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Inuit Youth and Ethnic Identity Change:

The Nunavut Sivuniksavut Experience

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Abstract

Inuit Youth and Ethnic Identity Change: The Nunavut Sivuniksavut Experience

Rapid social change in the Canadian Arctic has led to circumstances which make it increasingly difficult for young Inuit to develop and maintain a distinct cultural identity. Inuit, and many other Aboriginal groups in similar circumstances, are looking to education to play a role in cultural maintenance and revitalization. This study explored the experience of Inuit youth in Nunavut Sivuniksavut, a post-secondary program for Inuit youth from Nunavut. The findings indicated that the students experienced positive changes in all areas of ethnic identity, developing attitudes of pride and respect for their culture, an increased sense of belonging to it, an understanding of their cultural history, as well as an understanding of the relationship of Inuit with the majority society. The findings also identified program elements contributing to this change. The study develops a framework for viewing ethnic identity development in other settings and presents a model which describes how students developed a valuing of their cultural distinctiveness in a contemporary context.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The sound of the applause was overwhelming, and a huge smile spread across Margaret's face as she made her way to the podium. She struggled to maintain her concentration and composure, determined not to forget the words she wanted to convey to the assembled audience of friends, family and esteemed political leaders. Earlier that week she had taken time to reflect on her experience of the past eight months, of living on her own far from home, of forming bonds with other young Inuit who had once been strangers, and of studying about her people's history and the many social changes and political struggles of the past 50 years. She wanted the people in the audience to understand what the experience had meant to her and she had some poignant words for them: "After taking this program I have become even prouder to be an Inuk woman with a unique history. I feel fortunate to live in this generation where the Inuit are taking back the control they once had.".

Margaret's speech met with rapt attention, tears and even warm laughter, as she also recounted some of the misfortunes that had befallen her throughout the year. And, just as several of the classmates who had come before her, she fought back tears as the significance of the whole year seemed to appear before her in this one brief moment.

I was observing and participating in the graduation ceremonies for a group of young Inuit who had left their home communities in the eastern Arctic to come and study in the Nunavut Sivuniksavut (NS) college program in Ottawa. As a teacher in the program, I had witnessed such speeches on numerous occasions. Each time I had been struck by the emotional significance that this moment represented for the students. Their emotions did not appear to be simply those associated with the realization that an intense eight-month

experience had come to an end, but rather, I always seemed to sense that they were associated with something deeper, an expression of a new understanding about who they were. Margaret's comments regarding her pride in being Inuk were not atypical. It was not uncommon at program graduations to hear such comments as, "I've also learned to have more confidence in myself and to take pride in my Inuit heritage."; "This program, it makes you proud to be Inuk"; "I know what it means now to be Inuk"; and, "I'm no longer ashamed to say I'm Inuk.".

I had also read numerous comments similar to these in reflections that students would record at the end of their time in the program. It was clear they were expressing a genuine sentiment, but it was less clear as to what these statements actually represented and why these feelings were so significant to them. In an indirect manner, these statements were suggesting that before the program, the students' perceptions of themselves as Inuit were neither clear nor positive. Had they indeed felt less sure of who they were, less proud to be Inuit before participating in the program? If this was indeed the case for the young people coming to the program, could it also be that Inuit youth in general were harbouring confused and negative perceptions of their ethnicity?

How ironic this would be. At a moment in history when much of what Inuit had struggled for over the past 30 years was being achieved, and when the rights of Inuit as a distinct Aboriginal people within Canada were being affirmed and put into action, was it possible that the individual and collective identities of young Inuit were less than positive? Initial thoughts on how this might be led me to reflect on the position of Inuit youth within the context of political changes which were currently taking place in Nunavut.

1. The Course of Change Among the Inuit of Northern Canada

On April 1,1999 the political map of Canada was transformed, officially marking the creation of the territory of Nunavut, a political homeland for the Inuit of the Eastern Arctic. While noteworthy for many reasons, the new territory is a most remarkable achievement in that it has essentially been created by a people who less than 40 years ago were living a traditional subsistence lifestyle on the land, a people for whom the political notion of Canada, or Nunavut, held little relevance to their everyday lives. Today, as they create the first Nunavut government and follow the first sittings of their legislative assembly, the 26,000 Inuit of Nunavut live in modern, southern-style communities and participate in a modern wage-economy, a marked contrast to the lifestyle and political realities of 40 years earlier.

Within this political realm, the Inuit of Nunavut have clearly been successful in negotiating a response to the external pressures of the southern world. Inuit leaders who began their lives in the traditional world of life on the land, who experienced the dislocation of moving into the modern world of communities, and who created the world of political negotiations, are currently at the head of sweeping new political settlements for self-determination. While they are now living a modern lifestyle, their actions and roles in society, along with others of their generation, are supported by identities which are firmly rooted in the activities, traditions and values of traditional land-based Inuit culture, as well as in their participation in efforts to regain control over their own affairs and to redefine their political relationship with Canadian society in order to ensure the continuity of that culture. With the passage of time since the creation of community settlements in the 1960's, however, there are now many people within Inuit society who have not had this same experience or

frame of reference to guide their participation in society. Many new influences and changes have come to the Inuit world over this period. Southern social institutions, economic structures, and media have all brought new ways and new ideas, in an unending spiral of change to which Inuit society has constantly been adapting. It is within this framework that I have a particular interest in questions pertaining to Inuit youth and the sort of identities and visions for the future they are creating for themselves as they grow up into a world which presents a mixture of traditional Inuit and modern influences.

2. Social Change and Inuit Youth: Caught Between Tradition and Modernity

Within traditional Inuit society, the path to adulthood was clear. Adult roles were well defined and growing into them was a matter of learning the complex skills required to carry them out. Today the path to adulthood is not so well defined. As John Amagoalik, one of the principal leaders of the Inuit political movement, recently remarked to a group of Inuit students, "The world you are growing up in is much different from the one I grew up in." (Amagoalik, 1997). Betsy Annahatak (1994), an Inuk from Nunavik reflecting on the circumstances of contemporary Inuit youth, describes this circumstance in another manner:

> The tensions that young Inuit, and even we as adults, live through in this time of culture and language contact with another culture are tremendous. Of all the tensions involved in this situation, following (sic) are a few that come out in my story. There are tensions related to Inuit values versus institutional values, traditional activities versus current activities, obedience versus originality, Inuit worldview versus mainstream worldview, and modern cultural tools versus traditional knowledge. (p.13)

The roots of this tension are described more explicitly by Rhoda Kaujak Katsak, a middle-aged Inuk from Pond Inlet, Nunavut in Wachowich (1999) as she highlights some of the social changes that came with the resettlement of Inuit in communities:

> When I came off the land, the people with any type of authority were Qallunaat [white people], the principals were Qallunaat, the RCMP were Qallunaat, the administrators were Qallunaat, the nurses were Qallunaat, it was them who told us what to do....It seemed to us at the time that the administrators, the nurses, the teachers, the principals, and whoever else was in authority were talking above our heads, talking about our welfare and not letting us have a say about it. They treated us like we belonged to them, not to our parents....They taught us a new culture, a different culture from our own. They taught us that we had to live like the white people, we had to become like the white people. (p.194)

For the young people growing up in this new social reality, views of adulthood and lifestyle began to change. Rhoda Kaujuk Katsak goes on to talk about the influence this drastic change in social structure had on the young people and how this impact is playing itself out even today:

> When I was young I used to have dreams about my future, about what I wanted to be when I grew up. I always thought of people from the south, movie stars and musicians like the Supremes. They were my idols....our heroes were all Qallunaat....It is difficult even today to change that mentality, to change it even to a point where you think, "I am an Inuk, I am a good enough person as I am.". When we were growing up, the Qallunaat were the better people. We were supposed to look

> up to them.... Us parents today, we were brought up to be assimilated. Our children are being brought up the same way that we were brought up....We aren't teaching them that Qallunaat are better people...we are not teaching them that anymore, but the standards of living and Qallunaat ethics are still there as a pressure for them. It seems as if, just like we were taught to throw ourselves in the Qallunaat culture, we are forcing that same culture on our children....I seem to have a choice now, and I am becoming more traditional. There are people who are a little bit younger than me who are very confused. They don't know what culture they value most, they are stuck. (pp. 195-199)

Rhoda's daughter, Sandra Katsak, in Wachowich (1999) lends her own perspective on this circumstance, highlighting the resident confusion brought about by these circumstances of change:

> A lot of times I really don't know what to do. I think about a career, about having a family, about acting Inuit or acting like Qallunaat. I really don't know what I'll do...I guess I have always felt that I wasn't Inuit enough...I never really learned how to sew. I never even owned an ulu [woman's knife]. I especially felt this way during Inuktitut classes when all my other classmates were so good at Inuit things. They were more traditional, they had kamiks [winter footwear] and ulus, and they knew so many Inuktitut words. They were "university level" Inuit in comparison to me. They were so gung-ho about it. I guess I was just shy. I felt very dumb. (p. 255)

These ideas of tension and confusion were expressed to me recently in another fashion by a young Inuk student attending university. While comparing the upbringing of an older aunt to her own experience, she remarked that "We are the lost generation". She then went on to explain that she felt that young Inuit of her generation, not having an upbringing with predominantly traditional Inuit influences, but rather having been influenced by southern institutions, such as schooling and southern media, are somehow lost, that they do not really know who they are nor where they fit in. While they know they are Inuit, they are not sure what that means in today's context.

In the early years after resettlement of Inuit into centralized communities, many onlookers predicted that this drastic social change would lead to the assimilation of Inuit into mainstream Canadian ways and would spell the end of a distinct Inuit culture (Matthiason, 1996, p.159). This has not been the case. Within Inuit society the traditional influences of values, expectations and cultural practices are still strong in many families and communities, and there is still a strong sense of "being Inuit" (Dorais, 1997; Stevenson, 1996; Mathiasson, 1992). Inuit have long held concerns, however, about maintaining the integrity of their culture in the face of the many changes being introduced by the southern world. Indeed, it has been the collective desire to maintain culture and identity which has fueled the Inuit drive for self-determination. This same era of social upheaval has seen the birth of Inuit nationalism and an Inuit political movement which has, over the past 30 years, made great strides in throwing off the shroud of Canadian colonialism in the Arctic and in achieving political agreements and institutions through which Inuit are able to exercise greater control over their own affairs. While many political and institutional structures for self-determination have been achieved, however, the current situation for Inuit youth suggests at

the same time that the realization of this desire to maintain a distinct cultural identity could become problematic. With 60% of the Inuit population under the age of 25, this phenomenon could have far-reaching implications for the future of Inuit culture and society.

3. Rationale for the Study: Nunavut Sivuniksavut and Questions of Identity Change Among Inuit Students

As I considered the predicament of Inuit youth I was drawn back to Margaret's speech and the reflections of other students in the NS program. Their comments implied that before the program they had been less certain of what it meant to be Inuit and that they even harboured negative feelings in association with this. Yet at the end of the program they were clearly indicating that they now attached very positive perceptions to being Inuit. What had changed to allow them to now see themselves in this more positive light? I began to wonder what role the NS program might actually be playing in influencing the students' perceptions of themselves as Inuit.

I have been working as an instructor and administrator in Nunavut Sivuniksavut for the past 14 years, having begun in the 4th year of its delivery. NS is a unique education program designed specifically to serve Inuit from the Nunavut territory. Each year, 20 young Inuit, generally between the ages of 17 and 25, spend eight months studying in this Ottawa-based, post-secondary program. As a transition program it is designed to help students develop the academic and personal living skills required for successful entry into further post-secondary study or employment. The overall goal is to help young Inuit prepare for the responsibilities of the new Nunavut Government and the implementation of the Nunavut

Land Claims Agreement. Now in its 17h year, over 190 young people have completed NS, and the program, which began as an experiment, is now looked upon as a success story.

Areas of study in the program focus on three major topics: the history of relations between Inuit and the "outside" world, from the time of the earliest explorers up to today; the precise details of the land claim which Nunavut Inuit have negotiated with the Federal Government, along with the events leading to its negotiation; and, the structure and activities of various Inuit organizations, along with the many regional, national and international issues they are addressing.

As enthusiasm for the program and perceptions of the success of its graduates have grown, Inuit students completing secondary school in Nunavut have identified NS as a popular and valuable "next step" in their education. It is seen as a safe and supportive environment where students can prepare for future work and study by learning valuable new knowledge and skills, all the while experiencing the excitement and challenge of living on their own, so far from home in a completely new environment.

At the same time, feedback from parents, observers and employers of graduates is also very enthusiastic. They remark on changes in the young people who have gone through the program, noting that they are somehow "different" from before the experience and that they often appear to stand out from many others of their peer group. Commentary on this often refers to maturity, positive attitude and an interest and enthusiasm for "getting involved". Observers note the contribution that a substantial number of graduates are making through employment in government and land claims organizations. It is indeed this moral and political support from leaders, parents and observers that has been instrumental in maintaining yearly funding support from several Inuit organizations.

The significance of the overall experience to the students and the positive impact it appeared to be having on them, demonstrated that indeed something important was taking place for the students. It appeared to be related to their sense of self as Inuit, but what precisely was taking place and what the dynamic was behind it, were unclear.

4. Preliminary Research: Pilot Study and Corresponding Literature

I began taking graduate classes in the Faculty of Education at the University of Ottawa with the intention of seeking out tools that would help me understand and articulate, as well as convey to a larger and more critical audience, the influence of the program on the students. Courses there led me to literature and concepts for research that I felt would help me determine whether or not the program experience was indeed influencing the students' sense of self, as well as help me understand the dynamic this involved. As part of this course work and, as a precursor to this research project, I put some of these ideas into practice by carrying out a pilot study with five of the students in the program. The study focused on the students' perceptions of Inuit society and their place in it, along with whether or not they saw the program as influencing those perceptions.

The pilot study provided an opportunity to test certain data collection approaches and revealed startling new ideas and perspectives which shed new light on the student experience in the program. As well, the results appeared to support the emerging hypothesis that one of the principal impacts of the program was on the students' sense of self as Inuit, their Inuit identity. This led to the central questions of what the actual dynamic for Inuit identity development might be, how substantial this influence might be, and how the program might actually be exerting such an influence.

To begin addressing these questions and the broader issues of the study, I turned to literature on ethnic identity and on its relationship to minority involvement in schooling. This literature provided several applicable concepts and theories. The work of Tajfel (1981), Berry (1987) and Hall (1991) provided diverse perspectives which are central to understanding the role of ethnic identity within a social and cultural change context. Phinney (1989, 1990, 1992, 1996,1997) elaborates on the role ethnic identity plays in the psychological well being of the individual, as well as describing a process of ethnic identity formation and development.

Henze and Vannet(1993), Williamson (1986) and Medecine (1995) are among the authors who discuss the relationship between Aboriginal peoples' identity and the institution of education, describing that while education has failed to meet the needs of Aboriginal people in the past, they are now focusing on this institution as having a role to play in enhancing cultural continuity. Ogbu (1987) and Foley (1991) discuss the challenges inherent in the relationship between minorities and schooling, while Harrison (1993) presents factors which contribute to successful Aboriginal schooling.

Along with raising additional questions, the literature provided a framework for understanding and examining the questions of the study. Ethnic identity development is an individual process influenced by external experience and personal reflection in which each individual interprets and gives meaning to their experiences in their own particular fashion, dependent on the context and prior experience (Phinney, 2001). While the NS program represented a set of common experiences for all participants, it also represented multiple realities, as each student interpreted and made meaning out of those experiences in their own individual manner.

In order to explore the relationship between the NS educational program and the ethnic identity of Inuit students and to gain insights and understanding into the dynamic of how the one might influence the other I took a qualitative approach, combining the traditions of case study and ethnography. This approach acknowledges the multiple realities of the students and allows for exploration and expression of the full range of their individual perceptions and reactions. By examining and giving voice to this range of responses to the NS experience I create an image of the ways in which ethnic identity can be influenced through schooling, an image that represents new perspectives and possibilities for addressing the concerns of Inuit youth and of Inuit society in maintaining cultural integrity.

5. Organization of the Thesis

The study is presented in eight chapters. Following this Introduction, Chapter 2 outlines in detail the review of the various areas of literature pertinent to the issues and concerns guiding this study. It ends with an identification of the goal of the study and the central study questions. Chapter 3 goes on to outline the methodological approach taken in the study. It includes a description of the various methods of data collection utilized, along with an explanation of the process of data analysis. A summary of the pilot study is also included in this chapter.

Chapters 4 through 7 focus on presentation of data with the goal of establishing an understanding of the experience of the students in the NS program and how this experience influences their ethnic identities. Chapter 4 presents an overview of the Nunavut Sivuniksavut program, outlining structural and administrative details which are key to understanding the program. Chapter 5 draws on three different perspectives to present an

image of the nature of the ethnic identities of students as they come to the program. Chapter 6 then presents the student experience in the NS program, that is, a description of the student responses to the various key elements of the program. Following this, Chapter 7 examines various aspects of the ethnic identities of students as they complete the program. This section draws heavily on the final program reflections of the current students as well as those from former years.

