my career as an educator, I never discussed the issue of management and leadership with either of my parents in great detail. I once asked an Inuk educator colleague who was in a position of authority in the school system if she ever talked about her job and she said the same thing. I did not see myself as being promoted and climbing up the ladder. Other people saw that I was capable or ready to do the work required as an able person. These were people who were mentors, guides, coaches, and effective leaders themselves. They saw strength in others and provided encouragement.

I was asked to consider becoming a Director trainee, but I refused thinking that there was too much political baggage for an Inuk in such a high profile job. Claiming a leadership position did not feel right for me at the time in a *Qallunaatitut* (ways of *Qallunaat*) system. An Inuk teacher was often seen and characterized in discussions as capable of only teaching in Inuktitut without any academic standards so therefore was incapable of representing an English academic education system. I also felt that without any professional credentials, like a Master Degree or a management certificate, I would not be as credible as my *Qallunaat* colleagues. I had always received enough subtle and hidden criticism from some people without making myself an open target. I preferred to keep working at the supervisor level. The ever-present hidden and blatant double standards held for *Qallunaat* and Inuit made it difficult back then.

Nunavut – April 1, 1999

Nunavut was a dream-come-true for our leaders who worked for decades to make this historic change and sacrificed their time and effort for Inuit. People were excited,

happy and proud with shining faces. I remember the feeling of pride and excitement in 1993 when the signing ceremony took place at the Inuksuk High School. I wore my beaded amauti that my mother made for me. On the tail were old coins hanging on stringed beads that her great-grandmother had acquired from the whalers. I saw many wearing their *amauti* or *silapaat* (*ah-mow-teet* or *see-lah-paat* woman's parka and outer covers) and their *kamiit* (*kah-meet*, skin boots). My *Nukakuluk* as I called my mother's aunt, my great-aunt *Ningiuraapik* had been asked to light the *qulliq* stone lamp to open the signing ceremony and my great-uncle's wife, the well-known artist Kenojuak Ashevak, was there to commemorate this event with her artwork. The well-known Inuit leaders like John Amagoalik, known as the Father of Nunavut, and many others who had worked hard on the land claims negotiations were there to witness Prime Minister Mulroney and Nunavut Tunngavik President Paul Quassa sign their names. The average *Nunavummiut* (people of Nunavut) wondered what prospects this vision held for them. Many knew that not everything would change overnight and that there would be high expectations. Everyone would expect those in government to hit the ground running on April 1, 1999. After the signing in 1993, there was more effort for some training of Inuit and some programs were established in the Government. I was asked to consider applying for a four week Senior Executive Development program at the Banff School of Advanced Management which I did and was accepted. I had to make a strong case to my supervisor because it was very different from any education courses or the workshops I had taken in the past. This Management course broadened my awareness and perspective as an educational leader. The principals' training I had taken a few years before was very specifically geared towards program and school leadership. I enjoyed learning more

about leadership in general and meeting all kinds of leaders or managers from across Canada and even from other countries.

Director of Curriculum and School Services

In 1998 when I started my work as Director of Curriculum and School Services at the new Department of Education I was excited by this challenge. Working for a new government based on our cultural values and language filled me with hope. I set out to hire staff and establish the division. Not many Inuit wanted to move to the new decentralized office in Arviat which made it a challenge to find people to staff the positions. It had to be different from Yellowknife and reflect Nunavut's needs, goals, language and culture so I made sure there were Elder Advisors' positions in place. The curriculum and program had to be based on Inuit values, philosophy and knowledge while taking into consideration contemporary ways. There were major priorities and tasks for this new Department but building on the work that had started prior to Nunavut was important. The goals, concerns and recommendations in *Learning, Tradition and Change* came from the people of the NWT and the Eastern Arctic and were still relevant. *Nunavummiut* wanted students to graduate with strong academic skills in Inuktitut and English, but parents also wanted their children to develop a strong sense of Inuit cultural identity.

As a new Department of Education it was important to provide direction in the area of language for the schools. The three regions had different language situations and varying levels of language loss. We needed to develop a strong language and curriculum

strategy and policy base. We commissioned studies to look at these two critical areas and they were completed in 2001 and 2002.

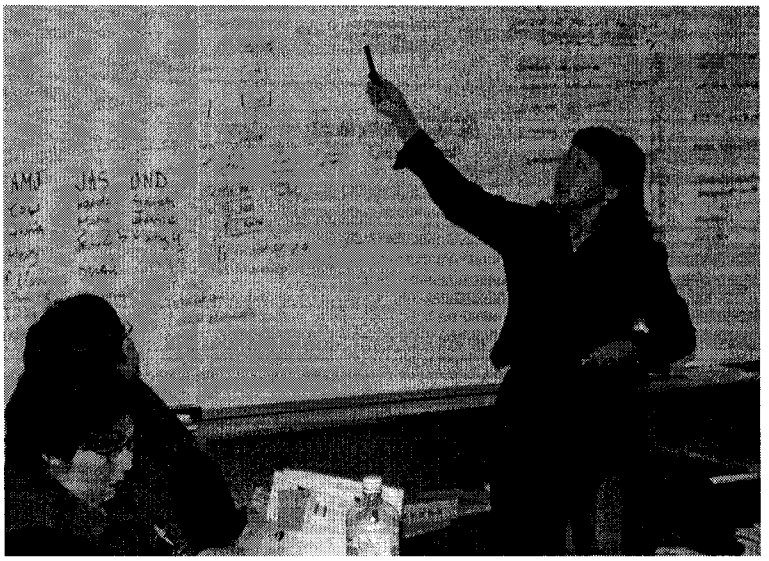


Figure 44. Naullaq, Assistant Deputy Minister, Education 2003, facilitating Language of Instruction study (2003). Arnaquq family collection. Colour photograph.

There was a huge amount of work to be done in establishing a new, decentralized Department of Education, more than I realized. *Nunavummiut* expected the Government to continue to administer all services smoothly. Staff could not be transferred from Yellowknife! We had to do everything ourselves. In the space of six to eight months I was up to my ears helping to devise, review and approve job descriptions, make organizational charts, design interview questions, and most importantly maintain a sense of vision tied to the goals for Nunavut. It was important to ensure each division in the new department reflected these goals as much as possible. The re-building from within would be mostly done as time went by for all departments. On top of this work, other Inuit senior managers and I were involved in a management training course. Each department had their challenges but had to collaborate on office space, numbers of positions to allocate to each decentralized office, housing, and all the administrative

requirements. All in all, there were a few major administrative hurdles that took time to be worked out which were systemic in all departments. Some of the decentralized staff had taken issue with some of the senior staff in Iqaluit thinking they were being ignored. This was part of the first signs of growing pains for a decentralized government. Lack of experience and training for staff at different levels in organizational and change management were also key to these issues.