Chapter 8 concludes by drawing together the results of the previous three chapters into some overall conclusions about the influence of the NS program on student ethnic identity. It also presents ideas regarding the implications of the study for education, comments on some limitations of the study and suggests some avenues for further study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The questions and issues leading to this study revolve around the notion of cultural change among the Inuit of Nunavut with a specific focus on the ethnic identity of Inuit youth and how this identity may be influenced by a unique educational project. This chapter examines three areas of literature which lend themselves to developing an understanding of the notion of ethnic identity and its role within this context:

1). Ethnic identity and the individual: Drawing heavily on the work of Phinney this area explores the process of formation of ethnic identity and the psychological role it plays.

2). A macro view of ethnic identity as it applies to minority social groups and their relationship with the majority society, as developed by Hall, Tajfel and Berry.

3). Schooling as a vehicle for addressing Aboriginal concerns for cultural reinforcement and revitalization.

This examination points to the need for further study, demonstrating that while the literature does provide key concepts and a theoretical framework for understanding the central concerns of the study, it raises further questions applicable to the issues and questions guiding this study. The need and direction for further study having been established, the chapter then concludes with a description of the key goals and questions of this study.

1. Ethnic Identity: The Individual and Society

The Encyclopedia of Psychology 2000 presents ethnic identity as "a dynamic, multidimensional construct that refers to one's identity, or sense of self, in ethnic terms, that

is, in terms of a subgroup within a larger context that claims a common ancestry and shares one or more of the following elements: culture, race, religion, language, kinship, or place of origin"(p. 254). The description, provided by Phinney (2000), is purposely broad, for while there is general agreement on certain aspects of the concept, there is not yet a precise definition for it.

Ethnic identity is a concept which has been examined from within a number of conceptual frameworks, including that of social psychology and the social identity theory of Tajfel, within cross-cultural psychology and theories of acculturation as developed by Berry, as well as that of developmental psychology and the ethnic identity development theory of Phinney (Phinney, 2000). Although these approaches have much in common, each one views the construct of ethnic identity through a different lens. These varying perspectives provide valuable insights from which to consider ethnic identity development in young Inuit.

1.1 Social identity theory

Within the realm of social psychology the specific notion of identity associated with ethnic group affiliation can be considered within the concept of social identity, as developed by Tajfel (1981). Tajfel looks upon social identity "as that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group, together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership"(p.254). This social identity, the labeling of oneself as a member of a specific group, is seen as a function of inter-group relations and is founded in the process of inter-group comparison. It involves two processes: that of categorization, the clarification of intergroup boundaries, and that of self-enhancement, the favouring of in-group norms and stereotypes (Hogg, 1996). Social identity theory works with certain assumptions which are applicable to the questions guiding

this study: i) membership in a group contributes, either positively or negatively, to the individual's self-image; ii) it is the nature of individuals to strive to achieve and maintain a satisfactory self-concept or self-image; iii) if a group does not satisfy the individual's need for contribution to positive social identity (positive self-image) the individual will leave that group, either psychologically or objectively (Tajfel, 1981, p. 256).

Tajfel (1981) suggests that in situations where leaving a group represents something as significant as social change, a social group, in order to maintain its integrity, "can fulfil its function of protecting the social identity of its members only if it manages to maintain positively-valued distinctiveness from other groups. If this positive distinctiveness does not exist it must either be created or acquired..."(p. 258). An example of this is the ethnocentrism which numerous societies develop in order to reinforce their own self-image.

Tajfel then goes on to describe how maintaining "positively-valued distinctiveness" can be problematic, with an inherent challenge being that minority groups which are clearly distinct from others are often viewed as inferior. This message may either be explicitly portrayed from "outside" by the dominant majority, or perceived by individuals from "inside" either implicitly, or through observations and evaluations of the group (p. 322). To demonstrate the complex nature of this dynamic he cites the numerous studies which have demonstrated that in the case of minority groups, "children are highly sensitive to the socially-prevailing evaluations of national and ethnic groups"(p. 205). In many instances they have shown to devalue their own group and indicate preferences for the dominant group even in studies where there was little distinctiveness between the groups.

While it explains group functions for maintaining group integrity, social identity theory also addresses individual possibilities. There is a need for racial and cultural minority

group members to establish a positive sense of belonging to a group. If a group is not contributing to an individual's positive social identity but leaving that group is difficult, as with a distinct ethnic group, social identity theory suggests that in the interest of maintaining a positive sense of self, the individual may try to change interpretations of the negative attributes of the group so that they become justified or acceptable, an expression of seeking to preserve self-esteem through affirming one's ethnicity.

Self-categorization theory, an adjunct to social identity theory (Hogg,1996) extends Tajfel's model by focusing on intragroup processes, suggesting that the cognitive process of categorization involves developing prototypical representations of a social group based on the defining beliefs, attitudes and behaviours of that group. This allows individuals to assess the extent to which members, including themselves, conform to the group prototype.

This notion of internal group comparison is taken even further in the work of Worchel, Iuzzini, Coutant, and Ivaldi (2000). While social identity theory focuses on the ideas of intergroup differentiation and intragroup homogenization, Worchel et al.(2000) expand on this base, proposing that differentiation within a group and intragroup dynamics play an important role in social identity as well. They suggest that "the role the individual has within the group and the relationship with the group" (p. 18), leads to an intragroup identity , one which reflects the individual's status or position within the group. In interpreting how perceptions within this framework influence behaviour they suggest that if the individual perceives himself or herself doing poorly within the group it could, "damage identity, lead to dissatisfaction, and invite defection from the group." (p. 23).

1.2 Acculturation theory

The notion of intergroup and intragroup comparison can also be viewed through a different lens, that of the model of acculturation as developed by Berry (1987). When two distinct cultural groups are in continuous contact, cultural change, or acculturation, inevitably occurs. Usually this change occurs within the non-dominant group, as a result of influence from the dominant group. Acculturation can include changes at the group level, within the realms of the political, economic, cultural and social life of the group, and it can also include psychological changes within individuals as they adapt to the group-wide acculturation: values and attitudes may change, personal and ethnic identities may shift and the stress of this adaptation may result in various psychological, social and physical health consequences (Berry, 1987).

Viewed as a linear process, acculturation theory suggests that ethnic identities of a minority group will continually decline and assimilation into the dominant majority will result. Berry (1987) suggests that acculturation is not a linear process, however, and that it involves the interplay of two basic questions which individuals implicitly answer: "Is it of value to maintain one's ethnic distinctiveness, one's ethnic identity, values and customs?" and "Is it of value to maintain relationships with the dominant group?". The interplay of the responses to these questions can lead to 4 possible combinations of cultural identification. Individuals may be viewed as bicultural, where they are involved with both cultures; assimilated, where they are involved only with the dominant society; separated, where they involve themselves with only their ethnic culture; and marginalized, where they are not involved with either (p. 44-45).

The stress associated with the process of acculturation is associated with a number of psychological states: those associated with mental health such as confusion, anxiety and depression; feelings of marginality and alienation; and identity confusion (Berry, 1987).

1.3 Developmental theory

Within the developmental realm various models of ego identity and ethnic and racial identity development have been proposed (Phinney &Kohatsu, 1997). While they utilize different vocabulary and concepts there is considerable agreement among these models. They all identify the individual as undergoing a transitional process of identity adjustment through three distinct phases from childhood to adulthood, with the goal of establishing a positive and secure sense of their ethnic or racial affiliation.

Building on Erikson's (1968) theory of ego identity formation, a process of psychological development usually centred on adolescence, Marcia (1993) has articulated a four- element status approach to describe ego identity development; with each status (diffusion, foreclosure, moratorium, identity achievement) being defined by different combinations of two criteria: exploration of identity alternatives and commitment to a set of values and behaviours (p.11).

Phinney (1996) has approached the notion of ethnic identity in a parallel manner, through adopting Marcia's status concepts and adapting them to the realm of ethnic identification. She has developed a model of identity development which describes a progression through three stages. The initial stage, called diffusion or foreclosure, is that developed during childhood. During this phase an individual adopts, without questioning, values and attitudes which are informed by messages from family and influences in society such as peers, the media and institutions like schools. Depending on the nature of that

influence, the child may develop positive, negative or even mixed feeling about their ethnicity. At this stage individuals have not consciously examined the meaning or implications of their ethnic group membership.

The second stage, which she calls moratorium or exploration, is associated with adolescence and is portrayed as a period of questioning and searching, a period of exploration, a period of trying "to make sense of their experience as members of a minority group" (Phinney, 1997, p.43). Phinney indicates that this stage can include an increased awareness of racism and ethnic stereotypes, a distancing from the dominant society, and a strong interest and involvement in one's ethnic culture. This stage is characterized by individuals wanting to know more about "who they are" and "who their people are". They immerse themselves in their traditions and their history, examining pre-existing attitudes about their group as well as the experience of their group in relation to the dominant or majority group. It is not uncommon for anger towards the dominant group and empathy towards other minorities to arise during this stage.

While this period of exploration may be a natural, developmental stage, Phinney suggests that it is more likely prompted or "triggered" by some sort of experience. She suggests that, "At some point in development, ethnocultural adolescents will be faced with situations that challenge their unexamined ethnic or racial attitudes and sense of group membership" (Phinney, 1997, p.430). She indicates that these situations may include: exposure to negative encounters with prejudice, stereotypes, or racism; exposure to positive encounters with role models; or exposure to information about the history and culture of one's own group (p. 431).

Phinney also suggests that this stage is a period of high risk, for if the exploration process leads the individual to a feeling that they have no place in a society that discriminates against them and provides few positive roles for them, they may become alienated. Although originating from a different perspective, this is very much a reflection of the dynamic which leads people to the state of "marginalization" as described within acculturation theory.

The final stage of the process is one of individuals having dealt with the many dimensions of the exploration phase and ultimately acquiring an achieved ethnic identity. It is characterized by individuals being secure in their ethnicity, identifying with their group with confidence and pride, and having a clear understanding of their group in relation to the majority. This stage is not absolute or static, however, since individuals are continually open to the influence of new experience or understanding which can in turn influence their attitude toward their group.

1.4 Ethnic identity structure

In addressing the multidimensional nature of ethnic identity Phinney (2000) posits that it is constructed of several elements: self-identification, elements in the affective domain involving the feelings and attitudes associated with belonging to the ethnic group, and cognitive components such as knowledge of the history and traditions of the group and an understanding of what one's ethnicity means (p. 255).

Along with identifying and describing elements which make up one's ethnic identity Phinney has operationalized the concept, developing the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM), an instrument for measuring these elements as a way to assess ethnic identity (Phinney, 1992). As a generic measure of ethnicity, Phinney has demonstrated that the

MEIM is not limited to a specific ethnic group, but rather, has been shown to be valid across ethnic groups (1999).

1.5 Ethnic identity: its role and psychological position

An achieved, secure ethnic identity serves three major functions for the individual (Phinney & Kohatsu, 1997):

1. it provides a secure sense of group affiliation, a notion fundamental to individual well-being;
2. it allows the individual to deal with the problems and stress associated with being a member of a minority group, such as prejudice, racism, cultural change and the sense of inferiority which social identity theory suggests is an inherent problem for minorities;
3. it allows the individual to establish a positive relationship with the dominant culture; supporting the notion that "For many ethnocultural youths it is a virtual necessity to be bicultural, to participate both in their ethnic culture and in the mainstream"(p. 436).

While the salience of ethnic identity varies widely among groups and contexts, all theoretical perspectives agree that in certain circumstances its role takes on increasing importance. Phinney suggests that, "It is a central defining characteristic of many individuals, particularly those who are members of minority or lower status groups." (2000, p.255). Indeed, she found that ethnicity was three times more important to Asian American, African American, and Mexican American college students than it was to White students (Phinney &Kohatsu, 1997).

In addressing the importance of ethnic identity to the individual's understanding of self and group, Phinney describes it as a construct which is of particular importance to adolescents and one which is recognized as being "a critical component of the self-concept", something that is "crucial to the psychological well-being of members of an ethnic group" (Phinney, 1999, p. 302).

While the psychological implications of arriving at an achieved ethnic identity are not clearly defined, Phinney does make a direct link between the two. She indicates that research has shown "that psychological adjustment among ethnocultural adolescents is associated with positive attitudes and interactions with members of their own group, of other groups, and of the larger society.... this combination of attitudes is most likely to be found among adolescents who have actively engaged in a process of ethnic identity development and have reached a secure, integrated understanding of themselves as members of an ethnic and/or racial group." (Phinney & Kohatsu, 1997, p. 438).

In her extensive work on the development of ethnic identity in adolescents, Phinney has determined that individuals who have an "achieved ethnic identity" score higher on measures of self-esteem, ego identity and psychological adjustment, and those who fail to deal with their ethnicity could experience negative effects of poor self-image and alienation (Phinney, 1989).

2. Post-Modern Influences on Identity

While the tension and confusion which many young Inuit are experiencing appears to be linked to their unique context, that of a distinct land-based minority culture in close contact with the dominant Euro-Canadian culture (from now on referred to in the Inuktitut

term as Qallunaat culture), this phenomenon is not unique. Hall (1991), theorizing on the nature of identity development and the rapidly changing post-modern world, suggests that such a phenomenon is occurring globally, on a much larger scale, within post-modern societies; a phenomenon he refers to as a veritable "crisis of identities".

Hall (1991) writes that in all societies, identity serves as a link between the individual and the surrounding society, a link which is formed through interaction between self and society, through a constant dialogue between the inner self and the outside "cultural world". He uses the medical metaphor of suturing to describe the process of identity construction, saying that as individuals project themselves into a cultural identity they internalize the meanings and values of the public world and make them an integral part of their being, a process that helps to "align our subjective feelings with the objective places we occupy in the social and cultural world" (p. 276). In so doing, individuals "suture" themselves into the social and cultural structures around them, creating a closed system of a stable subject integrally bound to a stable cultural world.

It is not difficult to see how this process, which occurred naturally within traditional societies, brought stability and predictability to cultural and social life. Shared values, meanings, social practices and norms of conduct were embodied in tradition and transmitted from generation to generation. Identities were conferred from one generation to another, ensuring continuity and maintaining cultures in a relative state of homogeneity.

This dynamic carried on as a feature of early modern society in the western industrial world, but as Hall (1991) indicates, wide-scale social and technological transformations in recent decades have challenged it significantly. Modernity has always been characterized by change, but the dramatically increased pace and scope of this change in the last half of the

20th century, driven for the most part by increasingly powerful forces of globalization, has ruptured the stable union between self and society. This period has been characterized by a constant re-examination and reform of social practices and institutions, the growth of global marketing and globally networked media, and, in essence, the creation of the global village (Hall, 1991). While this metaphor conjures up images of tradition and stability, what the global village actually presents to the individual is not a tightly knit, unified and predictable structure to suture into. Rather, the individual is presented with a multiplicity of possible identities, more than one of which they may assume at any one time, including ones which can create internal tension by pulling in different directions. At this juncture, Hall (1991) contends that we have entered the post-modern world where identities are no longer "fixed or permanent" but rather where "identity becomes a moveable feast, formed and transformed continually in relation to the ways we are represented or addressed in the cultural system that surrounds us"(p. 277). The process of identification has become "more open-ended, variable and problematic"(p. 277), and the firm locations in the social and cultural world which once provided stable identity anchors, locations such as "class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, race and nationality"(p. 275) are becoming fragmented. The cultural world is no longer unified and predictable and our sense of ourselves is no longer one of unified integration with a stable whole; we are no longer "centred" or anchored. This is Hall's crisis of identity, a crisis that is leading to profound changes in the makeup of cultural identities in the industrialized world.

Hall's (1991) work would suggest that within the current context of globalization, the desire of Inuit for establishing and maintaining a sense of cultural identity, or ethnicity, in their youth is becoming an increasingly complex issue. As with many other cultures, the

structures which provided a framework for cultural continuity have been broken and the stability of tradition and commonly held social practices have been replaced by the barrage of influences from the outside world. In a society where knowledgeable hunters are still revered, where traditional land-based activities and skills are still valued, and where Michael Jordan, MuchMusic, and Nintendo play stations have also become prominent symbols, it is not difficult to envision the mixture of influences that Inuit youth are dealing with, influences which can lead to confusion and uncertainty about their identity and their place in the world.

Phelan, Davidson & Cao (1991) reinforce the complexity of such a circumstance when they discuss the idea of students having to "negotiate" between the multiple worlds that are being presented to them and O'Neill (1986), writing on the health impact on young people of the stress induced by colonial development in the Arctic echoes this view. He indicates that in a society where adult roles are no longer well-defined, and where innovation is leading to new social realities, each cohort of young people perceives the world differently and is forced to develop its own coping style, its own version of reality.

In these ever-changing times, if there is no overarching or guiding identification, if there are no stable anchors, it would appear possible that Inuit youth could be pushed and pulled by the waves and currents of diverse and continually changing cultural representations, attaching themselves to whatever appears to be most powerful or most appealing, eventually to become "like everybody else".