Traditional Inuit Leadership

In talking with Elders about traditional leadership they often say that a camp leader was the eldest male of a family, well-respected for being decisive, reliable, welcoming and fair. Sometimes it was not the eldest male but someone else others turned to for leadership and direction. A leadership role was not rigid. People did not seek constant guidance in their decision-making. Men often conversed with one another in the morning to indicate where they would go hunting. Women stayed behind to do their share of their work. Older boys accompanied their fathers and girls their mothers. Elders did not sit idle as one may think but everyone was busy, contributing to their family.

Figure 45. My brother Sam's first beluga. Arnaquq family collection. Colour photograph

Figure 46. My mother in the front left, my aunts and *ningauk* (son- in-law) cleaning a polar bear skin in the 1990's. Arnaquq family collection. Colour photograph.

Some people mention that traditional Inuit leadership had really no hierarchy in Inuit society and that there were informal leaders, usually the eldest male of the family camp and often well respected for their decision-making and hunting skills, although sometimes the leader was not necessarily the eldest member. They were respected because they were able to articulate their thoughts clearly as well as confidently. There was not just one leader, families worked together to survive and collaboration, mutual support and reciprocity were crucial. Men and women had specific roles and were raised from birth to take on their responsibilities. Sometimes there was deviation from this norm because a family did not have an older son. Some women became very proficient with dogs, hunting and doing men's tasks.

With the transition to living in a larger community our parents did not immediately absolve nor dismiss their perceptions of traditional authority or guidance from their Elders. This just weakened over time as the dynamics changed in larger communities where now many groups of families were living together. The imported agencies, community services and different way of living like the schools, police, water delivery, housing with heat and electricity, stores, money and *aqsaaqsijut* (jobs) took away roles. I remember the dynamics and tension between the members of our families as well as other groups of families as a young girl. We lived on the same street as my uncles, aunts and grandparents for the first ten years of my life and often went camping together, and saw one other regularly. Elders and parents were our authority at home. My perceptions are based on these experiences as well as hearing Elders talk about their lives in their family camps including stories from my parents in the 1980's and 1990's.

Figure 47. Summer 1958, My grandfather, Aunt Jeanie, her baby and husband, my mother, sister and brother. Photo courtesy of Yatsushiro. Black & white photograph.

I think that there was some hierarchy because of the tensions that stemmed from relationships. Elders were listened to because of inherent customs, beliefs and taboos, *uqaujjuijjusiit* (gift of words of advice - passed down from Elders before them) so they evoked a sense of respect as *angijuqqaat* (parents in literal meaning – first authority from meaning; '*angijuq*' means 'big' or perhaps the secondary meaning 'eldest', and '*-qqaaq*' which means first or foremost). The father in a family was usually the authority for a group, but if he was not an assertive, confident type, and the wife was more dominant, the wife may become the matriarch. This is apparent to this day and we see families where this is the case. Family members deferred to the *angijuqqaaq* but it was often to both mother and father.

If the family had taken on an orphan, this individual might have acquired a subservient role as a helper, almost like a servant. If the new guardians were fair in their manner there was a sense of respect. However, in cases where the matriarch of the family held a certain attitude of having acquired a lesser person and did not treat the individual equally; there was a hierarchical tone to the relationship. This would often be evident in

the treatment of the individual and if he or she was close in age to the children of the family there would be a noticeable difference in giving of food. The family members would treat the child or individual the same way as the dominant mother did, for a time. The body language of the subservient individual was blatantly deferential to the family. This was still common in many communities in the 1960's and the early 1970's.

My mother's mother had passed away when she was quite young so she lost her nurturer and parent who provided unconditional love. A mother was the heart of the home. Usually, my grandfather was a hunter and was not always home during the day. My father also became orphaned as an older boy so his upbringing from then on involved 'deferring to others' until he was old enough to leave and make his own decisions. I would find his views towards certain authorities quite submissive – *naluqqutiniq* – *(nalujuq* means s/he does not know how, so *naluqqutiniq* means one's owns views are not worthy to be shared which is a very humble position that many older Inuit take). This *naluqqutiniq* was especially towards *Qallunaat* and my friends often said the same thing about their parents. My father was not confident in voicing his opinions publicly, yet at home he was confident and assertive. I also saw the behaviours of people who were orphans and treated differently. This treatment happened even though there were traditional beliefs and *uqaujjuusiat* that spoke against negative treatment of orphans lest they get back at you when the time comes. A well known legend, *Kaujjajjuk,* is an epic story common all across the circumpolar North that talks about an orphan who overcame his situation of being dominated and mistreated by a mean guardian. He paid back in revenge for being treated badly. Unfortunately, this type of treatment is a negative cycle

and those who were mistreated tend to exhibit the same behaviours they received towards others.

Yet, in saying the above, when my friends and I often discussed the issue of *Qallunaat* authority and our parents' generation we noticed that somehow that generation were conditioned into thinking the *Qallunaat* were the authority. The 'somehow', to me, stems from the only contact they ever had with *Qallunaat* was through specific contexts that created this power relationship and a form of dominance. *Qallunaat* that Inuit knew were always the ones 'in power'; those who, because of their positions could give or not give money, food, goods, (RCMP, HBC traders) because of their position. The ones who could heal you were the *Qallunaat* nurses, doctors and even missionaries through prayer. The RCMP, teachers and administrators also had the power to take away your children.

Inuit had become more reliant on the goods and ways introduced by the newcomers. This also meant one was reliant on the authorities who had the power to give things. Camps were often small, involving a group of families who were closely related to one another with members integrated from other camps through marriage. The use of wooden boats meant they did not have to make new covers or boats every year or so, clothing made from man-made material could last longer than skins, guns could kill animals more quickly from farther away, tea and sugar were pleasing to the taste, metal tools could last longer than their bone, antler or stone ones. Kerosene oil lanterns and stoves were very useful and cooked food much faster. There were many new conveniences that helped Inuit live more comfortably in such a harsh environment. These things made their hunting easier which meant their families would be safer and survive in a more comfortable way. Leaders of camps and heads of families did not want their

children and own families to be left out and suffer needlessly when there were comforts at hand. The acquisition and assimilation of new ways and technologies were not difficult to become accustomed to and taken for granted when they met survival and physical needs.

Role of Elders

Older people who lived to see the trials and patterns of life, saw the truths of the *uqaujjuusiat* (gifts of words of advice) they had received being validated over time in their long lives so they passed them on with gentle conviction. Talking to other Elders and people in the context of daily life situations and events also confirmed their thoughts and experiences. There would be events they had pondered and theorized about which would eventually be validated so these would then become part of their advice. This has happened with respect to the new technology and materials Inuit learned to use, for example, hunting with snowmobiles, boats, making clothing using modern material, raising children, and new things like alcohol.