Hall (1991) suggests that at the social group level there are three possible consequences to the transformations brought on by globalization: one, cultural homogenization; two, a re-valorization of cultural differences in reaction to homogenizing forces; and three, production of new hybrid identities. In the first instance, exposure to

outside influences is weakening traditional cultural attachments, and identities are becoming "detached from specific times, places, histories and traditions"(p. 303). People far removed in time and space are sharing identities, distinctiveness is decreasing and homogenization is occurring.

On the other hand, Hall (1991) says that as a second consequence, the active resistance of some groups to the tendency toward cultural homogenization is resulting in a strengthening of local identities. There is a growing significance and value being attached to "difference" and distinctiveness. In some cases with minorities, this resistance takes the form of construction of defensive identities based on such things as "re-identification with cultures of origin, construction of counter-ethnicities, revival of cultural traditionalism, religious orthodoxy, ethnic nationalism and separatism"(p. 308).

In considering a third consequence of cultures confronting the myriad of influences being presented to them, Hall (1991) suggests that viewing identities as being either traditional or homogenized might be a false dichotomy. National identities may be declining but he suggests that new hybrid identities are taking their place. For some groups, cultural identities are neither "returning to their roots or disappearing through assimilation"(p.310), but rather they are being "translated" into new forms. Citing the example of the diasporas created by post-colonial migrations and political conflict, he describes how people in these groups do "retain strong links with their place of origin and their traditions"(p.310) but are obliged "to come to terms with the new cultures they inhabit, without simply assimilating to them and losing their identity completely"(p.310). Being the product of cultural cross-overs they will never be unified, in their traditional sense, but in re-defining their cultural identity

they re-assert their cultural distinctiveness and establish a stable reference point, or anchor, from which to deal with the influences of cultural homogenization.

As a reflection of this idea, Hostetler (1997) describes how the Amish, as a result of choices and changes presented by the larger society, have slowly come to adjust their view of what it means "to be Amish", that it does not mean being restricted to one common set of beliefs and practices, but rather, that individuals may adopt a range of lifestyles and religious affiliations which deviate from the orthodox Amish position and in doing so still be accepted as being Amish. Through broadening the parameters for Amish identity, the group, even though becoming somewhat more diverse, still maintains its integrity.

The either-or dichotomy, a position of being "stuck between two worlds", is a metaphor commonly used among Aboriginal peoples (Henze & Vanett, 1993; Maguire & Mcalpine, 1996). Hall's (1991) third consequence suggests that rather than being "stuck" in this dilemma, a third possibility might be that Inuit will re-position their cultural identity within the post-modern context, establishing an identity which would reflect changing patterns of activity but also retain a central connection to their ethnic heritage and values; an identity which would provide a certain stability, a stable base from which to consider and interpret outside influences.

3. Ethnic Identity and Education

As a reflection of Hall's second consequence, some ethnic minorities are looking to their ethnicity as their anchor, their point of stability from which to deal with the homogenizing influences of the dominant society. Phinney's work certainly speaks to the important role which ethnic identity plays in individual development. If cultural identity is

indeed to be seen as an anchor for Inuit youth in these turbulent times of dealing with an ever-changing cultural world, the question then becomes one of how this is to be achieved. In responding to this, many Aboriginal groups, including Inuit, are claiming that the institution of education has an important role to play (Harrison, 1993; Henze and Vannet, 1993; Kirkness, 1999; Kusugak, 1979; Maguire and McAlpine, 1996; Medicine, 1995; Talylor, Crago &McAlpine, 1995; Williamson, 1986).

3.1 Challenges for minority cultures

The relationship between education and culture has generally been framed by the dichotomy of education contributing either to cultural continuity or to cultural discontinuity (Kirkness, 1999; MacAlpine, Cross & Whiteduck, 1990; Spindler, 1997). Within western society the structure of schooling has clearly served to maintain and perpetuate predominant mainstream attitudes, values and social practices. The almost universal implementation of the western schooling system, however, has had different results when applied to cultural minorities who do not share mainstream cultural values and patterns. Here, it has come to be associated more often than not with failure, cultural disruption and cultural discontinuity.

As Kusugak (1979) and Williamson (1986) argue, this was certainly the case with the early Inuit experience with public education. Initial efforts by government to implement southern style schooling in the North met with little success. This new institution operated with many values contradictory to those of Inuit society and students were not generally successful within this system. As well, schooling did not deliver on its promise of preparing people for the modern economy and bringing them modern jobs, which essentially was its rationale for being implemented and which was the principal message that had been conveyed to Inuit parents in convincing them to send their children to school. But rather than

being simply a benign failure, this new institution was also disruptive and counterproductive to Inuit livelihood and culture. It pulled young people away from their families, communities and cultural practices, rendering many of the students dysfunctional within the traditional lifestyle, and led to the creation of a "lost generation" of people who were not skilled in the ways of either world.

Again, this Inuit circumstance is not unique when viewed within the larger context of minorities and schooling. Many researchers and theorists have focused on questions of minority failure with schooling and have presented explanations which generally centre around two themes, that of incompatibility of cultural differences or that of the influence of socio-historic factors. Cultural difference explanations put forward by such ethnographers as McDermott (1987) and Trueba (1988) assert that cultural differences in value orientations, learning styles and language patterns lead to student-teacher incongruence and inevitably lead to student failure. While research into developing culturally appropriate pedagogy to address this issue is no doubt contributing to improved classroom effectiveness, this focus does not address broader issues identified by Ogbu (1987).

Ogbu's (1987) basic concern is why, regardless of cultural differences, certain minority groups are successful in schooling, while others are not. Based on social and historical factors he develops a caste theory explanation. Within this caste theory, those groups who are successful, such as Chinese and Punjabi, are those who have voluntarily chosen to participate in American society, while those who are generally unsuccessful, African Americans, Mexicanos, and Native Americans, have involuntarily become part of American society and have generally experienced negative and oppressive relations with the dominant society. He argues that the psychological impact of their history and current

situation prevents involuntary minorities from seeing how they could be both successful and true to their cultural roots.

While voluntary minorities, being generally optimistic about their occupational futures and the contribution schooling can make to this, socialize their children to this attitude and perspective, Ogbu (1987) describes involuntary minorities as having negative folk theories of success and socializing their children to be pessimistic about school and their occupational futures. As well, involuntary minorities, who have been marginalized, perceive themselves as facing social and economic barriers to success and see limited opportunity, again reducing any commitment or value to schooling. Faced with negative experience and a pessimistic future in mainstream society, involuntary minorities often adopt an oppositional culture, asserting distinctiveness by adopting values which are opposite to those espoused by mainstream society.

Foley (1991) expands on Ogbu's approach, and suggests that school success is more likely a combination of class, gender and racial factors, showing that even among involuntary minorities there are variable success rates. He presents examples of success among middle-class Mexicano youths who were preserving and expressing their traditional culture while at the same time adopting practices which brought success at school (Foley, 1991). Of importance to note is that Foley found that "Mexicano youths do suffer from a legacy of racial stigmatization, but the most dominant theme in their reflections is on their newfound ethnic pride"(p. 81), a point that resonates with Phinney's work.

3.2 Aboriginal cultures and schooling: Factors for success

While being recognized as an institution that has been associated with cultural discontinuity and failure in terms of mainstream standards and participation, Aboriginal

minorities have nevertheless identified schooling as an institution with a role to now play in restoring cultural integrity. Just as Foley found with Mexicano youth, Aboriginal people in many regions are clearly defining a link between cultural knowledge and pride, and future success in schooling. Harrison's (1993) work with Maori in New Zealand reflects this approach.

In comparing their relatively impoverished social position to that of Pacific Islanders, a group they were once part of, Harrison conveys the following Maori reflection, "The reason Pacific Islanders do better in schools is because they know who they are"(p.151). This statement highlights the dilemma inherent in the concept of assigning education the role of enhancing cultural identity. On the one hand, as in this Maori reflection, Aboriginal groups are suggesting that only through knowing "who they are" will they be successful in school and mainstream society, while on the other, they are looking to those same schools as a prime source for developing and maintaining that sense of "who they are".

Harrison contends that one key element of a solution rests with the degree of direct control that parents and local community members are able to exercise over schooling. This parallels a position which has been presented by many Aboriginal groups in Canada (Mallea, 1988; Mathew, 1990). She draws attention to Alaskan Yup'ik and New Zealand Maori cases of school success where local groups had obtained a high degree of authority in directing schooling. The local groups had collectively articulated three fundamental reasons which guided their desire to direct the schools: first, they had defined successful schooling differently from how it had been defined by mainstream school personnel; second, they believed that children's identity should be grounded in their cultural background and that school was destroying rather than supporting the growth of cultural identity; and third, they

believed that their position in society depended on empowerment in all domains of life, including schooling, as expressed by the statement, "If we are going to know who we are, then our culture must be strongly represented in the school. In order for that to happen we must run our own schools."(Harrison, 1993, p.152).

This identification of the importance of empowerment harkens back to Ogbu's (1987) socio-historic views of involuntary minorities; having been dispossessed of their authority in the past, the only way they can become whole again is to regain it. On a broader scale, but in a voice similar to Harrison's, Dybbroe (1996), in her examination of the relationship between identity and political status, argues for a similar approach, contending that the support of Inuit ethnic identity development rests on gaining means of political self-determination, an extension of which is control over education.

Harrison goes on to identify several common factors which were important to the process of establishing successful schooling in the cases she studied: a) the demand for change was facilitated by mainstream administrators who were willing to work with local people in decision-making; b) parental participation in decision making helped to establish a trusting relationship between school staff and the community; c) local participation allowed the curriculum to reflect local concerns; d) and participation of minority members as staff changed the image of the school in the students' and parents' eyes (Harrison, 1993, p. 154).

In terms of the dynamic of parental involvement in education at the local level Harrison draws three key ideas from her observations which she says are important factors: one, a critical element in successful schooling is the empowerment of parents to make choices about the direction of schooling; two, when any group feels powerless it withdraws support or actively opposes school policies; and three, parents will support schooling only

when they believe in positive outcomes of that process and when they have the power to determine what "positive outcomes" actually means (p. 155).

Harrison's fourth point regarding the value of minority members as staff reflects a theme common within Native education in Canada. The importance of having Native teachers teach Native students is often seen as a cornerstone of successful Native education. Stairs (1988), describes the value of Inuit teachers in Nunavik (northern Quebec) being able to bring Indigenous cultural perspectives to pedagogical practice. Kirkness (1999), argues that, "Indian teachers are critical to achieving success in the education provided to Indian people." (p. 61). In doing so, she draws linkages between three factors: one, the literature which suggests that concepts such as Indian identity, traditions, culture and language are important in the development of Indian students; two, the notion that Indian teachers would be most appropriate in transmitting these concepts; and three, the known desire of both parents and students to have more Indian teachers in schools.

Smith-Mohamed (1998), accepts that Native teachers serving Native students is most appropriate, but given the shortage of Native teachers, she notes that is not always possible. She takes a closer look at the role of teachers and poses questions regarding the relevance of cultural commonality to Native post-secondary students in their perceptions of credibility of their teachers. She suggests that by the nature of their position, teachers are also role models and mentors and she examines characteristics which "Native students deem important for a role model to possess in order to motivate their learning, achievement, and self-concept..." (p. 240). Her findings contradict somewhat the notion of the importance of Native teachers teaching Native students. While she found that Native students would select Native teachers as role models "when they could", she also found that the characteristics of "personality,

cultural knowledge, and diversity" were more important than cultural background to them when identifying role models. She suggests that non-Native teachers who possess certain characteristics, such as cross-cultural understanding, willingness to learn about culture and to get involved in cultural activities, along with an approach which includes consensual decision making and teacher-student collaboration, can also represent cultural role models to Native students.

This literature would suggest that there is a role for schooling to play in addressing the value and desire within Inuit society for maintaining and reinforcing cultural identity. Success at such a venture would speak to the tensions and insecurities among Inuit youth vis à vis their sense of self as Inuit. The record of success of involuntary minorities within schooling has been low, however, and as Ogbu (1987) and others have studied, there are a number of complex factors behind this. In response to problems associated with minorities achieving success in schooling the work of Harrison (1993) would suggest that, for Inuit, active involvement and a role in directing schooling would be important characteristics of successfully achieving their aims.

4. Problematique

Initial reflections leading to the study centred on two principal issues: one, the possibility that Inuit youth might be harbouring a negative sense of self as Inuit, questions of why this might be so, and the implications this might have on the goal of Inuit society to maintain its cultural integrity; and two, the possibility that the NS educational experience might be having a positive influence on Inuit youth and their sense of self and that there might be lessons in it to apply to broader applications. While this body of literature provides

valuable concepts, theories and perspectives for framing an examination and understanding of these issues, it also raises several questions directly related to those issues, questions which point to the need for further study. This section will highlight the main themes flowing from the literature along with questions which the literature review raises.

Two prominent points regarding ethnic identity emerge from this literature: i) ethnic identity plays an important role in the overall well-being of the individual; and ii) there is a reciprocal relationship between the ethnic identity of the individual and the overall well-being of the group; strong ethnic identities influence the maintenance of strong groups, and conversely, strong groups influence the formation of strong ethnic identities.

From the work of Hall, Tajfel and Berry we see that the status of ethnic identity for minority groups, especially culturally distinct ones such as Inuit, is problematic. The forces emanating from the dominant majority which influence acculturation are intense, invasive and powerful. Acculturation is an inevitable process, with young people being especially vulnerable to developing preferences for the dominant culture; this due both to its powerful, compelling nature and the inherent tendency for individuals within a minority to feel inferior. Left unchecked this process can lead to individuals abandoning the group, becoming either assimilated or marginalized. Implicit in the process of acculturation, however, is decision-making, either implicit or explicit, about the value of one's own culture. This would suggest that individuals with a strong, secure sense of their ethnicity will find affirmation in their culture while negotiating external cultural influences and will tend not to be overwhelmed by the influences of the dominant majority. For the situation of Inuit, who have expressed a clear desire to maintain cultural integrity, this then leads to the question of how to ensure that

young people develop positive, secure ethnic identities so that that they will implicitly say yes to the value of their culture as they deal with the influences of Qallunaat society.

Ethnic identity, as an expression of how one values and understands one's ethnic affiliation, is a complex construct, being composed of many different elements which are continuously being influenced. It is formed, in stages, in a progressive process from childhood through to adulthood. At some point, usually in adolescence, the ethnic identity formed throughout childhood comes under conscious scrutiny in a period of exploration, leading eventually to the final stage of an achieved ethnic identity. This stage is viewed as a position where the individual has a secure sense of who they are as a member of their group and a secure sense of the position of their group in relation to the dominant society; a stage offering the individual a stable, secure position from which to deal with influences of cultural change.

As Phinney (1989) describes, the transition out of the initial childhood stage to that of active exploration and examination of one's ethnicity, a process usually associated with adolescence, requires some sort of triggering event or circumstance. For the issues raised in this study, this then raises the question of whether or not there is a way of ensuring an individual's progression through to a secure achieved identity. Could conditions be created that would act as the triggering process and could the exploration process be facilitated, to ensure a healthy, positive outcome, rather than leaving the process to happenstance?

Aboriginal groups are now looking to education as a tool for reinforcing and maintaining culture. There are many challenges inherent in this, a central one being the dilemma that while they are looking to schools to develop such things as ethnic pride and value in culture, there are indications that it is these very attributes which are necessary for

success in those schools. There are few guidelines for systematic approaches that will lead to this goal. Structural elements such as local control, parental involvement and inclusion of Aboriginal teachers have been shown to be important factors in contributing to successful Aboriginal education. This leads to the question of whether or not there are specific programming elements which might also be effective.

Currently there is very little in the literature which speaks to issues of Inuit youth and their identity. As an example of a successful approach to Aboriginal education, Nunavut Sivuniksavut offered an opportunity to further explore these questions of ethnic identity and its link to education as raised by the literature review.

5. Purpose and Guiding Questions

The purpose of this ethnographic case study was to explore and describe how the ethnic identity of a select group of Inuit youth was influenced by their participation in a unique educational program. Ethnic identity was defined as a dynamic, multidimensional construct that refers to one's sense of self in ethnic terms; a construct composed of such elements as self-identification, elements in the affective domain involving the feelings and attitudes associated with belonging to the ethnic group and cognitive components such as knowledge of the history and traditions of the group and an understanding of the meaning of one's ethnicity.

The overarching question guiding the study was therefore, "What changes occur in the ethnic identity of students in the Nunavut Sivuniksavut program and what aspects of the program influence those changes?" Developing a response to this question required

exploring its constituent parts, each with its own subquestions:

1. What changes occur in the ethnic identity of students in the NS program?
    1.1 What are the characteristics of the ethnic identity of the students when they begin the program?
    1.2. How do characteristics of students' ethnic identity evolve as they participate in and eventually complete the NS program?
2. What aspects of the program influence ethnic identity changes?
    2.1 What is the nature of the student experience in the program?
    2.2 What curricular elements of the program influence students' ethnic identity?
    2.3 What structural elements of the program influence students' ethnic identity?

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

1. Introduction

Ethnic identity is a multi-dimensional construct influenced by innumerable contextual factors and the Nunavut Sivuniksavut (NS) program itself is a multi-dimensional experience, an experience that is lived and given meaning to in a unique fashion by each student. In order to explore the relationship between the two, to understand how participation in the NS program might be influencing the students' ethnic identity, I determined that a qualitative inquiry approach would be most suitable. Marshall and Rossman (1995) suggest that the strength of qualitative studies lies in their usefulness in addressing questions that require exploration or description, questions where the context, the setting and the participant frame of reference are important factors to consider.

Within the framework of qualitative inquiry this study draws on both ethnographic and case study traditions to meet the goal of developing an understanding of the issue outlined above. These two traditions encompass many similarities and while they are distinct processes, in some study instances, such as this one, the boundaries between them become blurred. Creswell (1998) describes case study as "an exploration of a bounded system, or a case,...over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context." (p. 61). In this study the "case" is bounded by one complete cycle of student participation in the NS program, with the study being carried out on-site at the NS program from September to May. Due to the nature of the NS program, participants would be highly identifiable if the year of the study were included. It has been excluded to respect confidentiality.

The study of student experience within a specific program such as NS over an extended time frame of nine months is also served by ethnographic approaches. Ethnography seeks to gain insights into groups, usually through immersion in the day to day lives of the participants, by observing what they say and what they do, in order to develop a cultural portrait of the group, an image which incorporates both the views of the participants and the interpretations of the researcher (Creswell,1998). This is precisely the approach that was essential to developing an understanding of how groups of students who share a common experience are influenced by that experience.

In their approach to handling data, both ethnographic and case study approaches are similar. They both rely heavily on multiple sources of data to develop thick description, which then allows for an analyses of themes or issues in order to arrive at interpretations. The process followed for this study is thus guided by both these traditions.

2. The Participants

It was decided that all the students in the NS program would be invited to be participants in the study. On the basis of lengthy written applications and extensive consultation with at least two, but often three references, program staff originally selected 20 students for the program. They were chosen over some 35 other applicants on the basis of such criteria as reliability, responsibility, initiative, leadership, and academic ability. While all students agreed to participate in the study, not all did so from the beginning of the program through to the end. Of the original 20 students who enrolled in the program, one left after the first week and was replaced two weeks later, two students left the program in November and one student left in March. The program has a practice of replacing students

who leave early in the year and an additional student was admitted in the last week of September. Also, in an unprecedented measure, an additional student was admitted in January. Eighteen of the students who enrolled in the NS program continued through to completion in May.

The students ranged in age from 17 to 25 years, with the average being approximately 19. Ten were female and twelve were male. They came from 12 different communities and represented all three regions of Nunavut: 13 from the Baffin region, five from the Kivalliq region, and four from the Kitikmeot region. All but three of the students had completed their Grade 12 education. The students all had some experience in the south, having traveled for short periods of time on vacations, school trips and exchange programs. Two of the students had one or more years of southern university experience and one had lived for several years in the south as a youngster. For all the others, NS represented their first experience at attending post-secondary studies and living in the south.

Although the students shared a common cultural heritage, there were some noted variations in their cultural experience depending on how close their family was to "traditional" land-based practices. Several had hunters within their families and country food of caribou, fish and seal was an integral part of their diet, while for others, whose parents were employed in the wage economy, these foods were less common and had become somewhat of a luxury. Most of the students had spent varied amounts of time camping on the land throughout their youth. With the exception of three of the males who were active hunters none of the other students practised traditional cultural activities. The students from different regions spoke different dialects of Inuktitut. For some, Inuktitut was the first language of their home while for others it was English.

The participants are introduced in a brief manner below. All participants in the study are identified with pseudonyms. As well, due to the distinct nature of the NS program and the group enrolled in it each year, only a minimum of personal information is provided regarding each participant in order to protect confidentiality.

2.1 Female participants:

Carmen, 18 years old, had tried a year at CEGEP in the South. She had family support there, but she struggled with the course work and was quite demoralized, not knowing which direction to turn. A relative close to her had found out about NS, told her there were other Inuit there and that it was a college program. That was enough to convince her to apply.

Leesee, 18, had just completed Grade 12 and was certain she would go to university, but she did not yet feel ready. She had an older sister who had gone to university in another city several years earlier. She had applied because friends had told her it was an exciting thing to do and she had heard you learn interesting things about Inuit history. Her applying was partly an act of rebellion as well, in that her parents were not really supportive of her moving to Ottawa.

Naudla, 19, wanted to be a lawyer. Her sister had lived down here for some time and was studying in university. Friends and teachers had told her this was a good step to take to prepare for university studies.

Hazel, 17, was the youngest in the group and had traveled the furthest. She had heard from former students that it was a fun and exciting program. She had just completed high school and had no idea what she wanted to do or study, so she had decided to try this.

Karen, 18, had come from a very small community that was known for its traditional ways. She had an adventurous spirit and said she liked the idea of traveling and of learning new things. She wanted to get out into the world and she thought that being in NS might be a way of continuing to do that.

Rebecca, 19, had waited a year to get accepted. There were many former NS students in her community and they had encouraged her to keep applying. "They tell me it's good for you and you learn a lot of interesting things." She had no idea what she would like to do.

Barbara, 25, was the oldest student in the group. She had come from a smaller community which was noted for being more traditional. While she wasn't interested in extended studies away from home, she felt that NS might help her with employment prospects back home.

Alexis, 18, was the first student to come from her community in over ten years. She had just graduated from high school and was clearly focused on going on to further studies.

Elisapee, 20, entered the program under special circumstances. She was in a third year of university when she discovered the types of courses offered at NS and decided it was where she wanted to turn her attention. In December she convinced the instructors to accept her for the winter term, arguing that although she would be missing out on the first term content, she would already have the academic skills to deal with the second term's work.

Theresa, 19, had come to Ottawa to study in another program. After her first three weeks of study she realized it wasn't for her and that she probably would not be successful. She approached the instructors about enrolling, and rather than seeing her go back home, with all the expense and negative feelings associated with that, they invited her to join the group.

2.2 Male participants:

Michael, 20, was from the capital, where life had become very modern. He was excited by the political developments going on around him. He knew he needed more education but did not know what he wanted to do. He was coming on the advice of friends and a brother who had already participated the program.

Moses, 19, had been out of high school for two years and had not found any employment that interested him. He had a sister who had completed the program several years earlier and she had encouraged him to follow in her footsteps.

Pauloosie, 23, had also been out of school for several years but his life had not taken any specific direction. At this point he had just wanted to get out of town and enrolling in NS looked like it might be an interesting way to do so.

Mark, 20, had already completed a year of university study. While doing so he had lived with a friend who was in NS who "was always talking about all the cool stuff they were learning here". He recognized a strong interest in the material and decided to leave university for NS.

Moshi, 19, was a serious academic student with his sights set on university. He had been advised to come to NS by a teacher- counselor in his high school.

Alex, 19, was from a larger community where many high school students had applied directly to NS over the years. Although he didn't have specific goals he went along with his classmates in applying, accepting that it might be a positive next step.

David, 20, had taken a special introductory science course during the summer and wanted to study biology. He felt that coming to NS would help prepare him for actual university.

Seemee, 22, was from a small community where only one other person had ever come to NS. He enjoyed being on the land and hunting, and had left a partner and young child behind to come to the program.

Billy, 19, came from a small community that not many people were familiar with. He was the very first member from his community to come to the program. He was one of the few males who was skilled at hunting.

Josh, 22, had gone back to high school after dropping out in his early teens. He had just graduated and a counselor in school had advised him to try NS next.

Lucasee, 18, was referred to by teachers as a serious, academic student. He had spent much of the summer prior to NS on vacation in the south.

Simon, 22, had a close relative who had been active in politics and his family was looking to him to carry on in a similar field. Again, a school counselor had directed him towards NS.

2.3 Key informants

While all students were participants in the study, each of them contributed to the study through varying means and to varying degrees. Ethnographers in the field often seek out "key informants", individuals who can "provide useful insights into the group" (Creswell,1998,p. 60). In this study certain students played a more active and prominent role than others. In the early weeks of the program, three students in particular, Mark, Pauloosie and Leesee, emerged as key informants and became main reference and focal points for certain types of data collection. There were several common reasons why these three were well placed to play a key role in data collection: it quickly became apparent that all three were very comfortable with verbal communication; they were somewhat more extroverted

than their classmates; and, they took a very reflective approach to their experience. They were quick to express their reactions, both verbally and in writing, to life and program events and enthusiastically entered into discussion of these. While many of the other students were quite reflective and open to questioning and discussion of ideas, they were generally more reserved in their reactions and less inclined to openly discuss them verbally.

There were additional reasons which made these three valuable informants. Mark already had a university background, had completed two years of high school in the south and was well adjusted to southern life. He was not going to have to deal with the many distractions and preoccupations of being on his own for the first time. He was coming to the program uniquely for the academic content and was in a position to focus on his studies in a manner different from the others. His observations and reaction to the program provided valuable data on the influence of the academic content of the program. Pauloosie, although skilled academically, had never had a positive history with the education system and didn't think it was his place. He was very skeptical of much that was going on politically and he vigorously debated his points of view. His critical perspective provided valuable reflections on the activities of the program. Leesee was perhaps the most outgoing person in the group. She had not known much about NS before applying, but she had many questions about what was taking place in Nunavut and she demonstrated that she very much wanted to explore them in a critical fashion. She and Pauloosie were often at the heart of much classroom discussion.

3. Data Collection Methods within the Research Group

Qualitative inquiry, in particular ethnography and case study, employs multiple sources and methods of data collection in order to develop thick, rich descriptions, descriptions which will implicitly convey understanding and meaning. Creswell (1998) suggests that "there are four basic types of information to collect: " observations...interviews ... documents...and audio-visual materials" (p. 120). My contact and involvement with the participants, which, by nature of my position, was both intensive and extensive, included interaction in a variety of circumstances and allowed me to utilize the following approaches: focus group interviewing, participant observation, direct individual and group interviewing, open-ended journal writing and guided student writing. As well, I utilized numerous sorts of program documentation and archival materials.

3.1 Focus Groups

Near the beginning of the year, ten students volunteered to participate in directed focus groups. The goal of these sessions was to gain some insights into how the students were viewing their world back home; a means of establishing somewhat of a starting point for creating images of their perceptions. This exercise was a repetition of the one carried out in the pilot study. The pilot study had identified clear themes representing students' views of the world and I wanted to see if this group would make references to similar themes.

I asked two different groups of five participants to respond to the following three directives:

1) When you think of the term Inuit culture, what comes to mind?
2) John Amagoalik, the long time political leader, says that the world you live in is not the world he grew up in. Describe your world.

3) When you think of the future, what are important issues that come to mind?

I dealt with one directive at a time. In order to maximize responses and to give all five participants a "voice", I provided each one with a marker and asked them to record their responses on common sheets of flip-chart paper. We had previously used this technique in class. The participants were comfortable with it, and doing it together allowed participants to build on each other's ideas. After about 10 minutes the production of ideas would begin to stall and we would move on to the next item. The results were later transcribed and printed.

3.2 Participant observation

As is common in ethnographic approaches, participant observation played a principal role in this study. Wolcott (1999) indicates that "Participant observation is founded on first-hand experience in naturally occuring events."(p.46). The physical structure of the NS program, with its self-contained centre, along with my role as instructor, provided me with continuous and extended access to the participants on a daily basis throughout the study period. I was ideally placed for immersing myself in the experience and for carrying out observations of how they were reacting to the program in general, to each other, to specific elements of the course work and to life events occurring outside the program. This was a situation with two important ramifications. First, it allowed me to move from the position of being an "outsider" to one that was much more of an "insider", a circumstance highly valued in qualitative study (Wolcott, 1999, p.137).

Secondly, this close association provided me with potentially innumerable events, circumstances, conversations and interactions to record; a circumstance which was problematic in the early stages. I was constantly dealing with the question of "What to record?". It was impossible to describe everything I had seen, heard and participated in each

day. I needed some basis for selection of observations. Almost from the beginning, data collection involved a certain degree of minor analyses. It was not a completely open-ended, random process, as observations, conversations, and informal interviews led to reflection, insight, and direction for recording future observations of certain events and interactions, while disregarding others. These decisions were most often instinctively, but sometimes consciously, influenced by the concepts outlined by the literature, by past experience, by the focal questions of the study and by a growing awareness of what might be important or significant to note. This approach is consistent with the notion of emergent design in qualitative research.

Throughout this time there were numerous opportunities to speak with participants informally. It was often these very brief, off-hand conversations which were instrumental in providing clear insights into the participant experience. Notes from observations and conversations were recorded in a notebook and later semi-transcribed, with entries being grouped by participant name.

Along with the above types of observations I also had several opportunities to observe students as participants in specific events. Many of these observations were recorded as vignettes, as a means of creating an image of the multi-dimensional nature of the program. These too were recorded in a journal.

3.3 Interviewing

Given the intimate and informal nature of the NS centre, I not only had opportunities for off-hand conversations but also repeated opportunities for informal interviews with the participants. As I began to get a sense of what type of information I was after, these encounters took on a semi-structured tone. As well, through regular tutorial sessions I had

repeated access to three participants, Michael, Pauloosie and Mark, on a one-on-one basis. While these sessions were primarily meant for academic assistance with assignments, they were also a time for conversation on issues related to the students and the program.

This close access allowed me to obtain quick reactions to events and issues, to verify impressions and reflections of my own and to follow the progressive development of the participants' reflections. Given this continuous informal access I conducted very few formally structured interviews.

As the year progressed, several of the students took a keen interest in the idea that I was still going to university and doing research "about their experience". In an unstructured interview with Michael, Pauloosie and Seemee, it was Michael, who focused on the nature of the research, saying, "Why don't you ask us about what other young people think back home?" and he proceeded to explain why he thought it would be a good question. It was a turning point in the project. I said "You're right. I should ask that. In fact, now that you know what I'm up to, what other ideas do you have about what I should ask?". A lively conversation about the position of young people and their changing world ensued and it ended with Pauloosie saying that he'd like to interview some of the students on his own. He subsequently carried out two individual, 30 minute interviews. He tape-recorded these interviews, which I listened to in their entirety, all the while jotting down quotes and references which related to the main issues of the study.

This circumstance exemplified both trust in myself as researcher and enthusiasm for the idea and focus of the project. My close association with the program not only permitted extensive interaction with participants, but, as this example demonstrates, it allowed some participants to play a more active role than is typically expected in such studies.

3.4 Student writing

Student writing of a variety of sorts provided rich and valuable data for the study. Several of the students kept a journal of their thoughts and experiences as the year progressed. While this was not carried out on a systematic basis, some made regular entries, shared them with me in our tutorial sessions and then left me their journals at the end of the year.

Within the written assignments that students would submit in courses I was teaching, I was also able to gather reactions, opinions, and attitudes with respect to specific topics of study. Although none of these are included with the data presented, they did provide important insights into the perceptions of individual students vis à vis the material they were studying, and as such, they were useful in developing interpretations of the data. For example, in the essays that students wrote on the coming of the whalers to the Arctic and the impact they had on Inuit society I was able to see how students were beginning to develop ideas and understandings about the historical relationship between Inuit and Qallunaat.

While analyzing the data at the end of the program year I realized that additional information would be useful and I attempted to contact, by fax and e-mail, several of the participants who had not already provided the type of information I was seeking. This took the form of a guided writing exercise which focused on their thoughts about being Inuit before NS and the influence of NS. Six of the participants provided responses to this exercise.

4. Data Collection Methods Outside the Research Group

4.1 Documentary

The results of a public opinion survey (Appendix A) carried out in Nunavut by NS students in 1998, as an internal class project, provided both quantitative and qualitative data which were useful in developing insights into Inuit perspectives on cultural change. The students surveyed over 440 respondents, with representation from all age groups, genders and regions. Questions which related to perceptions of culture included:

- Do you think Inuit in your community are losing their traditional culture? If you answered yes, how much do you feel this is a problem? If you answered yes, explain how you think this is happening.
- How important to you is it that Inuktitut be kept strong?
- How well do you speak Inuktitut?

All questions, with the exception of the one asking for explanations, were forced choice questions. The results of these questions were used to help develop an image and understanding of the ethnic identity of students as they came to the NS program.

4.2 Archival Student Writing

One principal data source which is central to this study is the body of reflective writing that students were asked to submit near the end of each program year. The program has kept these individual reflections on file for the past 10 years and they provided an invaluable source of comparative data. The writing focused on the students' overall impressions of the year and what the experience had meant to them. As a data source which paralleled that of current students, it provided a broader base of perceptions and also served

as a corroborating source. This triangulation of data is an important technique for enhancing trustworthiness in qualitative studies (Creswell,1998).

4.3 Nunavut Sivuniksavut Alumni Conference "Ajurnanngimmat"

In addition to data collection specific to the program site, to the participants and their activities, a specific program event at the end of the academic year provided a unique opportunity to add to the study data. Over a three day period the N S program hosted a conference of its alumni, with about 60 former students travelling from Nunavut to participate in it. The focus of the conference was the discussion of specific questions related to post-secondary education and Inuit students. One of the days was devoted to discussing the NS experience and the role the program should play in the future. Eight round table discussion groups were set up, with note-takers recording the proceedings at each table. As well, each discussion forum was tape recorded and then transcribed.