Elders were to be treated with respect and not called by their given names. To do so would be disrespectful. I can remember the gentle chuckles and responses of older people when a very young child would mistakenly call them by name, "*Atsiraaqtailiravit*" (You are calling me by name). Instead of being negatively reprimanded, the child would be fondly reminded later not to do that again. The kinship terms had to be used depending on the relationship of the person acknowledging the grandparent or Elder. They kept the families and traditions strong. I can remember my

mother and aunts speaking to us as children in hushed tones in regards to an Elder, commanding and issuing respect for them.

Elders who told stories and legends in their homes helped to pass on a rich legacy of language and storytelling. In Iqaluit, there was a family of noted storytellers whose father had told legends and stories. One of the young grandsons who had dropped out of school early, learned the passages verbatim, and is now well known for his evocative language and storytelling ability in Inuktitut speaking the old form of Inuktitut in the traditional legends like *Kiviuq, Kaujjajjuk, Lumaajuuq* and many others. Songs, mores, values and chants are woven through many of these epics. Children were told shortened versions appropriate to their age and as time went on, learned the adult versions which had all the sex, violence and graphic scenes. Many families lost their storytellers during the flu and TB epidemics from the 1930's to the 1950's, and tragically, the biggest loss happened when schools and communities were established breaking the age old tradition.

My grandmother was the matriarch in our group of families, sure of herself, strong, talented and funny. Although there was some tension between her and my mother, she taught my mother well how to make clothing, work with skins, care for a family and home, and relied on her for moral support towards the end of her life. An Elder was looked to for moral support in times of mourning, hardship and family tensions. I have never forgotten the advice that my father said he received from his father-in-law, my grandfather, that it is important to provide a child with a strong family and a stable home when he had been neglecting our family in the early 1960's.

In the last several years I have heard adults say they missed the presence of Elders who could provide them advice but I have also heard Elders who yearned for advice

themselves during the troubled adjustments and transition to community life. They were grasping for solace and support, something that continues to this day as some of them struggle to deal with grandchildren ridden with modern problems. The role of Elders drastically changed when the communities were established and families dispersed. I often heard outsiders saying, 'Why is there so much apathy? Why do Inuit not seem to care? Why do Elders not take more of a role in the community?' The reasons are in the history of colonization and are far-reaching.

Domination by the Haluuraaluit (Qallunaat)

The impact of colonization on Inuit impacted the Elders and was especially evident when communities and schools were established. Elders roles were displaced and considerably weakened. The dominant authorities and their laws were like steel barriers for our grandparents and parents. There was resistance by some Inuit at first, and it manifested in different ways. Our parents' generation and the Elders have not believed in the young people at times because they thought a *Qallunaaq* could do the job better. I have seen this and also experienced it. This is changing.

"How did Inuit get dominated?" many people wonder and even ask out loud today. Why were they so easy to influence? Why do they not seem to care? Why do the Elders not take charge? Why is there so much apathy, hurt, and anger? Our cultural values and customs were based on survival and life in a context that depended on harmonious kinship and interdependency. It was important not to alter or put out of kilter life that depended on familiarity of the known in a world that was often harsh, cold, and unforgiving. All this dominated their daily decisions. To go against that could be

dangerous and taboo. Confrontation, violence or having a negative attitude would take them easily along that path. Families lived together in very small numbers. The laws, customs and taboos evolved from these settings and adapted to help them live. For the most part, the general nature of people was calm and peaceful. If one became emotional and aggressive there were social repercussions such as rejection, avoidance and withdrawal, particularly if there was no change in behaviour. In general, there were individuals and some families who showed negative characteristics but on the whole, the kinship relationships and social expectations helped to prevent them from escalating. The environment and weather ruled them as the Elders often say, '*Sila angijuqqaangummat*' (catching or meeting up with something before it disappears or changes. This can be to a certain time, era, or person). Acceptance of what one could not change was necessary or one would start warring with one's own emotions rising into a chaotic state of mind and creating conflict. There were some families who were known to be violent and even groups of Inuit. Knud Rasmussen's Fifth Thule Expedition (1999) cites some murderous individuals they met during their trip.

Qallunaat and, mostly *Qallunaat* men, established themselves as the people who took charge across the Arctic. They had a mission or a specific role; to police, minister, administer and trade or sell under the authority of a state or system of policies, regulations, laws or contracts from institutions. There was almost a feeling of an unseen higher being that was deferred to because they followed orders from afar. Their very presence and who they were as officers or managers exuded a sense of dominance that Elders and others from that era often called *iliranarniq* (feeling of reverence) that only

their parents and their Elders traditionally commanded. Thus, it was natural and easy for the newcomers to command reverence from the Inuit.

As children, we were often told when being disciplined, such as when playing outside, to not go too far lest we be taken by a *haluuraaluk* (big or bad hello, a term that was used for Qallunaaq) or when a child was whining, there would be a scolding, '*Haluuraalummut pijauttaruaravit*' (you might be taken by a big, bad hello). This saying is thought to have stemmed from the early days when Inuit first encountered *Qallunaat* explorers who would nab Inuit and take them away in their ships. As children, these sayings did not help our perceptions about *Qallunaat* but they were still used. I do not hear this anymore but only when someone says it in jest.

When Inuit moved into the communities so their children would go to school, they brought their families, grandmothers, children, and babies leaving behind a way of life forever. There were significant social adjustment and problems. Some Inuit who still lived out on the land in their own family camps would see the problems when they came into town to get supplies from the store and they refused to move in for a long time. Some had moved into town for a few years but experienced the conflict, tension and problems so they moved back to their family camps. I remember there used to be some families that lived in Iqaluit but they moved back to the smaller communities because of the drinking and social problems. They had started to drink excessively and could not deal with it anymore so they withdrew themselves to get away from the social issues.

Avoiding conflict was one way to survive and maintain strength and social cohesiveness. Some individuals or families would withdraw themselves and move away from a tense situation when they had a negative camp leader. My mother once described

a man who had been very arrogant, demanding and authoritative in his camp. Eventually the families left one by one from this man's camp. There was a similar situation that my mother pointed out to me years later. A group of brothers and their families lived in the same camp but the eldest brother became too demanding and wanted things his way all the time so his brothers all left one by one with their families and established their own camp away from him. That is how many of the students feel when they drop out of school. They withdraw from negative leadership, structures and systems. They get pushed out. The people within the system have the authority and power to change these negative and dominating patterns so the students have an opportunity to strive for goals and opportunities.