5. Data Analyses

The term data analyses implies a singular process of studying a certain body of information in order to learn from it. In this study, data analyses was a multi-layered process which began early on in the study and continued throughout, as described in the participant observation section.

The variety of methods of data collection, however, ultimately provided a broad range and quantity of data, data from which I would have to derive interpretations and meaning through a systematic process of analysis. Marshall and Rossman (1995) describe this process as one of "bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data" in a search for "relationships among categories of data" (p. 111). Creswell (1998) describes the process

more succinctly in practical terms, depicting it as basically a sorting procedure, one of a search for "patterned regularities" (p.152). These were the principal ideas guiding the approach to analyses of the collected data.

5.1 Data analyses, phase 1: Organization

5.11 Focus group

The initial focus group activity provided multiple responses to each question, responses which I hoped would begin to create some images and provide insights into how students were viewing "their world" and "their culture" at this early stage in the program. I read and reread the print-outs for each question, and eventually I began to discern certain commonalities among some of the entries which provided a basis for organizing them into groupings. Aligned in this way, the responses began to create images of certain themes. I then vetted this classification of entries with each of the participants, asking them if the varied headings and the subjects they referred to were an accurate representation of their views.

5.12 Participant observation, interviews and student writing

Marshall and Rossman (1995) suggest that the analytical process of deriving meaning from data can actually be broken down into various phases, with the first one being simply an organization of the data and the second being the generation of categories, themes and patterns. Creswell (1998) expands on this notion, suggesting that qualitative data analyses takes on a spiral form, with the first stages being ones of organizing the data and then immersing oneself in it to get an overall sense of it before it is broken up into categories.

Data from these sources were initially organized in two different manners as a reflection of these approaches, and then later re-organized into three broad categories.

Initially the various observations, conversations, interviews and journal writings were arranged by participant. For those for whom there were larger amounts of data, the arrangement was set out in chronological order. This style of organization created a broad overview of individual student experience. While reading and re-reading through this collection in its entirety, certain common references, or as Creswell (1998) termed, "patterned regularities", began to emerge. These were themes which began to portray certain elements of the students' experience, such as critical reflection, which provided insight into the meaning they were making of their experience, their reaction to program experience, their perceptions and understandings of Inuit society, along with their emotional and attitudinal responses. I then attached color codes to these themes and correspondingly highlighted the entries.

Both ethnographic and case study approaches rely heavily on detailed description in order to create an in-depth picture which will help bring meaning to that which is being studied (Creswell,1998). Not all of the data in this study, such as the descriptions of events and the actions of several group members together, fit with any one individual. As these were representations of a wide variety of program activities and events, they provided the basis for creating a broad picture of the program experience. Keeping in mind that one of the goals of the study was to gain insight into how the ethnic identity of the students was being influenced by their program experience the data were then organized within the confines of seven different groupings in order to create a composite image of the experience. These included orientation, course work, interaction with leaders, cultural presentations and performing, international trips and urban-living.

Taken together, these two categories of data combined to create an initial picture of the overall program experience, a picture which provided insights from which to begin developing interpretations. Keeping in mind the goals of the study, however, I now undertook a re-organization of the data into three formats which would allow for clearer analyses and interpretation. One of the goals of the study was to discern how the ethnic identity of the students might be influenced by the program experience. In order to build on each of the composite program elements which had earlier been identified, data which had initially been sorted by student, were now selected out of those student groupings and inserted, with student names attached, within these program experience categories. This organizing process established a basis for developing clearer insights into influences that might be associated with the various program elements.

Two other broad data categories which responded to the goals of the study were also created. One reflected students' perceptions of themselves and Inuit culture before their entry into the NS program, and the other reflected their perceptions either while they were in the program or when they had completed it. Data from the initial two groupings that fit with these categories were selected out and re-organized under those headings.

This organization of data into three central groupings which corresponded to the research questions: student reaction to six constituent elements of the program experience; student perception of self and Inuit culture prior to NS; and student perception of self and Inuit society both during and upon completion of NS, now created a template for insertion of data from other sources as well.

5.13 NS survey

I was able to draw direct interpretations from the quantitative data provided by the student survey. The bulk of qualitative anecdotal responses dealing with the process of cultural change, however, required an analytical process. I approached this data as I had the focus group responses, going over and over it in search of common elements or themes. Five central themes emerged which created a vivid image of cultural change and the dynamic involved it.

5.14 Archival student writing

I was already familiar with these writings to a certain extent and it had been some of the statements included in them which had initiated my thinking about the issues being addressed in this study. Reading through student reflections from the past six years in their entirety, with the questions of the study in mind, allowed me to discern common, recurring elements which were directly relevant to the study. In this year-end writing students would most commonly refer to:

- the experience of living on their own and the skills associated with it;
- overall feelings vis a vis the program;
- their increased knowledge;
- their feelings about themselves as individuals and as Inuit;
- their thoughts about Inuit society.

As an initial step, entries referring to the above themes were selected out, with names attached, and grouped together under the above headings. These were then included with the other data from the current year which had been grouped under the heading of "perceptions of students after the program".

5.15 The Ajurnanngimmat Conference

The NS session at the Conference provided valuable data on how individuals viewed their NS experience after many years of distance from it. The notes and transcriptions of these proceedings were read in their entirety, common recurring themes were color coded and regrouped and a synthesis printed up in a report of the proceedings. Thus organized, the data were also included in the "perceptions of students after the program" data group.

5.2 Data analyses, phase 2: Generating themes and patterns

After bringing a certain degree of organization to the data, Marshall and Rossman (1995) suggest that a second phase of analyses is one of generating "categories, themes and patterns"; a process requiring a "heightened awareness of the data" (p. 114), in order to detect "salient themes" and "recurring ideas or language". This is the search for Creswell's (1998) "patterned regularities".

With the data now organized into three broad categories reflecting the research questions (the program experience, perceptions of students before the NS program, perceptions of students during and after the NS program), I now needed to determine what sorts of correspondence there might be with the notion of ethnic identity. Drawing on the literature, ethnic identity is defined for this study as a construct composed of several dimensions: self-identification, elements in the affective domain involving the feelings and attitudes associated with belonging to the ethnic group, and cognitive components such as knowledge of the history and traditions of the group and an understanding of what one's ethnicity means. For the purposes of analyzing the data, each of these components was looked upon as an indicator or marker for ethnic identity. I began this phase by now re-

reading through the data in its entirety, with an eye for language and occurrences that might be associated with these markers.

To manage an analyses of how various elements of the program might be associated with various elements of ethnic identity I constructed a classification scheme which is represented by the accompanying matrix in Table 1. It allows for a cross-referencing or viewing of the three categories of data through the lens of the various components of ethnic identity.

While this matrix created a clear format for viewing the data I was also attentive to the possibility that it would limit my ability to draw out possible important themes and meanings not associated with this typology. As an example of this, I subsequently discerned a pattern in the data which did not correspond to the matrix. This pattern pointed to the notion of confidence in one's culture as being a reflection of one's ethnic identity. While this concept had not been included in the original matrix as an element of ethnic identity, I felt that it did have an important bearing on the interpretation of the participants' experience within the ethnic identity framework.

As I read through the data I entered into the matrix identifying notations of references which corresponded to the various categories. This process helped to establish certain relationships in the data as well as creating somewhat of a visual image of certain patterns. Table 1 combines all the elements of data analyses in this one matrix as an illustration of this aspect of data analyses. In actual practice, however, given the volume of data, variations of this form were used with specific groups of data.

	INDICATORS OF ETHNIC IDENTITY						
	Affective Components					Cognitive Components	
Program experience elements	Feeling or sense of belonging	Attitudes: pride	Attitudes: respect	Attitudes: pos. feelings	Ethnic behaviours and practises	Knowledge of group's history and traditions	Understanding of ethnicity and its implications, vis à vis relationship with dominant society
orientation							
courses							
history courses							
current issues							
interaction with leaders							
cultural presentations/performing							
international exchanges							
city-living							
Perceptions before program							
- current students							
- data from NS survey							
Perceptions during and after program							
- current students							
- former students/archival & conference							
Structural elements of the program							
curriculum development							
Ottawa location							

Table 1: Matrix for cross-referencing data categories with ethnic identity components

6. Verification, Unique Issues and Ethics

Proponents of qualitative approaches maintain that in order for one to have confidence in the trustworthiness of the observations, the interpretations and the conclusions of a study, certain elements need to be present within the study and certain standards need to be met in applying those elements. Of prime importance are four criteria: one, prolonged engagement in the field; two, persistent observation throughout that engagement; three, multiple sources and methods of data collection; and four, opportunities for peer review and member checks (Creswell, 1998; Lincoln &Guba, 1985). Identifying the Nunavut Sivuniksavut Program as a research site where I would act as the principal researcher created a context which was ideally suited to meeting these standards set out for trustworthy inquiry. I would be in close contact with the participants over an eight-month period and the nature of my interaction with them would allow a variety of approaches to data collection and verification of interpretations.

This study focused on questions of ethnic identity, youth and education by exploring the experience of a unique group of people in a unique circumstance. In keeping with the position presented by Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 298) I have attempted to describe the contextual conditions of this study as clearly and comprehensively as possible and I have presented my interpretation with "thick description". While I hope that the findings of the study will provide ideas of value that might be applied elsewhere by others concerned about Inuit and other Aboriginal and minority youth, I take the position that the transferability of any of these findings will have to be determined by those interested in applying them. It will be up to them to determine if their context for application is sufficiently similar to this one to warrant ideas of transfer.

Creswell (1995), in an overview of qualitative methodologies indicates that in any study there may be unique "issues" which arise which are outside the norm for the data collection stage (p.128). This study had some unique features related to objectivity and ethics. At the same time as I was carrying out the role of researcher at the NS site, I was also a full-time instructor in the program, sharing responsibilities for delivery of the Inuit history, land claims, and contemporary issues courses (see Appendix B for complete descriptions); a position I had held for the past 12 years. This circumstance was somewhat unusual and merits specific discussion.

Most of the specific observations noted in the study were particular to its specific time frame. The interpretations of those observations, however, are supported and influenced by the accumulation of observations, of information and of reflections which I had built up over the years at the program; from having worked closely with some 150 students who were, in many respects, similar to the current students involved in this study. Through this extended history of involvement with the program my experience and my reality had become linked in many ways to that of the students. My frame of reference for approaching this new group was based on the accumulated experience of previous years. Indeed, it is the observations and reflections from past years which had led to this study.

This circumstance placed me within a frame of reference which was much more subjective than objective. Since the earliest years of the program we (my colleague and I) could see that the program was an important experience in the lives of the students and we spent much time reflecting, and speculating, on the reasons for this. The wealth of prior perspective and information which I brought to the study was thus acquired through a process of observation and reflection which had been driven by emerging questions related to the

impact of the NS program. As Wolcott (1992) indicates, "one cannot embark upon research without preconceived ideas"(p. 43). While I did bring predeveloped ideas and perspectives to the study, I don't believe I brought foregone conclusions.

I see this history as having allowed me to bring a unique understanding to the study, an understanding which allowed me to detect nuances, apply appropriate communication methods, invoke unique insights and more accurately interpret meanings from the data. I believe the value of this to such a study far outweighed the value of increased objectivity that one would expect from a researcher arriving as an outsider to the site. As well, my working interaction with the students commonly led to a close, trusting relationship, a circumstance which was conducive to honest and extensive disclosure and a situation which is commonly a goal of ethnographers. This context created conditions for lessening the distance between myself as researcher and the participants, a condition highly valued, and even deemed essential to credible and trustworthy qualitative study (Lincoln & Guba, 1988).

My role as both teacher and researcher, however, did raise certain ethical issues. A student-teacher relationship invariably involves an unequal power relationship. Although we worked hard in the program at developing close, trusting, and as much as possible, egalitarian relationships with the students, the very nature of our position implicitly carried with it certain power and authority that could influence student actions. Such a relationship increased the possibility that they might feel obliged to say things they thought I would want to hear, or try to provide "the right answers", as students sometimes do. I had to trust that the honesty of the relationship between us would not make this the case. I wanted to reduce any pressure they might feel to act in one way or another, or to say some things rather than

others, and, overall, to minimize any influence this power dynamic might have on the outcome of the study.

In keeping with guidelines expressed by Creswell (1995), I discussed the nature of the study at length with them, focusing on how this might be a vehicle for describing to others how young people are being affected by today's world and how the results might have value in helping young people in the future, with emphasis on the necessity of their true thoughts and ideas. Since I was inviting the students in courses I was teaching to participate in the study, I took direct steps to ensure they understood that their participation was entirely voluntary, that their contributions would remain confidential and that their participation would in no way influence their standing in the program. After these explanations all participants signed a consent form declaring their understanding of the study and their willingness to participate in it.

7. Nunavut Sivuniksavut Pilot Study

As a precursor to the current study, I carried out a formal, qualitative pilot-study with students at the NS site, during the year previous to this study. This pilot-study played a key role in developing the focus and design of the current study as well as in the analyses and interpretation of some of the results. A summary of this study and its findings are presented here.

The study focused on students' perceptions of self and their position in Inuit society along with the influence of the NS program on those perceptions. While the study was limited in scope and time-frame it did provide valuable insights and data which were instrumental in framing the design of the current study. The study involved two female

participants, Apak and Geela, and three male participants, Toonoo, Billy and Jack (all pseudonyms). They were from four different communities. Three discrete data collection activities were carried out: one, a focus group brainstorming session; two, a guided writing exercise; and three, an unstructured individual interview.

Some of the results were in keeping with what I had expected but the study also produced some startling new revelations which were not at all within the realm of what I might have envisioned, revelations which added a whole new dimension to the view of the perceptions that young Inuit might be harbouring about themselves and their relationship with Inuit society.

7.1 Pilot study-Brainstorming

In this initial step of the pilot study, participants were asked to think about how their life experience was different from those of a generation before them and to then describe the world they had grown up in. This exercise provided a wide array of comments and references which, when grouped together around certain commonalities, identified five thematic areas which most prominently characterized how students viewed "their world" as being different from that of earlier generations:

Theme 1: Discouragement from the loss of earlier ways

While everyone recognizes that Inuit lifestyles have changed, this category was not an objective comparison of those changes; rather, it appeared more as a lament for that which had been left behind or lost, a perspective which carried negative connotations. Sample comments included, "no respect for elders by youth; we don't have the same skills as our grandparents had; families do not share as much as we once did; more English, less Inuktitut; greed the main part of our existence, materialistic; people don't work together as much, more

of doing things alone; more time inside offices, less time hunting; less knowledge of tradition and culture; more dependent on technologies than on ourselves"

Theme 2: Coping with social problems

Participants acknowledged that this category of "problems" is an ever-present part of their lives now. Numerous references were made to such things as drug and alcohol abuse and suicide.

Theme 3: Modern activities which weren't a part of the past

This category represents those "modern" activities which Inuit society has adopted; such things as "we watch more tv; we play a lot of nintendo; we desire southern products more than ever; play a lot of different sports; education; we depend on technology like computers and skidoos."

Theme 4: Uncertainty about personal position in society

This theme reveals the ambiguous nature of their self-perceptions. Comments referred to such things as "being stuck in the middle of the traditional and modern life" and to being "confused" and experiencing a "loss of identity"

Theme 5: Opportunities for future action

Participants viewed their current context as also having components of a positive and optimistic outlook on their position and the future. Comments included, "people are more self-reliant; freedom of choice; we're the next generation; more women have roles in society; independent; on our own; more opportunities."

These five themes demonstrate the ambiguity and tension within the participants' perceptions of themselves in relation to their world, where there are feelings and influences which carry a negative connotation alongside those which are positive.

These initial sessions of data collection provided clear indications of specific factors informing the participants' sense of self as Inuit. Within their current social circumstances, while there were positive influences, there were also strong negative influences informing this sense of self.

There appeared to be a view that life represented a division between tradition and modernity, and that there was little alternative but to follow the modern path. This view could be perceived as an abandonment of their culture with the concomitant feelings of guilt and shame associated with this betrayal. Also, having followed the schooling path meant not having learned traditional skills, which led to feelings of inadequacy.

7.2 Pilot study interviewing

The interview with two participants, Geela and Apak, explored the notion of tension involved with the seeming dichotomous nature of life, composed of traditional and modern influences, and how the students were perceiving their position in life vis à vis this idea. This idea had been expressed in the brainstorming as "being stuck in the middle of traditional and modern life".

Both agreed that the current social context had put them in a position of having to face important dilemmas. On the one hand, they saw no alternative but to continue on the "education - employment" route that they had followed, one that had been stressed to them as important since an early age. On the other hand they felt that doing this was leading them away from "being Inuk". In following the education-employment path they felt that they were somehow diminishing and even betraying their culture, "It's hard to make those kind of decisions [education or tradition] because you know you can't get a good paying, a high paying job without an education, but you know that you have to keep your culture alive.".

They both held in high esteem those who were known in their communities as "real Inuks" and who lived with more traditional activities. In following the education route, however, they had not become proficient in many cultural ways, including language, a position that left them open to criticism from others in society and with the feeling that they were somehow "less Inuk" because of that. "A lot of people tell us, you don't know how to hunt, you're not an Inuk. You don't know how to speak Inuktitut, you're not an Inuk."

Apak revealed how this position can engender deep-seated feelings of inadequacy. In reflecting on a lack of proficiency in Inuktitut she indicated:

> I felt really useless or ashamed because I know how important my grandparents are, they're very special people, they can teach me lots. They have all this knowledge that I want to learn from them, that I wanted to, well I still do, but I just couldn't ask them how, I always had to have a relative by me to tell me in English, and I just felt really useless.

Although only speaking of their own perceptions, both participants suggested that many young people were in this similar situation and indicated that there was a certain sense of powerlessness in it all, and as Geela interpreted it, "I guess they've been overtaken by the other world.".

Apak had been especially open in expressing how her sense of self had been affected by being caught up in the inevitable path to modernity. It was also the first time that I had heard the reference of shame being attributed to a specific issue. Such a notion was certainly a sensitive one, and not common currency of conversation, but now that it had been raised by a student I felt comfortable exploring the idea further. I asked four of the participants to carry out a brief guided question exercise.

7.3 Pilot study guided writing

It was clear that Geela and Apak both had a strong sense of being Inuit, but the interview had shown that there were also some feelings of ambiguity, personal inadequacy and confusion associated with their perceptions. The guided writing revealed how deep-seated some of the perceptions of the students were and provided some startling and unexpected results.

In the first part of the exercise, participants were asked to focus on life before the NS program and to reflect on that which made them happy and proud to be Inuit, and that which didn't make them happy/proud to be Inuit; along with rating this on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is negative feelings and 10 is positive. Two of the participants conveyed positive feelings and found little that was negative to comment on. Apak and Toonoo however, indicated strong negative feelings, a surprise since both had appeared as enthusiastic, confident and outgoing leaders in the class, conveying a sense of strength in who they were.

Their explanations of this added new light to the information provided in the focus group. Both indicated that they had associated being Inuit with negative social conditions, and that this was the source of a lot of their feelings. Toonoo put it very clearly, saying:

> There was nothing that made me feel proud of being Inuk other than the fact that T.Q. was my grandfather. As I grew older the majority of the Inuit that were in the community were either unemployed, uneducated people on welfare that used their welfare money for tobacco, alcohol, and gambling before anything else. That is how I saw a typical Inuk. So I was ashamed of being Inuk.

Apak was less categorical. Referring to that period she indicated "Nothing significant changed at that point in my life to make me feel very proud to be part of a unique culture.". She acknowledged that her "cool grandfather" provided some positive feelings for her but she succinctly expressed similar identifications to those of Toonoo, "The fact that I was

associated with drunks and non-educated freaks that called themselves Inuit. I was discusted [sic] with those type of people.".

In the second part of the exercise, the participants were asked to comment on whether or not their prior perceptions had changed at all since they had been at NS, and here again there were some surprising results. Geela and Billy had both indicated strong positive feelings to begin with but both indicated that these feelings had increased. Toonoo and Apak, however, revealed some remarkable changes. In comparing their rating scales Toonoo had gone from a 1 to a 9 and Apak had gone from 4.5 to 12. They both attributed this drastic change in attitude to elements of the NS program, specifically the content of the courses and the interaction with other students.

As a result of his studies, Toonoo now saw Inuit society in a different light: "There were so many things that I did not know about my culture and the things I have learned about my Inuit forefathers have given me a sense of pride, for the way I viewed Inuit was not always the way it was, so I have a sense of hope now.". Apak associated her change with being associated with young Inuit who she saw as a positive influence, especially in helping her overcome what she had highlighted as a major inadequacy, her lack of ability to speak Inuktitut:

> I am around my classmates who are special to me. They're helping me learn Inuktitut, they speak Inuktitut to me and they teach me new words. I know that the language is the whole culture – when I get home I want to hang out with my grandmother while she's still here and get her to teach me sewing and skinning....I guess I am more confident.

Clearly, specific aspects of the program had been instrumental in positively influencing their sense of who they were. For Toonoo, the history studies had increased his knowledge of the Inuit past, which in turn had increased his pride in being Inuk. For Apak,

the association with others with similar motivations, others who could help her with the language, was helping her push aside the negative feelings associated with her inadequacy in something so important. Learning the language was developing her confidence. As well, the Inuit-focus of the studies had brought about the realization that she was part of a unique culture, something she had never thought about before, for she had indicated, "I didn't really think about being Inuk, I just was.".

In harkening back to her interview, Apak indicated that co-existing with the ambivalent feelings surrounding this dilemma of choosing between traditional and modern ways, were very positive feelings about involvement in education, particularly the program of studies offered at NS. While she revealed that she might not be supporting her culture by not living traditionally, she felt that what she was doing at this time was indeed important. When asked if she had mixed feeling about her choice to take education she replied, "No, because I have friends here who can teach me the language, but I think the first step is learning about Nunavut, about the government, about the land claims and about Inuit organizations.".

The strong positive feelings associated with what they learned in NS appeared to add a counterbalance to the negative perceptions associated with not following certain culturally related ways which they had expressed earlier. They had a sense that somehow they were now doing something important for their culture through what they were learning. The content of what they were learning also appeared to expand and reframe their views of Inuit society.

In sum, the findings of the pilot study established that it was possible that young Inuit might be harbouring mixed and even negative perceptions about themselves as Inuit and that

these perceptions could be positively influenced by a program of studies. The questions of how this actually happened and what significance it was then became the focus of the present study.

CHAPTER 4

NUNAVUT SIVUNIKSAVUT – STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS

The central focus of this study was to explore the nature of the relationship between the Nunavut Sivuniksavut (NS) program experience and the ethnic identity of the participants. Critical to developing an understanding of this relationship is an examination of two dimensions of the NS program: one, the structural features around which the program is organized, and two, the curricular elements of the actual program and the nature of the student experience vis à vis those elements. The following description of the structural elements of the NS program, based on personal experience over a number of years, serves to provide a general understanding of the context for the NS experience, a context which, along with specific elements of the program, contributes to the overall impact of the program on students' ethnic identity.

1. History of Purpose

In 1985 the Tungavik Federation of Nunavut (TFN), the organization mandated with researching and negotiating a land claim on behalf of the Inuit of the eastern Arctic, initiated the NS program in order to train land-claim fieldworkers who could act as liaisons with the communities. Within the first two years the program had quickly fulfilled that original need, but on the encouragement of the first students, the TFN continued to deliver the program as an educational project. The organization began to see the program as one where young Inuit could learn about land claims and the history behind them, as well as learn some of the

generic skills, both academic and personal, that would help them contribute to the implementation of the future responsibilities of the claim.

Currently, the purpose of the program reflects its historical development and is officially stated in its by-laws as being:

> to assist Inuit youth from Nunavut in preparing for post-secondary education and training, and for employment opportunities related to the implementation of the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement and the Nunavut Government. The Corporation will provide educational programming which will allow Inuit youth to:
>
> - learn about Inuit history, land claims and other issues essential to their future careers in Nunavut;
> - learn the skills necessary for successful post-secondary education and employment;
> - experience the world outside of the North;
> - learn to live successfully on their own.

2. Southern Location - Ottawa

The NS Program operates within its own self-contained facility located in the central market area of downtown Ottawa. This Ottawa location, as the site of a program exclusively for Inuit, has been a point of critical concern and debate from time to time throughout its history. This concern has been grounded in a number of factors:

- nationalistic concerns that programs for Inuit should be based in Nunavut;
- economic concerns about spending Inuit training money in the south;
- cultural concerns that the students would become acculturated into southern societal ways;

- concerns that living in the south, so far from home, was too difficult and that it would be easier on the students if the program were delivered in a Nunavut location;
- concerns that a northern location would provide greater accessibility for those unable, due to family reasons, to participate.

Whenever these concerns have been raised publicly, influential Inuit leaders have convincingly responded in support of the program location. There are many within the Inuit leadership that see the location as supporting their long-term goals of self-determination, noting that southern education has been a common factor for virtually all of the early leadership of the Inuit political revolution (Amagoalik, 2000).

Students have also framed their own response to this question. Over the years the students have consistently reaffirmed the importance of the Ottawa location for three reasons:

- living on their own outside of the North, while difficult, allows them to develop important independent living skills and the confidence which will allow them to participate in other post-secondary programs;
- being far removed from home adds new relevance and importance to studying about Nunavut;
- the Ottawa location provides invaluable access to a number of resources such as national Inuit organizations, national institutions, post-secondary institutions, and experts in a number of fields relevant to their program of studies.

Therefore, despite the concerns about the Ottawa location, the many compelling reasons for supporting it have been at the heart of maintaining this southern location.

3. Governance

Nunavut Sivuniksavut operates as an incorporated, non-profit body, with a board of eight directors overseeing its operations. This current system of governance represents quite a departure from the first 14 years of operation, in which the program operated as a "project" under various land claim organizations. This "project" status within a larger organization was eventually deemed by staff to be an inadequate governance structure as the organizations did not have the internal capacity to effectively provide support and direction to the program. In 1999, after being approached by staff, eight people from Nunavut agreed to step forward to create an independent, non-profit organization.

The directors represent a wide cross-section of backgrounds and experience in administration, education, and youth issues in Nunavut. Two of the founding directors were former students of the NS program and two were non-Inuit. The establishment of this structure has brought a great deal of administrative stability to the program.

4. Program Financing

Although NS is in its 17th year, it is not a permanent institution. As a function of its history, location, and independent nature it has always operated on the "fringe" of Nunavut education, with no direct links to core funding. Delivery of the program is contingent on availability of funds on a year by year basis. While this created a condition of permanent instability for the program, funding has stabilized somewhat since 1997. The majority of funds are provided by four Inuit organizations: Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI), the main organization overseeing the implementation of the Nunavut Land Claim, and the three training arms of the regional Inuit economic development organizations, Kakivak

Association (Baffin Island region), Kivalliq Partners (Keewatin region), and the Kitikmeot Economic Development Commission (Kitikmeot region). The program has established a close rapport with these organizations and while they are unable to guarantee funding each year, their support has been consistent. In 1999 the NTI affirmed its support by establishing multi-year contributions to the program.

A fifth source of funds has been the federal Department of Indian and Northern Development, which has contributed funds from a program designed to support preparatory training for the new Nunavut government. This funding program ended in the 2000-01 fiscal year.

5. Staffing

The core functions of program delivery are carried out by four permanent staff, all of whom are Qallunaat (non-Inuit). There are two full-time instructors, both males: the founder, in his eleventh year with the program, and myself, who also acts as coordinator, with 14 years of experience (note that the founder was away from the program for several years, thus the difference in years of experience). There is also a female office administrator who has handled reception, financial accounting, and administrative support for 14 years and a part-time tutor/administrative assistant who is in her seventh year. As well, two external teachers are contracted to teach English and Computers.

The staff have not always been Qallunaat. In the seventh year of the program, instructors felt it important to have Inuit involvement at the program level and with the founder leaving, they made a concerted effort to have his replacement be an Inuk instructor. This move added valuable new experience and perspective to the program and was

enthusiastically supported by students. After three years, this instructor left NS for a new position and a second Inuk woman was hired to replace her. At the time the program was on fragile financial footing and its future was uncertain and at the end of that first year this person also moved to a new position. This description of staffing reveals that while there has been some turnover at the program, there has also been a high degree of stability and continuity throughout its history.

6. Nunavut Sivuniksavut Students

6.1 Student selection and characteristics

The NS program has become a popular education choice for young Inuit from Nunavut. Each year the program receives 50 to 60 applications, from which 20 students are selected. This selection of 20 students has slowly risen from an original intake of eight in the first year of the program. This relatively low intake is based on the rationale that individual attention and support is critical to student success.

Students are selected on the basis of information provided by a lengthy written application, by reference checks with teachers and employers, and often by telephone interviews. Academic skill level is a prime but not limiting factor in selection. Other factors include personal qualities of reliability, enthusiasm, initiative, and stability. The only standard requirement is that applicants must be beneficiaries of the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement. In making final selections attention is paid to maintaining a regional balance, as well as a gender balance, although in recent years many more qualified females, than males, have been applying for the program.

6.2 Student profile / motivations for attending NS

Over the years there has been a marked shift in the student profile. In the early years the average age of the students was in the mid-twenties and few had completed formal high school education. Their motives for applying to the program were usually employment related: unemployment was very high in their communities and they looked to this program as one way of hopefully improving their employability. In the early 1990's this profile slowly began to change. The average age has steadily declined to about 19 and almost all have completed their Grade 12. The students' motives for coming are no longer directly related to employment, but rather they are looking to further their education.

Most are incited to apply to the NS program by the influence and recommendation of peers who have attended. The experience of their peers in NS presents a picture of a safe "next step" to them and they see the program as one that will somehow prepare them for the future.

Ironically, while their motivations for coming to NS are usually to prepare for further study, the reality is that very few students actually go on to further study. There appear to be several reasons for this. After a year of living on their own in the south, students realize just how difficult a task it is to go off and study on their own, and they choose not to continue on that path. As well, the high availability of employment in Nunavut for graduates of the program reduces the incentives for further study and they enter the workforce rather than continuing education, as was their earlier expectation. In a survey of graduates conducted in 1997 by program staff, 70% were found to be in the workforce, 15% were attending other education or training, and the others were either full-time mothers or unemployed.

6.3 Program completion rate

The overall proportion of students completing the NS program is approximately 75%, however, in five of the last six years the completion rate has been close to 85%. To date, 160 students have completed the program. Feedback to program staff from others involved in post-secondary education suggests that this completion rate is relatively high, especially considering the cross-cultural context for the program.

6.4 Student financing

Given the geographical distances involved and the high cost of air travel, very few students in Nunavut would be able to afford the costs of southern study without external support. Students participating in the NS program receive financial support from the Nunavut Department of Education's Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students (FANS) program. This support is in the form of two return airline tickets, tuition payment ($2,500), book allowance ($400) and monthly living allowance ($675).

Recognizing that the level of living allowance is insufficient for the students, the program raises funds to allocate as student grants. Students receive a grant of up to $85 per week contingent on attendance.

6.5 Student housing

One of the goals of the program is to help students develop independent living skills that will allow them to pursue other studies or employment on their own. With the support of program staff, students find and set up their own apartment accommodations in the city, with two or three usually choosing to share a residence.

7. Course Development – Content

The initial groups of students involved in the field-worker training program posed questions which reflected a desire and need for a deeper understanding of the land claim concept. As instructors responded to this it led to the researching and collecting of documents to support broad, overview instructional topics in the areas of Inuit history, the relationship between Inuit and the federal government, the Inuit political movement, and various current issues that Inuit organizations were addressing. This dynamic of developing resources in response to student needs became the basic model which drove the evolution of the program curriculum. As new resource and teaching materials were selected and developed, their relevance and appropriateness were determined on a trial and error basis and on the intuitive reflections of both staff and students.

Over time, a substantial body of content material was collected for instructional use. It became apparent that the central theme underlying the content side of the curriculum development was "the Inuit story", i.e., the story of the forces, influences, and events that had resulted in the many changes to Inuit culture and society in the last one hundred and fifty years. In a variety of ways, what students had been expressing, in their questions and in their response to new information, was a desire to know that story; a story to which they had never been introduced in prior schooling.

The study of history can never be objective, and in this case, what students had been describing was a desire to know their history from their own perspective, from where Inuit stood in relation to all of the events and changes that had occurred in their own territory. To support this, the instructors committed themselves to teaching northern history from the perspective of the Inuit experience.

In adopting this perspective it became apparent to instructors as they collected and pieced together the Inuit story, that there was one underlying theme tying together all the events of this story, as expressed by the following graphic, Figure 1.

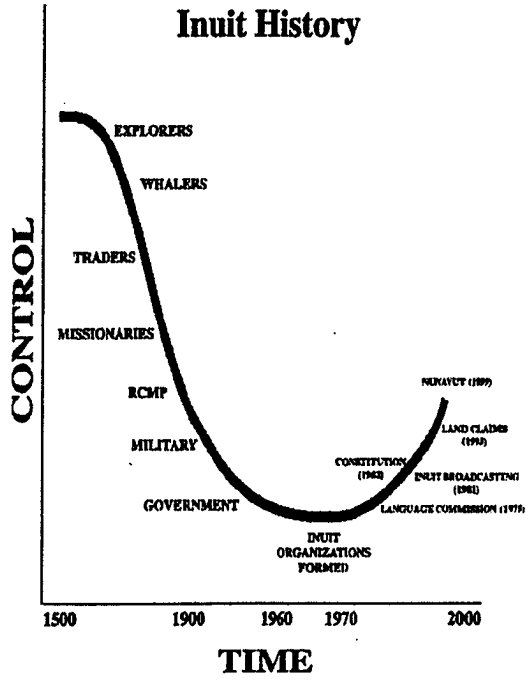

Figure 1: Graph of Power, Control and Independence of Inuit Society over time.