CHAPTER FIVE

Inuuqatigiit Curriculum

> Decolonization, however, does not mean and has not meant a total rejection of all theory or research or Western knowledge. Rather, it is about centering our concerns and world view and then coming to know and understand theory and research from our own perspectives and for our own purposes. (Smith, 1999, p. 39)

> Colonized peoples have been compelled to define what it means to be human because there is a deep understanding of what it has meant to be considered not fully human, to be savage. (Smith, 1999, p. 26)

Philosophy and Principles

In March 1990, I was walking up the road towards the Nunavut Arctic College with someone from the Department of Education of the Government of the Northwest Territories who was in town for a few days. She asked me if they should start work on Inuktitut curriculum and who should be involved. I felt uncomfortable answering because in a sense I was asked to answer for all Inuit teachers. I think I responded that it was about time and asked what the curriculum topic would be. At the time I did not know how to express my discomfort because I did not know then why it made me feel that way. In retrospect I think that I did not want to be responsible for selecting people because culturally, it was not appropriate for one person to do this alone.

Several weeks later I was officially asked to co-chair the subject advisory committee for the new Inuktitut curriculum project while I still taught at the Teacher Education Program. I agreed to try it like other challenges that had come my way. The first meeting brought in a handful of experienced Inuit teachers and someone who was a non-Inuk to this table. At the time I did not realize I had qualifications that had been building up over the years. I was too busy doing my work. It was and has always been difficult for me, and I know it is the same with my Inuit friends and colleagues, to display our perceived abilities and utter them out loud. It was almost taboo to do so. I had of course been chairing meetings and teaching university TEP courses for several years and, had just recently organized and chaired *Sivumut*,. I was busy doing the tasks at hand without thinking that I was 'good' at them. Administrators from the Baffin Divisional Board of Education and the Department of Education of the GNWT had put my name into the list of people who could work on this project. I was teaching at TEP and had been for the past five years, and I had experience in schools since 1975.

I accepted the role somewhat reluctantly because of my inexperience in curriculum development. We managed to get through most of the agenda in the first couple of days. The members of the new committee were from across the two Inuktitut speaking regions of the Eastern Arctic, from the Baffin and the Keewatin, and all spoke Inuktitut except for one member who was a *Qallunaaq*. Most, if not all of us, had started as classroom assistants and then become qualified teachers with teaching experience. We all brought this and our life experiences to the table. Before this, Inuit teachers had not led curriculum development projects at the Departmental level.

The co-chair and I had a big challenge on our first day. *Qallunaat* administrators who organized the process in the background had unknowingly put me in a vulnerable position with my colleagues at the table when we put two items on our agenda; identifying the purpose of the curriculum and the issue of language to be used for the curriculum and its development. Doing this was a cutthroat act. It was not a straight-cut-and-dried process by any means! These decisions brought forth very strong opinions, views and philosophical perspectives because it raised questions about cultural identity, language, principles and values. It put individuals on the defensive as these issues touched on raw nerves and personal feelings. Heated discussions arose which came out of nowhere. The debate seemed to be zinging past my nose between individuals. I felt my stomach muscles clench and took deep breaths as I commented carefully. After almost an hour of debate and disagreement between individuals, the other chairperson and I at last suggested a break and opening the boardroom door, I took another deep breath and unclenched my tense muscles. What did I get myself into I thought to myself as I walked out the door?

"Who would ever develop a curriculum about their own culture and language in another language?" I thought to myself. That was the underlying logical question some of us were asking. All of my working life I have returned again and again to the Inuit cultural base that was a foundation for my identity as an educator and as a person. In all my work in education it has always felt as if we had kowtowed to the *Qallunaat* system, ideologies, knowledge, and especially authority, so this time we did not want to bow down. There was no question about it! I stood up for this principle. It was amazing to me that other Inuit did not believe in the importance of the Inuktitut language as a foundation

for our work. Could there be a curriculum for Francophone speakers written in English? It was not fair for us to be put in this position of defending our language and culture to each other, something I felt we had been doing in our own work at times! In hindsight, the process should have been more carefully thought out and an Inuk or someone hired in a full time position right away to coordinate the project. The mix of the group and lack of training on curriculum development were perhaps other issues.

A cultural trait that Inuit traditionally held was to be fair to someone even to the point of almost giving something up. Confronting someone or raising a controversial issue was negative and dangerous. Survival was a necessity in a harsh and unforgiving environment. If you went against someone, it was dangerous. Negative behaviour and acts can become cyclical and recurring. This was always forbidden even if it was verbal. Emotions could easily get out of hand provoking more ill will and misfortune in a world where spiritual beliefs and taboos could save a family from starvation. When two cultures meet and there is no negotiation, the dominant one takes over. The *Qallunaat* culture and ways threatened to dominate us even in this project that was dedicated to the creation of an Inuit curriculum. There were more of us that wanted to develop a culturally-based curriculum and believed a language arts curriculum could always be developed later on because some language arts material for Inuktitut already existed. At the end of two or three days, there was still some disagreement about the topic and which language should be used to write the curriculum so the final decision was left to be resolved at the next meeting.

I had never really clashed with others before, let alone about pedagogical and philosophical issues. It evoked a side of me that I did not know existed. I learned that I

had very strong beliefs, culturally, pedagogically, philosophically and professionally. Never had I been in a situation where I had to verbally defend my beliefs and values the same way, especially to fellow Inuit. In our next meeting, my beliefs were about to be tested even more. This time, the language issues were even more magnified because now there were new members who no longer spoke their mother tongue so they were very defensive, to the point of anger. The tense discussions wrung us out even more. Some individuals who had gone to residential school were very sensitive to the discussions on language. The issue of identity was at the core of what was said and loss and pain were fuelling the debates. When you really looked at the whole process and issues, we were all affected one way or another by colonization. The irony of it was that it was at the root of our disagreement.

The Department of Education had placed a subject advisory in a difficult position managing a curriculum project that put all of us in a situation that was not necessary. It felt there was absolutely no understanding of the complex cultural and linguistic needs. I threatened to withdraw from this committee in a letter of resignation unless there were some changes. Fortunately after some delay of a year and a half or more, it was decided that someone would be hired on a full-time basis to lead this curriculum project. Unfortunately the curriculum would now be written in English, supposedly for the sake of the Western members. It could always be translated later into Inuktitut was the reasoning used by the Department. I stayed on the Committee even though I did not agree with that decision and was very busy by then in my new role as a Supervisor of Schools working at the Baffin Divisional Board of Education. I felt this work on the Inuktitut Curriculum was far too important to just give up and walk away.

Figure 48. Celebration and launching of the Inuuqatigiit curriculum, 1996 Naullaq Arnaquq, Millie Kuliktana, Guita Anawak, Rosemary Kirby, Maggie Putulik and Liz Apak-Fowler. Arnaquq family collection. Colour photograph.