This "story line" describes the history of Inuit society in terms of the elements of independence, power and control which Inuit have exercised over their society. From a beginning point, when Inuit society was completely independent and self-governing, the graph traces the decline of this independence, power and control to a point, generally agreed to be in the late 1960's, when these elements were at their lowest level. The rest of the story then traces the process by which Inuit have taken back, or regained control, culminating in the creation of the Nunavut Territory in 1999. It is these reference points of power and control which give this story an Inuit perspective; a perspective which is premised on the explicit political assumption that Inuit have a right to control their own destiny.

The development of this story as the underlying theme of the program has led to the articulation of the following five courses which form the central core of the program of studies. (Course descriptions included in Appendix B) Each course carries 64 hours of credit with Algonquin College.

Inuit History I: the archaeological basis for early Inuit history, pre-contact social history and the nature and impact of contact with explorers and whalers

Inuit History II, the Government Era: the activities of the fur traders and missionaries as well as a study of federal government involvement in areas of justice, health care and education, social welfare, and the creation of southern-style settlements

Inuit-Government Relations: the history of federal policy towards Aboriginal peoples, the complex story of the events of the late '60's and early 70's which led to land claim negotiations, as well as the story of the negotiations themselves.

Contemporary Inuit Issues: focuses on the beginnings of the Inuit political movement, the creation of various regional, national and international organizations to promote specific causes and the issues they are currently working on, for example: Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), the national Inuit organization lobbying for funding for housing; Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC), the international Inuit organization, lobbying at international fora on the impact of persistent organic airborne pollutants on the Arctic food chain; etc.

Land Claims: focuses on the details of the many legal provisions within the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement.

8. Course Development – Skills

The institution of schooling is relatively new to Inuit society. The educational culture which is developing does not have a history of sending young people off to post-secondary institutions, and there were few internal reference points available to prepare students for the level and intensity of work they would encounter once they arrived. The drop-out rate for those few individuals who did venture south on their own to college or university was, for a number of reasons, very high: there were the expected difficulties associated with living on their own in a different cultural milieu; their academic skills were often below the level required to succeed in a conventional post-secondary institution; and there were a multitude of barriers that students would experience in large institutional settings with complex bureaucratic processes.

The challenge of the instructional approach at NS has been to carry out post-secondary level learning, while developing essential academic skills at the same time. The principal strategy employed at NS to enhance academic learning has been to integrate skill development as much as possible with the content courses throughout the year. These courses, which focus on the Inuit story, remain the most compelling aspect of the curriculum for the students. Academic skill development is therefore integrated with these courses to the maximum extent possible.

To support this integration, one 3-hour session each week is devoted entirely to the development of specific skills in a small-group seminar format. Exercises in these sessions rely heavily upon materials drawn from the other "content" courses, or from materials that are relevant to other aspects of the students' learning experience. The weekly schedule at NS includes a time when each student may participate in a one-on-one session with an instructor

or a tutor. These occasions provide a regular opportunity for course material and assignments to be discussed, and for potential problems to be identified and resolved. The small-group sessions create space where the more reticent students can be vocal about what they are learning, and the one-on-one sessions provide a place where feedback can be given to students on their skill levels and what they can do to improve them. These one-on-one sessions also serve as valuable "safe" spaces to discuss all manner of personal issues that students are dealing with, and which may impact on their learning ability at a given time.

9. Course Scheduling and Delivery

The NS setting, a self-contained centre where students attend from 9:00 to 4:00 every day, has allowed instructors an unusual degree of freedom and flexibility in their approach to course delivery. While the individual courses highlighted above carry a 64-hour accreditation with Algonquin College, the amount of instructional time actually allocated for each of these is much more than 64 hours. The objective of integrating skill development into the content study, as well as the consideration of the students' second-language reality, has necessitated these longer time frames.

Three of the core courses begin in the Fall Term: Inuit History I, Land Claims, and Contemporary Inuit Issues. Inuit History is completed in the first term, while the other two carry on throughout the year. Due to the requirements of working with external instructors, the English and Computer courses are delivered at a fixed time each week.

The Winter Term is comprised of Inuit History II, Inuit-Government Relations, and a continuation of Land Claims and Contemporary Issues.

Along with the regular course work the program includes student involvement in educational outreach in the Ottawa community, where they carry out presentations of Inuit culture to numerous community and school groups. Also, at the end of each program year the students carry out a cultural exchange tour, either nationally or internationally, usually with a focus on meeting with other Indigenous groups, but also with the intent of presenting their territory of Nunavut and Inuit culture to the general public. Former tours have included meeting with the Navajo in Arizona, the Sami in northern Sweden, and the Maori in New Zealand.

The pedagogical approach of the instructors reflects the student-centredness of the curriculum, along with the philosophy that relationships are essential to, and are at the heart of, the teaching-learning experience. Instructors deliberately focus on being attentive to each student. Instruction of new topics usually begins with the students identifying their own questions on the topic (note learning cycle description in course outlines of Appendix B). While these questions do not totally define subsequent instruction, linkages between these questions and the instruction to follow are then demonstrated, and at times they lead to exploration of unintended areas of learning and unintended learning activities. The focus of each course is not on a body of knowledge, with the sole goal of delivering certain information within a certain time frame and with the onus for learning being on the individual. Rather, the instructors take on the role of facilitators, presenting the information along with a variety of learning activities which will enhance student learning, all within the context of the students' perspective. Instruction is often interactive, with students commonly involved in researching topics and presenting to other students. As well, a cooperative approach is often used, with students being responsible for critiquing the work of others as

well as assisting others in their learning. Topic study ends with a return to original questions. It is through utilizing such a student-centred approach and responding to the students' expression of their learning needs that the instructional element of the program has evolved to its current form.

While this is far from the orderly approach to curriculum and instruction found in most post-secondary contexts, it is not a haphazard one. The self-contained nature of the program, along with the flexible instructional and scheduling approach, creates a context for both encouraging new learning opportunities and for taking full advantage of them when they arise.

10. Evaluation and Certification

One of the more challenging areas in the development of the NS curriculum has been to determine how success and achievement should be defined, and what role formal assessment and standards should play. In a purely academic post-secondary program appropriate learning outcomes and standards would be pre-determined by a central authority and student success would be determined by assessment of their learning in relation to those outcomes. At NS, however, a different approach has been required, since the curriculum has developed largely in response to the expressed and perceived needs and interests of the students themselves.

While students demonstrate high enthusiasm for the course content and the exercises designed to enhance their learning, the notion of marks has rarely carried high value. In part, this is a reflection of their motivation for attending the program. NS students enroll because they believe the program will broaden their horizons and help them determine, and prepare

for, their "next step", not for the purpose of attaining a certain paper credential. The important factors for students at NS are the content and the process, not the formal outcome.

Most students come to the NS program with English comprehension and writing skills which are below what would be expected of a student entering first-year of a post-secondary program. Many students put great effort into their work while enrolled at NS, and make huge strides in their skill levels, but when this is assessed against college-level standards, they may still fall short.

At the same time, formal evaluation and marks have begun to play an increasingly important role in the program. More and more students come to NS with the idea of going on to other college or university programs. In this context, formal academic evaluation has become an important feedback mechanism for them to get a realistic reflection of their skill levels against those that are required for post-secondary success. As well, the program sought and acquired new levels of certification through its affiliation with Algonquin College in the mid-1990's. This higher degree of certification required that separate courses be identified, each with specific, measurable outcomes and with a formal, objective evaluation mechanism set at a standard equivalent to a first-year college program.

While it was relatively easy to fit the existing content into separate courses, the biggest challenge has been to meld this conventional educational model with the developmental approach traditionally taken by the NS program. The question is: how to officially demonstrate respect and affirmation for the learning achievements of students, irrespective of their end point, within the context of conventional college courses that require standardized and pre-determined performance outcomes?

These two approaches to evaluating students' achievement are allowed to exist in a state of creative tension within the NS program. Each approach is reinforced: on the one hand, students' initial performance levels are accepted for what they are, and any improvements are given a high degree of affirmation and positive reinforcement; on the other hand, students are also given clear and realistic feedback on how their skill levels would compare with the standards expected in a typical post-secondary program.

Institutionally, the program acknowledges these two aspects of the learning experience by issuing dual certificates upon completion of the program: one from Algonquin College, which reflects academic performance, and is granted to those who achieve a passing mark in the required number of courses; and the other from the Nunavut Sivuniksavut organization, which affirms the significant learning achievements that have resulted from the student's engagement in the program and commitment to their own learning. By issuing dual certificates, the NS program shows its continued commitment to the developmental approach and the notion that standardized marks alone should not be the sole standard of success at NS.

11. Conclusion

The NS program is multi-faceted, with a variety of formal and informal learning activities being acknowledged and encouraged. The current structure and focus of the NS program continues to reflect the original ideas expressed by students in its early years, that there are things they need and want to learn and know, and that the program should help them do that. This student-centredness, that the purpose of the program is to respond to students, has guided its evolution and development to its current state.

The independent nature of the program is both its weakest and strongest point. Being independent has made it especially vulnerable to the variable of funding, keeping it in a perpetual state of insecurity, and inhibiting it from responding to new needs and changing circumstances, such as the continual increase in demand for admission. At the same time this independence allows for a high degree of flexibility in program design and delivery, and in responding to students and new learning opportunities, resulting in a rich learning experience for the students.

The specific role certain structural elements of the program play in influencing characteristics of students' ethnic identity will be discussed in the concluding chapter of the thesis.

CHAPTER 5

ETHNIC IDENTITY: PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS PRIOR TO NUNAVUT SIVUNIKSAVUT

The focus of this study is on the nature of the relationship between the ethnic identity of Inuit youth and their experience of participating in the Nunavut Sivuniksavut (NS) program. In contributing to an understanding of the context for this relationship, this chapter is meant to help the reader develop an image of the nature of the ethnic identity which Inuit students bring with them to the program.

Three main data sources contributed to developing the image of student perceptions prior to the program:

1. a focus group exercise at the beginning of the year which provides a general image of how students viewed Inuit culture and the world of their community;
2. observations, reflective writings, and interviews with students throughout the year as they described how they "saw themselves and their world" before NS;
3. results of a survey of Inuit culture carried out in Nunavut by NS students in the '97-'98 program year.

1. Focus Group

Using a brain-storming technique, the focus group session with ten students was intended to highlight the students' first impressions of two questions related to Inuit culture and contemporary society. A sample of the responses presented here highlights the main themes arising from the questions.

The first question "What is Inuit culture?" generated responses which could be best categorized within the following groups:

1. traditional activities	drum dancing, hunting, taboos, living off nature, qammaqs & igloos, old ways, tradition, umiaqs & kayaks, making skin clothing, traditional story telling, etc.
2. values and personal ways	respectful, sharing, using what you get, not complaining, forgiving, depending on each other, large families, everyone important, happiness, sense of humour, smiley people, proud, lots of cousins
3. language	different language, special language, Inuktitut

In responding to the second question of "How do you see your world today?" the participants provided a multitude of wide-ranging responses, all of which can be categorized by three prominent reference groups. Each of the following groups represented about a third of the comments:

1. references to positive activities and attributes of life which are a mixture of traditional and modern	berrypicking, fishing, camping, family, knowing your neighbours, sports, ski-doing, hunting, dancing, etc.

2. references to such social problems as ...	alcohol and drug addictions/abuse, suicide, teen pregnancy, health problems, dropping out of school, crime
3. references to personal feelings and attitudes	3/4 of the responses referred to negative feelings such as, nervous, depression, lost, angry, confusing, fear, have no dreams, stuck, sad, etc. 1/4 of the responses referred to positive feelings such as confidence, love, happiness, pride

These responses led to two notions which are important in developing a sense of the context for the ethnic identity students bring with them to the NS program:

1. The activities which the students identified as characterizing Inuit culture are all ones associated with what is often referred to a the "traditional" lifestyle, a land-based lifestyle which none of the students have led. With the exception of two of the male participants who had learned some hunting skills, none had any experience in any of the other activities listed. It is also important to note that virtually all of their responses to this question were positive, in marked contrast to the responses of the second question. This suggests that the students' image of their culture was somewhat of a romantic one. Either they were reluctant to acknowledge any negative aspects , or, since they hadn't lived a "traditional" lifestyle, they simply weren't aware of any.

2. The image the participants have of their world is one of a mixture of positive and negative perceptions, with negative elements occupying a very large part of that view of their world.

2. Individual Student Perceptions

In various ways throughout the year students revealed, both in direct and indirect manners, feelings, and attitudes which they and other young people held about being part of Inuit culture. Some of the students had always been clearly aware of their feelings on this issue, but several indicated that it was only in hindsight, in looking back on how they had been before coming to NS that they realized and were able to articulate the feelings and attitudes which they had held. They presented a wide range of perceptions of themselves as Inuit and of how they see Inuit society. Those perceptions are represented by the four following categories:

1. self-identifying as Inuit
2. positive feelings and attitudes associated with being Inuit
3. negative feelings and attitudes associated with being Inuit
4. confusion and tension

2.1 Self-identification

Each one of the students clearly identified herself or himself as an Inuk and as being part of Inuit society. When asked "Are you an Inuk?" many students laughed, finding rather absurd a question about something seemingly so obvious, something which they had always taken for granted. In a follow-up question about what made them Inuk, several students initially responded by simply stating the obvious "because I am". When pressed further the majority expressed in different ways a lineage connection, with such comments as "well, my

family's Inuit" or " my grand-parents are Inuit" or "my ancestors are Inuit", through which they conveyed the logical position that they were therefore Inuit.

Hazel's words sum up the taken for granted conception succinctly when she responds, "I had never thought about it – I just was".

The initial focus group sessions had students describing Inuit culture as being associated with those activities and ways which are closest to the "traditional" land-based lifestyle which was common before the move into communities. While their individual experiences vary greatly with respect to how proximate their lives are to what they see as this Inuit cultural lifestyle, they all hold strongly to the notion that who they were flows from that culture and that it is the defining element in who they are.

2.2 Positive feelings associated with being Inuit

All but one of the students expressed some positive feelings associated with being Inuit. These views generally centred around living in an environment which allowed being able to do the kinds of positive land-based activities highlighted in the focus group. With some there was a kind of pride associated with being able to do this. As Billy commented, "We are a unique people, nobody else lives like us.", and Hazel offered, "There's no better feeling than when you're out camping.".

A few others focused on the importance of the values associated with sharing and family, with such comments as Hazel's, "Inuit share everything. You're taught to do that from an early age" or Leesee's: "Families take care of each other."

Still another category of positive feelings focused on the recent political achievements. Michael, who was from the capital, indicated, "It's great to be getting our own government. We should be able to do a lot for ourselves." Mark focused on the

Nunavut Land Claim Agreement, indicating that although he wasn't all that sure of the details, he was happy that Inuit had successfully made a deal with the Government and obtained an Agreement that recognized their rights and brought them Nunavut.

2.3 Negative feelings associated with being Inuit

Students also expressed many negative perceptions of their Inuit affiliation. They did this in two ways: one, directly through expressions of a lack of pride and respect in being Inuit; and two, indirectly, through expressing a lack of importance in that which is associated with being Inuit.

These negative feelings seemed to be based on two perceptions. First, they had a perception that Inuit culture is somehow inferior to the rest of the world. They seemed to acquire this notion through associating Inuit society with such negative elements as social problems, lower socio-economic and power status, or inferior cultural ways. These perceptions were the result of both personal reflection on their own observations and experiences and of being influenced by what others think about them. Secondly, they perceived themselves as being inferior within Inuit culture, that they were inadequate as Inuit; a perception which can lead to their devaluing of that culture.

2.31 Lack of respect

One of the main categories of negative perception centred around a lack of respect. Karen's assessment of social conditions in her community had led her to develop a lack of respect for Inuit society. In an oral presentation to the class on her personal story she openly admitted:

> I wasn't looking forward to Inuit History very much since I didn't really care about my background and my culture.... I didn't want to learn about it. I didn't have very much respect for Inuit. I grew up learning that Inuit were not very good people.

> Community X is such a broken place that you grow up not caring about anything. I didn't want to be Inuk.

While Hazel had been one to present strong positive views about being Inuit she also perceived social conditions in her community, where there had been many suicides in the past years, as so unhealthy that "I couldn't get away fast enough. I never wanted to go back. Life is just rotten there.".

Rebecca, in reflecting at the end of the program, presented how she had viewed the political process, a view which denotes a lack of respect for a part of her society, "I'm glad for the older leaders that made Nunavut because before I came down here I thought of them as alcoholics, or just that they couldn't do anything, that Nunavut's not all that good, it's gonna break down.".

2.32 Lack of pride

Moshi expressed a lack of pride in being Inuik due to perceptions of inferiority, but from a perspective which demonstrated how young people can carry multiple perceptions of themselves and their society. In year-end discussions he indicated that he had come to realize that he had "never really been too proud of it [being Inuk]". This perception had come about as a reflection of his view of Inuit status within the socio-economic structure in his community. "I was proud to be Inuk, but at the same time I was ashamed too. Everyone around you in the higher positions were Qallunaat, they weren't Inuit. It made me feel like I was inferior, that I was part of a lower race.".