Throughout the work on this curriculum, the core members of the committee continued to meet. It was the first opportunity where we could fully express ourselves, talk about what we learned at home and on the land from our families, and discuss the joys of our culture, heritage, traditions, customs, knowledge and history. We brought our ideas, vision, laughter, and even our hurt, anger, or fears to the table of every meeting we attended. We even brought our *quaq* (frozen meat), dried meat, fish and other delicacies to share. We would end up sitting on the floor of the Lahm Ridge Building in Yellowknife, eating our food. I am sure that was a first in a Government building.

The sessions were not just about developing a curriculum document. The entire process healed us and helped us to speak, voice and name those things that we had not been able to express in our own schooling. Our voices had never been free before to share our truths. We had never learned about our own history and cultural traditions in school but importantly, we found that we knew a lot more than we had realized. We were extemporaneously acknowledging our identity in a pedagogical forum for a pedagogical

purpose, but we stayed on task as well and involved Elders in the curriculum development. We interviewed Elders when we returned to our regions and communities. This enabled us to develop stronger relationships with Elders and re-connect with aspects of our Inuit culture, history and traditions. Some of us may have occasionally brought Elders into schools or workshops but we had never really looked to them before in this way. I became more comfortable in talking to older people. We had been brought up to not question or talk in a dialogue with Elders so for some of us, this involved breaking down the communication and cultural barriers. As I was writing my thesis I dug out some of my journals and came across a piece that mentions this change. It took *Inuuqatigiit* to help me out of the shell I had built to protect myself from the years of schooling that had contradicted where I came from and who I was.

I still strongly believed there had to be an Inuktitut written version of the curriculum, not just a translation so I set up our own curriculum committee of Inuit teachers in the Baffin region. We brought in and interviewed Elders. Many concepts and aspects of our culture that we could easily describe in just one word in Inuktitut required several in English such as; *Tuqsurarniq* (concept or notion of using kinship terms to acknowledge relatives), *aqausiq* (chant or song for a baby), *sirnaarniq* (act of defending of others), *uqaujjuusiat* (gifts, words of advice), *tarriatsuit* (shadow beings that disappear), *ilirasunniq* (act of reverence towards someone in authority or higher position of influence; parent, boss, leader), *inuuqatigiit* (fellow human beings), *nunaqqatigiit* (people who live in the same camp, town or community/those who share the same land), *naluqqutiniq* (notion or act of being humble and not showing abilities), *sijjaq* (ice along the shore).

As a language that is oppressed by a dominant one, Inuktitut needed the space to thrive as well as evolve without being translated. In the final year, writing the Inuktitut version of *Inuuqatigiit* became a parallel process with the work completed in English at the meetings in Yellowknife. Those of us from the Baffin were determined to follow through with our plan to complete the document in Inuktitut. We were committed to our language, and culture and to people who could not speak English. Children, adults and Elders deserved and needed access to a curriculum document in their own language!

Elders worked closely with us, describing concepts about family and social relationships, child-rearing, child-development, relationship to the land, animals and oral literature, history and laws. Interestingly, we were reminded that we knew a lot already from what we learned at home after school, and in the evenings, weekends and summers. Those of us who had been to school but were old enough to have witnessed and experienced more traditional customs, ways and behaviours understood what the Elders were talking about.

There is a concept called, *anngutijuq* (catching or meeting up with something before it disappears or changes. This can be to a certain time, era, or person). Our generation was born into a time before the Southerners and their technology, and globalization entered the North with full force. Television was the biggest factor after schools had been established in influencing and reinforcing new concepts, attitudes and behaviours and considerably changing the language of the children to English. Our younger siblings, and now our children, had not *anngutijuq* many of the ways, beliefs, customs and traditions that my age group and a bit older experienced. The rest of the world pervaded into their consciousness like a fog or smoke clouding over a once crystal

clear picture of a certain way of life. The fog has lifted to a different setting with different sounds, smells, feelings, memories, colours, pace, tensions, stories, knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, words, and dreams. The world of computers, satellite TV, i-Pods, Global Position System receivers, Hip-hop music, Hollywood movies and other technologies are taken for granted now. Sometimes the old ways make it back into this picture as if through a haze.

How was *Inuuqatigiit* going to influence change? It was an integrated curriculum that teachers could use as a philosophical and pedagogical framework, a foundation for Inuit education. It not only meant that the teaching content would be more culturally based and rooted but it suggested reaching back into the local community and involving parents, hunters, and Elders. It would not replace or take away from the required academic expectations or standards. Many schools or individual teachers in the Baffin were already teaching this way, as I noted in my school visits. They were already drawing on the wisdom and knowledge of local people to inform their teaching. This new curriculum would make this approach more consistent across the communities. Parents had expressed concerns about loss of language and cultural knowledge since the 1970's. A school is not just a building to teach children new skills and knowledge without the involvement of their parents, grandparents or *nunaqqatiit* (fellow community members). It is an arrangement between the parent and a teacher or educator to teach your child to become skilled and survive when he or she grows up. The context and lifestyle has changed but that does not mean your child does not learn about his or her history, traditions, customs and beliefs. To contradict or refuse to accept that is robbing a child or individual of his or her heritage, history and cultural identity.

As we completed our work on *Inuuqatigiit* we were sad to disperse as a group because we had grown closer and achieved a major goal together. This document represented the children we taught, our children, grandchildren, parents, grandparents, fellow educators and ourselves. It would have been so easy to just give up and replicate yet another Southern-based program or just translate a document, yet again. The intent of our group before Nunavut was to start with *Inuuqatigiit* and then develop other required curriculum documents and resources. The Inuktitut version was still being worked on by the Teaching and Learning Centre staff in the Baffin so it would be published later. It would not be respectful nor make sense if we just published an English version when it was about our culture. Inuit teachers in the Baffin were Inuktitut speakers, some of whom were not fluent in English. There were some Elders working in our schools as well as local education council members who were unilingual Inuktitut speakers. As stated earlier, they also needed access to *Inuuqatigiit*. Imagine producing a document about Inuit perspectives that was only accessible to those who understood English.

Inuuqatigiit represented a change and some people interpreted it as a non-academic-curriculum. They did not believe this curriculum was up to par, therefore, learning could not be evaluated. One day, at a regional conference in one of those years of working on the curriculum, a fellow educator who had been in the North for several years, in a certain doubting tone of voice, asked me how our work was coming along and said, "What exactly is the curriculum about?" I explained that it was an integrated curriculum based on Inuit culture and values. This person commented, "Aw, come on Naullaq, our values are not that different are they?" I answered, "Well there are differences" and she challenged me with a slight smirk on her face, "Like what? Give me

an example." This comment was one of those that would come back into my mind on different occasions afterwards. It was made by someone who was in a position of influence, a person who had never entered any of our homes and never really talked to our Inuit parents or grandparents, children or teachers. This is what the face and voice of Eurocentricity looked like and we had heard it far too often and for too long. Another educator colleague was known to make comments about Inuit Elders being useless old fogies.

One year when I was Supervisor of Schools and still working on *Inuuqatigiit* I was visiting Pond Inlet during the beginning of the Professional Development days for the elementary school staff. They had brought in several Elders, men and women, to talk about their knowledge about children. As the workshop started the Inuit teachers asked the Elders questions about behaviours in children. The more they talked, the deeper the level of the discussions went, including their vocabulary and usage of terminology. I was shaking inside from hunger, excitement and awe at the level of discussion. In all my years of education I had not heard any experts talking about child psychology based on their first-hand experience the way these individuals were doing in Inuktitut. I have met professors and worked with colleagues who considered themselves to be of that calibre, who could talk about theory and applied research in language, child psychology and sociology. The Elders we sat and listened to were talking about issues and topics they had not read about but knew from experience and heard from their Elders who heard it from their own Elders! It was the deepest legacy of oral knowledge being shared and recalled as these Elders spoke together. They were discussing child growth and development,

behaviour, discipline, and relationships. I knew the discussions touched on Inuit knowledge we needed to understand and teach in schools.

As I sat in the plane on the way back home from my visit, I pondered the knowledge shared in the workshop. It was a significant event for me because it was the first time I had heard extensive discussions taking place in Inuktitut. I knew this was what TEP should be offering in addition to the imported child psychology books filled with Piaget, Montessori and Kohlberg. The discussions had been at a high-level, abstract and theoretical instead of the half-hour cursory commentaries we often heard from presenters or resource people in workshops. It struck a chord in me and remembering it made me determined to pursue what I believed as an educator, that we had to strive for quality and high standards in Inuktitut. That is why I worked hard to organize the Sivumut conference even though it was just a start and that is why I stood up for the purpose of *Inuuqatigiit*.

Some teachers have commented that *Inuuqatigiit* should have been the precursor to *Piniaqtavut* because of the content on Inuit history, culture, knowledge and values. The next step was the development of teaching and learning resources on the topics in *Inuuqatigiit*. A teaching and resource manual was started to complement the curriculum but it did not get produced at the same time. Much material was and is needed for Inuit teachers and students: science, math, reading, language, art, social studies, health, and geography need to be developed in Inuktitut and drawn from Inuit epistemologies. These curricula and resources could be the

outcomes-based material that teachers expected. We knew that implementing a curriculum without any resource material would be problematic but there had to be a

starting point. We could have delayed implementation by a couple more years and just developed support materials. There were some existing resources that could be identified and used, but we needed a foundational document like *Inuuqatigiit*, a guiding curriculum philosophy, a starting point for the development of programs, resources and materials. We finally had such a document and a long road lay before us in terms of program and resource development.

The curriculum and school services division at the Department of Education in Yellowknife hired one Inuk among several program coordinators and she was expected to cater to the whole of NWT for all Inuktitut language groups. There were a handful of Teaching and Learning centre program consultants in the three Eastern Arctic regional Boards of Education centres all expected to be book production specialists, Inuktitut program coordinators, material development specialists and teacher support consultants rolled into one. In a region like the Baffin the two Inuktitut program consultants were expected to travel to all thirteen communities and support the twenty-one schools at the same time as they were developing teaching and learning materials. As a Supervisor of Schools I was expected to be the same. Which one was a priority? Those who had never taught in Inuktitut did not realize the dilemma the TLC staff was facing. We were spread far too thin and needed many more people to help us to create the resources.

So, on top of our other priorities and tasks, we then began work on implementing the new *Inuuqatigiit* curriculum in each of our own regions in 1995 and 1996. We started with a workshop at the Board for our colleagues before we set out to the schools. Teams were assigned to groups of communities and schools consisting of supervisors of schools and program consultants including Inuktitut-speaking consultants and *Qallunaat*. We

began with a timeline activity to put the curriculum and implementation workshop planning in perspective and another activity to generate discussion on cross-cultural issues which touched on the underlying purpose of *Inuuqatigiit.* The title *Inuuqatigiit* was chosen because it means, people to people, or fellow; partners, friends, neighbours, family, kinship, human beings which is often at the heart of advice from Elders to youth, that respect for others is utmost to relationships whether it be your parents, grandparents, parents-in-law or others. *Inuk* (person), -u- (verb to be), *-qati* (means partner or with) , *-giit* (share in common or together).

In the next few years after *Inuuqatigiit* had been developed, we Inuit staff would often go back to the principles of *inuuqatigiinniq* (relationships with others) to try and help others resolve conflicts and issues. Elders have often reminded teachers that schools have to teach children how to socialize with others in a respectful way, and that Inuit will always live in the cold Arctic and must know how to live there.

The different teams took the workshops out on the road taking boxes of materials to the assigned schools. We had asked each community school principal and staff to bring in the Elders, education council members and interested parents to the orientation workshops. Many of the local participants were delighted to see that there was now going to be a document that the teachers could use to bring more of the traditional knowledge, the Inuit culture and *Qallunaat* culture together more consciously. I do not remember which community it was, but someone mentioned that this should have been done 30 years ago when we first attended school. As we completed the timeline activity it was interesting and amazing that the Elders and local members of the community had so much historical information. Those of us who were visitors, including some of the

teachers, learned new things. When I summarized the major events that started to change the old Inuit way of life and commented on how the newcomers had affected our customs and traditional practices, the older people were very inclusive as they usually were and said, "They did not just bring or do negative things. They also brought new and useful ways." How typical it was, that our older people were forgiving, giving and positive. They always wanted one to see the positive side or bring peace to a tense situation and wanted to remind us that we had to look at all aspects of a situation.

To provide a concrete example of why *Inuuqatigiit* was important in changing how and what we teach in our classrooms in Nunavut is illustrated by using the topic of Inuit kinship and naming that we cannot get from any imported curriculum. There are younger people who now only use the *Qallunaatitut* kinship terms like 'aunt' and 'grandfather' only for direct relationships because they were taught these concepts and terms in school by their teachers from the South. They have also resorted to using it only for their immediate family members. Some now dismiss the Inuktitut terms, concepts and usage of Inuktitut naming customs. Indirectly, they have developed a negative attitude towards their own cultural customs because they do not believe it is appropriate to refer to someone as 'grandmother', who is not your grandmother. The terms *anaanatsiaq, ataatatsiaq and aana* for grandparents are used not only for the parents' parents but also for the grandparents' siblings and cousins. My niece's daughter formally should refer to me as her *aana* (paternal grandmother) and also her grandmother's sister as '*anaanatsiaq'* (maternal grandmother) because her grandfather is my brother and her grandmother is her sister's sibling. In Inuktitut, *aja, atsak, angak, akkak* (terms for paternal and maternal aunt and uncle) are differentiated and they can be also used for the

parents' female and male cousins. For instance, my father's paternal cousin is my *akkak* (paternal uncle). The English terms 'great-aunt' and 'great-uncle' are being used and translated rather than using the Inuktitut forms. These terms are still recognized and used by many Inuit. Reversing this weakening of unique Inuit customs is possible through the school. An informed teacher has the power and influence in helping children not just to learn vocabulary but also in developing a positive attitude and a stronger sense of identity. *Inuuqatigiit* promotes this custom that does not exist in any other curriculum document.

Figure 49. Naullaq and her Grade Three and Four students (1983). Arnaquq family collection. Black & white photograph.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion

> *Sunatuinnaq tukitaatsiaqsimatinnagu nalunasuungummat. Qaujimaniit – katitigasuariangit, aturniusaniqsausuungummata ilisimajaminik – qaujisaqtiit ilisimajut* (When something has not been identified clearly, it is often confusing. In gathering and analysing knowledge and information, the Western researchers often inherently use their own learned knowledge to base their findings) (Simon, 2008, CBC Radio Interview)

De-Marginalisation and Decolonization

During the 28 years that I worked in education, and previously as a child in school, I experienced many events and changes that contradicted my being. I often searched for words to defend my values, language, culture, and essentially, my identity as an Inuk. I did not want to write from the margins or back pages anymore. Although as an adult I had come to terms with past hurts during my teaching career, I had not let go of some of the things from my schooling, because I did fully realize they were there. As I wrote this thesis, the memories came back and were named, put on the table, so to speak, and examined. I also remembered good and happy memories of my childhood and family. I felt that in the writing process I have learned to express myself more clearly without feeling ashamed of who I am as an Inuk.

Part of the reclamation of who we are as a people has been through further education, training and acquiring jobs where we can make improvements and changes.

We have been rebuilding from the inside out but there have been tremendous challenges because the imported system of education and government is huge and the machinery can be overpowering. When there were more positive developments in the early 1980's, it seemed as if we were to be half-Inuk (Inuit) and half-Qallunaaq.

Figure 50. Half-Inuk, half-qallunaaq drawing by Naullaq (2008)

I have heard Inuit say, '*Qallunaaruqtitaunasulirniraluaratta.*' (We were being forced to almost become like *Qallunaat*). The Elders have been saying more and more in the last five years that there does not have to be continued loss of Inuit ways and conformation to an imported system. Just because it is 2008 and the world has changed for everyone, it does not mean we need to continue to be assimilated and colonized. My parents' generation now admits that they let go of too much when the schools took us in the 1950's and 1960's. They did not realize what we were learning or not learning in school.

There are some Inuit who have been branded as ideal models or examples other Inuit should aspire to by *Qallunaat* because they acted more like *Qallunaat*. In the book, *Life with the Esquimaux,* (1970, p. 135-136) Hall mentions that in1860 Hannah

Tookoolito was a potential model for other Inuit because of her spoken English and the manners she learned while in England.

> But, on turning her face, who should it be but a lady Esquimaux! Whence, thought I, came this civilization refinement? .... November 14th, 1860. Tookoolito, after returning from England five years ago, where she and her winga (husband) spent twenty months, commenced diffusing her accomplishments in various ways, to wit, teaching the female portion of the nation, such as desired to knit, and the various useful things practised by civilisation. This shows me what one person like Tookoolito could accomplish in the way of the introduction of schools and churches among this people. To give this woman an education in the States, and, subsequent employment in connexion with several of our missionaries, would serve to advance a noble and good work.

Another example of idealizing modern Inuit during the transition to community and 'civilized life', is found in *Eskimo Townsmen*, (1965, p. 20).

> He had learned well a suitable style of behaviour, learned it even better than he had learned English, which he rarely spoke during the conference. The officials from Ottawa were openly delighted with him. One can hardly resist comparing him to his namesake, 'SA' of Ikhaluit. 'SM' is dedicated to a steady job, the income from which permits him to sample a considerable range of white middle-class culture, including his own automobile and modern home. He is a hero to those Euro-canadians who visualize the North someday administered by Eskimos in a fashion compatible with the way they currently administer it.' These people brand S. as a "white man's Eskimo".

In school, some Inuit students would be pointed out as good examples for the other students. This, of course, inadvertently targeted a student for ridicule outside the school. Some teachers, not just in elementary and high school but even in higher level education classes, have been known to latch onto these types of 'achievers' because they speak excellent English and carry out their duties to their liking. The more *Qallunaaq*-like one behaved, the more she is rewarded.

The challenge I find that we have in Nunavut is there are some people who do not believe that culture and values can be taught in school. They say that Inuit culture is best taught outside the school, at home, and that the school does not have any culture. They use themselves as examples of ones who managed to learn their culture and traditions from home, and not from school. It is difficult for some to see that the school always teaches a specific culture. Even some *Qallunaat* officials have said publicly that schools do not have a culture. That is a dangerous thing. As Joan Wink says, in her book, *Critical Pedagogy*.

> Sometimes, unlearning takes time and feels like a long leap across the great paradigm divide.' 'Unlearning is central to critical pedagogy, and it often feels terrible. This is good. Does it feel as though everything you learned, you now need to relearn and unlearn? This is good.' [She quotes a teacher named Karie], "Relearning asks us to add new knowledge, and unlearning is more difficult than relearning because it requires that we part with previous knowledge, schema, and theory that are known and comfortable" (2005, p. 20).

Some of us have had to consciously embrace our customs again because aspects of the *Qallunaaq* culture had crept into our way of being. For example, the naming of a

baby. In retrospect, I failed to respect tradition because I had not let my parents choose the names for my daughter when she was born in 1978, but when my son was born in 2001, my father wanted him named Johnibou after his father's cousin, and also his uncle so that is one of his names. He referred to my son as his *akkaruluukka (*my dear two old uncles). My siblings and I make a point of ensuring our children refer to us and each another with kinship terms so they learn and internalize them while they are very young.

When I visited *Kalaalliit Nunaat,* Greenland in 2006, I talked with an Inuk man about our naming and kinship customs. I told him that we still practice the tradition of naming and that we still believe the old beliefs associated to it. He was surprised with what I said and told me that they have not practiced naming the old way since his grandparents' time. He referred to this naming custom as old-fashioned. The *Kalaalliit* (Greenland Inuit) have had contact with *Qallunaat* (Danish people) since the 1700's and have adopted a lot of their ways. They also acquired surnames, but mostly of Danish origins. In the past few years they have started using Inuktitut names again but not like we still do here in Nunavut. They use some kinship terms as proper names now, for example, *naja, nukaq, aliqa, (*sister, younger sibling) whereas we use them for identifying a kinship relationship. There is a policy in Greenland that the Inuktitut name you give your baby has to be in the name registry in order for you to use it and there is an approval process for a name that is not registered.

Inuuniq (Inuit Identity)

My generation became different people from our parents' generation. We are concrete examples of what policies and laws can do to people. Nunavut itself is an

example. However, I cannot just hang up my *Inuuniq* (Inuit identity) on a coat hook or leave it at a door when I walk into my office as some have unconsciously learned to do because of acquiring Southern customs and knowledge. I have started to regain what I almost lost. Some people of my generation grapple with what it means to be an Inuk because they never learned about our culture and language in school. Inuit educators have had the opportunity to at least speak in our language, talk and teach about our culture in our classrooms and work in Inuktitut when many of our peers could not during the transition years from the 1970's to the present. Others have only just started to have the opportunities to do this since Nunavut was established in 1999. Suddenly it became the cool thing to do. Many people of my generation and a bit younger are very hungry and thirsty to learn more about our cultural identity. One concern I have heard from the older generation is that the younger people have a tendency to stereotype or generalize some of the old customs. This is a form of essentializing, perhaps a kind of strategic essentialism that Gayatri Spivak refers to (1990, p. 109). It is no wonder, the way of life has changed and there is a longing to regain identity. When we were school children we literally left our identities, our culture and language, on our coat hooks in the hallway as we walked into our classrooms. Some still continue to do this today when they go to work.

There is more openness now and a desire to learn some of our traditions and customs. Young people want to learn the traditional songs, chants, stories, legends. They are making skin clothing, and Inuit tools as well as reviving many other old Inuit ways. The Nunavut Arctic College programs are offering very successful courses on such aspects of our culture. Elders have been saying for many years, "The Arctic will always be cold and our people will always live here. They must know how to build iglus and

read the weather for survival." They are happy to know there is a revival of our customs and to still be around to see it happen, to *anngutijuq* (catch something in time).

Uqaujjusiat ('Gifts of' Words of Advice)

However, in reviving some customs with some humble pride there has to be continued discussion and dialogue in Inuktitut about what it means to be an Inuk today because it is different now, we no longer live the same way as our parents and grandparents lived. The CBC radio show *Tausunni* often has Elders talking about societal issues which inspire many listeners and validate our values and changing customs. Conceptualization and articulation can liberate memories and the emotions within a person. Your identity can be strengthened in the telling and re-telling of stories. Artistic creativity through arts, literature, music and drama is a reflection of a thriving society. Although this has been happening more and more, our generation is used to thinking and writing in English and has had less opportunity to intellectually debate, orate or narrate in Inuktitut. We need to think, write, work, debate, develop, conceptualize and critique in Inuktitut. I have been conscious about my audience as I have written my story. I am also writing an Inuktitut version so it can be accessible to students in our language.

A culture is not static and is always growing and some of our traditions and customs are changing and evolving. Simeonie Aqpik, an Elder, said recently, that when he was little, people were preoccupied with survival. Today, he says people are preoccupied with having fun (Nunatsiaq News, March 28, 2008). The survival skills of today are different socially, physically and intellectually. The skills and knowledge involved in learning in school to survive and make a living for the future have no

immediate practical connection for the youth. My father and grandfather had to hunt on a daily basis for subsistence and survival so there was always a concrete connection in their learning. The new *uqaujjuijjusiit* (words of advice and customs) that my generation has to pass on as gifts to our young ones are the ones we have learned in the last thirty to forty years about life in school and a large community. Some of the traditional *uqaujjuusiat* (values and beliefs) are still appropriate and can help our families and society stay strong. It is up to us to show leadership and guidance. We must reach out to our grandchildren as well as our children, the way our parents and grandparents did for us, to keep the kinship circle strong. Finally, we must make the education system our own. This is the task we have ahead of us for the future.

Sivumut Inngiusiq aippaa Other Sivumut Song

Inuunivut upigigattigu
Assualulli Quvianaqtuuvulli
Tamannalu pimmarigivavut
Piqqusivut kinguvaattinnutlli

Sivumulli isumaqaratta
Inuujugut sanngijuuniaqpugut

Tamattaali katujjiniaratta
Atausirmik isumaqarluta
Uvagulli sanngijuuvugulli
Inappassi ajunnginattali

We are proud of our Inuit identity
It is with great joy
That we hold dear
Our ways and traditions, for our children

We think of the future
As Inuit, we will be strong

In unity, we will together

Strive for one goal in mind
We are strong
I urge you, we are able

Ishmael Naulaalik, Sivumut Songbook 1990, p. 18.
Baffin Divisional Board of Education. (Qikiqtani School Operations) (unofficial translation by Naullaq Arnaquq).
Used with permission.

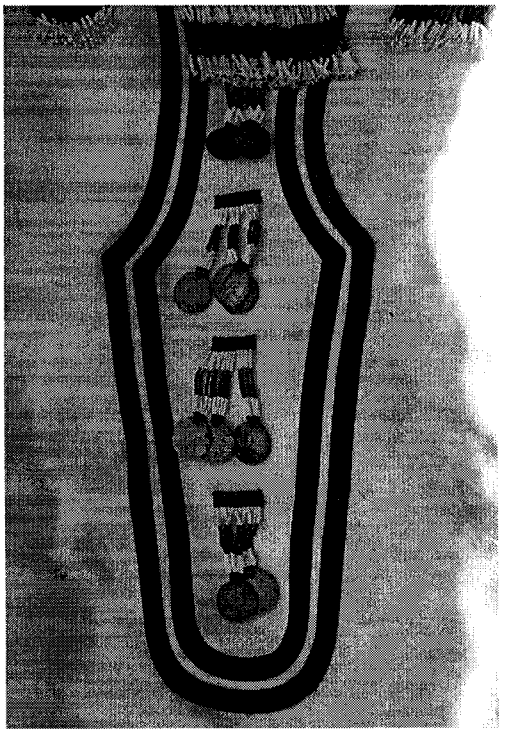


Figure 51. *Amautima akunga*, the tail of my amauti. It was my late mother's last gift for me. The old coins are from the late 1800's and early 1900's traded for furs or pelts by my great-grandparents. To me, this represents tradition and change. This *amauti* is an ancient design made with new and imported material. Colour photograph.

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