As an echo of Moshi's perception of Inuit being somehow inferior Pauloosie spoke about the influence the perception of unequal power relationships between Inuit and Qallunaat can have, suggesting this can lead to a type of despair:

> I'd say young people are generally pessimistic – well, see they have a little idea in the back of their head that 'maybe I can be anything I want' but then there's the reality in front of them, where they see all this racism and they see all the, well, the white people got the most education, and you know I guess they're smarter than everybody else and they get all the good jobs - and what am I, I'm just gonna, I'll just finish my school and work in the Northern Store and you know I'll just make barely enough to get by but it's no big deal kinda thing. So I think they're pretty pessimistic you know, they want to be a lot of things but eventually they come to the realization that that's never gonna happen.

Theresa also talked about a lack of pride, of carrying feelings of shame as well, but in this case her feelings represented a sense of inferiority based on how others viewed her culture:

> Before going to NS, I sometimes felt ashamed of who I was as an Inuk and where I came from. I think that I felt this way because of what I thought other people would think of me after I tell them who I am and where I came from. I really don't like the stereotypes that people have on Aboriginal people. For example: "oh, she's an Eskimo" or the question of if we still live in an igloo. I didn't feel comfortable letting people know who I am and where I came from.

In reference to how general she thought this sentiment might be Theresa went on to say, "I don't know if these feelings are common but I think that quite a number of young people have these feelings but don't talk about them."

As an example of being influenced by expressions of others, Michael talked of how he had adopted negative stereotypes. In reference to how he had once looked upon some others he expressed a lack of value in his culture, "It was better than the stereotypical thoughts that I previously had. The uneducated Inuk, most likely to be unemployed, what does he know, type of attitude.".

2.33 Lack of importance

Several students spoke about how many young people simply developed a lack of interest in those things Inuit. This appears to be a result of the dominating influence of the

majority Qallunaat culture and the associating of a higher status to those ways and activities associated with it. Carmen expressed the dynamic this way:

> It wasn't that big a deal to me that I was Inuk and had Inuit families around me while I was growing up. Yes, there was [sic] elders in my community to tell me stories and their experiences, but I didn't think it was that important. Everything else around me was Qallunaat style. That's what seemed to be important.

The predominance of Qallunaat culture and the influence it has on young people was commonly referred to by the students. Rebecca, in reflecting from a distance on life in her home community, talked of young people's apparent disinterest and lack of value in Inuit culture, saying:

> "I didn't notice it when I was living there. I don't know why. But since I've got down here I've really noticed that young people are not interested in any Inuktitut stuff [meaning traditional activities] – like just not helping the older people, talking with elders....young people aren't interested anymore [in language and traditional skills] because they're only learning Qallunaat culture".

In a similar vein, Naudla expressed an outlook that was commonly referred to by students: "Young people don't care about being Inuit. So many of them just want to live life like they see on TV."

Elisapee talked about how the phenomenon of lack of interest in Inuit ways had led to a separation from the older generation. She referred to it in this way: "They don't talk to older people. They don't seem to care about who they are. Neither group really understands the other. They'd [the young people] learn more Inuktitut and it would be good for them to learn why their parents are who they are.".

2.34 Inferiority as Inuit

As well as young people devaluing Inuit culture as a result of being influenced by the majority culture, there are indications that a devaluing of being Inuk can be prompted from

within Inuit society as well. As a result of not learning or practicing what are seen as Inuit ways and activities, young people can be the focus of derision from those who are older and more in tune with traditional ways. Many spoke of situations in which youth were held in low esteem by elders.

Karen described the impact this can have. She described young people feeling rejected, "I know some have these feelings [rejection], you can tell even in a general conversation – you just know they don't feel good. They talk about how we're [young people] not being treated right. Yah, back home there's still lots of people not doing pretty well.".

She indicated that much of their negative perceptions of self came from being constantly reminded by older people that they were inadequate and not worthy, to the point that they lost interest in trying to live up to their expectations. "Old people put a lot of the youth down. They don't see us as being Inuk." Karen indicated that being viewed like this, "pushed them to not being interested in their culture, to not wanting to do Inuit things, to not wanting to try in Inuktitut. It hurts so much to be told you're not good enough."

Clearly there were a number of circumstances which could lead to a lack of pride, respect, and lack of interest in their culture. It appears that a sense of inferiority may be a central factor at the heart of these perceptions.

2.4 Confusion / Tension

While all the students had very clearly identified themselves as Inuit, several of them conveyed perceptions which demonstrated that they were not clear on what that actually meant. This confusion, which often resulted in internal tension, appears to be related to three factors:

Lack of understanding of how Inuit society had come to its current point: They identified the traditional hunting and land-based lifestyle as "Inuit culture" and while they all had some knowledge of what that entailed, they lived lives disconnected by varying degrees from it. They revealed that a lack of understanding of how they got to the "new" lifestyle and the political events surrounding them, which was their contemporary reality, left them feeling lost and confused.

Seeing life as a choice between two worlds: Students commonly referred to being "stuck between both worlds", implying that they perceived their world as made up of two discrete entities, the Inuit way and the Qallunaat way. They saw these two "ways" as distinct and mutually exclusive choices to be made. One, which was highly valued but in many ways unattainable, and the other, which appeared to be essential; a situation which created confusion and tension around "how they should be " and " what they should do".

Inadequacy in Inuit ways: They recognized their inadequacy in those things which were considered Inuit ways, ways which were highly valued within Inuit society, and thus they come to be confused about their own Inuitness.

2.41 Lack of understanding

As John Amagoalik had expressed, the world of young people in Nunavut is different from the world that the older generation experienced. Without a sense of historical development and change and an understanding of how things have come to be, the students can only wonder at what is going on around them and how that may or may not be connected to the Inuit past, leaving them confused about who they are as Inuit.

Leesee expressed this confusion by remarking that, "Before NS I had no clue who I was or where I really came from... I thought Nunavut was the wrong way to go, I thought

that the Inuit were so not ready for this step and were setting ourselves to fail." Michael similarly related his confusion around current social and political changes due to a lack of knowledge of his people's history:

> I was lost, as to where our people were from and where they were going. On top of that I didn't really know too many people who shared these thoughts, or had any interest in Land Claims, as there are a few in Community A who don't particularly care for Nunavut and feel it's just a big mistake. I didn't feel that way at all. I didn't know too much on my people and I wished I was able to explain to them about us. I knew a few things from reading the current events, but I wasn't able to interpret most of what I was reading. That's why I felt lost.

2.42 Seeing life as a choice between two worlds

Pauloosie expressed this situation as being "pulled in two directions" and contrasts the path of young people in earlier times to that of today:

> Fifty years ago there was no uncertainty, no choice; you knew exactly what you had to do. Now elders are saying do this, others are saying do that, and I'm left thinking who the hell am I?.....A sixteen year old fifty years ago, he pretty much had his path beaten in the tundra. He pretty much had his whole life laid out for him – this is what you need to know, this is what you need to do, and this is what's gonna happen if you do them right. And nowadays there's so much of people saying you could be this, you could be that, you could do this, you could do that that. He doesn't have just that one path anymore, like he has 6, 7 if not 10 different paths in front of him, and everybody with equal authority on each of those paths saying 'come this way, come be like this'. You know he's totally lost now, he's like 'I wanna please everybody but I don't know if I can so maybe I'm just gonna please this person who may be more important right now.'....I'm kinda torn in-between. I respect my Dad and everything and the knowledge he passed on to me about the land and the life I probably wouldn't be able to survive as an Inuk but without my mom's pushing me for education, I probably wouldn't be able to survive in the society we have built for ourselves today...it's really hard to see which world is best.

Michael spoke about how this perceived dilemma can prevent young people from doing anything, with the confusion instilling a sense of paralysis:

> For one you have your parents who were brought up hunting and living out on the land. They were brought up in the changing world between hunting and working in an office and now these days you have people telling you, I feel a lot of the youth today are pretty confused as to what they want to do – whether they want to follow their

> traditional lifestyles or should they complete high school – a lot of them tend to make that decision really late in their life as well and during that time in high school they tend to neglect school and not go anywhere.

The confusion generated by the contrasting social realities and visions that are conveyed to young people also goes deeper than an either-or dilemma. Pauloosie went on to indicate that while one side of him felt a real dilemma, another side suggested that there actually was no choice; that he could see that society was going in a certain direction and there was no choice but to be a part of it:

> I realize the power the white society has over the rest of the world and I know for a fact no matter how much we pray, and no matter how much we wish, it's not going away. And in order for me to live a decent life and in order for my children to have a decent life then I have to make do with the best I have from this white world, and if education is the key then education is the key.

I raised this issue with the whole class one day, posing the question as to whether or not they saw life in this way and what their thoughts were about following the path of schooling. Without exception, they felt that with the way society was going, they had no choice but to do what they were doing in order to survive in the wage economy. This was not however a comfortable decision for them. Many expressed deep value and pride in traditional activities and ways of living, and they knew that in not following more of those ways they were disappointing some people. Some spoke of being seen to be leaving their culture behind or of abandoning it, something which they didn't want to feel they were doing.

2.43 Inadequacy

The students expressed great respect and value in those activities which were associated with traditional culture, even evoking the term "real Inuk" in reference to those who practiced them. While this affirmed the value in traditional ways, this perspective can

also suggest to young people, however, that living a lifestyle that is distant from these traditional ways somehow makes them inadequate as Inuit.

Students were especially sensitive to lack of proficiency in the Inuktitut language and how this was perceived. Many indicated that they knew they were being looked down upon for their inability in this area, often hearing the comment that they were not really Inuit since they didn't commonly use Inuktitut. At times they came to this realization themselves, as when Pauloosie described the sense of inadequacy that came from being unable to understand his grandmother; that he loved to be around her and do things for her, but at the same time not being able to say anything to her left him feeling inadequate, "I felt really stupid and useless. How could I be an Inuk when I couldn't even talk to her?".

At other times this perception was reinforced by messages from others. A description of Leesee's experience with her mother, an experience which left her questioning herself and feeling inadequate, illustrated this point:

> I'm talking about this guy in my class, a good-looking guy, who hunts for his grandparents and doesn't go out partying. My mom says "There's a real Inuk." So I said, "so what am I?" and she says, "no you're an Inuk, but not as much as he is." I couldn't believe it.

In sum, the combination of lack of historical understanding of Inuit society, a perceiving of life as an either-or choice between two distinct ways, and feelings of inadequacy in those things Inuit, suggests that in many instances, the students could experience confusion and tension around the meaning of their Inuitness.

3. 1998 NS Student Survey on Inuit Culture

The survey of 441 Inuit in Nunavut, carried out by NS students in 1998 (see Appendix A) provided an additional perspective from which to gain insights into factors which may be influencing how young Inuit see themselves and their position within Inuit society. The survey demonstrated several key points:

- Inuit view their culture as declining;
- this cultural decline is viewed as problematic; negative judgement is associated with those activities which represent this cultural loss;
- young people are at the forefront of changing cultural ways and are seen as the focal point for cultural loss.

Three questions from the survey were key in developing these points:

Do you think Inuit in your community are losing their traditional culture?

Overall response:
a) Yes: 68%
b) No: 32%

Yes response by age group:
12-15: 59%
16-19: 62.5%
20-25: 66%
26-30: 81%
31-39: 70%
40-59: 79%
50+: 79%

If you said "yes" to this question, how much do you feel this is a problem?
a) a big problem: 40%
b) somewhat of a problem: 47%
c) not much of a problem: 12%

How important to you is it that the Inuktitut language be kept strong?
a) very important: 83%
b) fairly important: 16%
c) somewhat important: 1%

How well do you speak Inuktitut?

Age group:	16-19	20-25	26-30	31-39	over 40
a) very well:	41%	44%	58%	65%	78%
b) fairly well:	34%	41%	36%	29%	22%
c) only a little:	23%	13%	5%	4%	0%
d) not at all:	2%	1%	0%	1%	0%

Those respondents who indicated yes to the question of cultural loss also provided written commentary on how they thought this was happening. An analyses of these comments revealed that they were characterized by six thematic patterns, creating a vivid image of cultural change.

An adoption of, and reliance on, modern technology and activities is associated with decline of traditional activities:

- "money is the problem. We need money on everything and to have money we have to look for a job; while we're working there is not enough time to do our cultural stuff"
- "too much technology, you can do anything sitting down"
- "most aspects of the traditional lifestyle are being lost because they are not needed in this new world of technology"

Traditional activities are not being passed on or taught to young people:

- "we the elders can see that we are slowly loosing [sic] our language and not doing anything about it"
- "elders aren't close to young people anymore, not passing their traditional culture"
- "we only learn English like Caucasians and we don't usually learn Inuit culture; we don't usually learn how to hunt or do anything"

Language loss contributing to other cultural loss:

- "we are losing our language and not all small children understand their grand-parents"
- "we are losing culture because many people only speak English and some older people don't understand English"
- "I find most younger Inuit cannot understand full Inuktitut conversation – to make them understand you have to speak English"

Education plays a role in cultural loss:

- " because Inuit are speaking and learning mostly in English. They are speaking English in school all day"
- "it's getting harder to do what our parents did back then; they are making us go to school and having no time to teach us anymore"
- "the students in school are slowly losing their culture because there's not enough Inuktitut curriculum in schools"

Southern influence is overpowering:

- "Qallunaat are taking us over, slowly we are losing our culture"
- "loss of language and identity because of overwhelming white influence"
- "Inuit are trying to be like white people"

Young people are very much the focus of cultural loss:

- "they seem to be wanting to act more and more like white people. They don't like to speak Inuktitut or think it's too hard to learn"
- "kids now a days are thinking like non-Inuit, not the Inuit way; they are losing respect for elders and their ways and adopting southern values"

- "youth aren't into traditional ways of hunting and sewing"
- "not so many young people visit elders and their relatives"
- "a lot of young people don't like Inuit food"
- "young do not know Inuit values"
- "they are turning to white people for role models, trying to be and act like them"

These expressions of cultural loss were not seen in a neutral light. Along with creating an image of cultural change, many of the explanations (38%), conveyed a negative judgement. This was done through the use of such phrases as: should be, too much, don't even know, not enough, can't even, hardly, only, and not willing. These phrases represented a negative connotation which implied that something should not be occurring, for example: "some people don't even speak Inuktitut", or "they don't really care about Inuit food", "they are too much into white culture and are not doing traditional culture activities.", "not much respect for elders".

Since youth are at the forefront of adopting other cultural norms it would suggest that these negative judgements would be focused on them and would be a factor in influencing how they view their position within Inuit society.

The two questions pertaining to the cultural element of language presented added information to highlight the theme of youth being the focus of cultural change. The first demonstrated that Inuktitut was highly valued. But while there was wide-spread agreement that it was important to have a strong Inuktitut, the next question depicted a marked difference in self-identified Inuktitut proficiency between young and old, a situation which revealed an emerging dilemma.

While there was very high value placed on maintaining Inuktitut, there was also high recognition, as evidenced both by the anecdotal responses to the question regarding cultural loss, and through self-declaration in the question on proficiency, that this was not happening. These results also clearly demonstrated that in this cultural area of language, change was occurring most rapidly among the youth.

These results suggest conditions for a more generalized level of tension and stress both in young and old, with everyone agreeing on the value and importance of strong Inuktitut, but of the young people not being able to measure up to this.

It is clear that the greatest amount of change is represented in the young people, those furthest from the practices of traditional culture. Given the high value placed on this traditional culture, however, and the negative attitudes expressed about the decline of its various expressions, it is easy to see how this circumstance is the source of tension and confusion for young people as they see themselves caught in the position of not living up to adult expectations and of somehow failing that culture which is the source of who they are.

4. Discussion of Perceptions Prior to NS

The goal of this chapter has been to address the study question "What changes occur in the ethnic identity of students in the NS program?" by presenting data pertaining to the first sub-question, "What are the characteristics of the ethnic identity of the students when they begin the program?". These insights will help the reader develop a basis for understanding the nature of the Inuit identity which students bring with them to the NS program. To do this three different perspectives were presented:

- a general image of how students viewed their world;

- a presentation of specific student perceptions related to being Inuit;
- a contextual perspective on the relationship between Inuit youth and their culture.

These perspectives demonstrate four key points related to the ethnic identity perceptions of the students coming to NS:

1. students come to the program with a clear and strong sense of being Inuit;
2. the students' perception of being Inuit and a part of Inuit society may include a complex set of both positive and negative feelings and attitudes;
3. the students may have ambiguous and confused perceptions around what "being Inuit" actually means;
4. there may be tension and stress associated with the uncertainty, confusion and mixed feelings which students might harbour.

The NS students are at the age and stage of life in which ambiguity and confusion are common factors in the normal process of personal identity development (Erikson,1968). Viewed through this lens it would therefore be expected that they would express such feelings. What the data describe, however, is that the students' perceptions are linked to the notion of Inuit culture and their relationship with that culture. They are no doubt dealing with identity issues related to their status as individuals, but given their position as members of a very distinct minority group in close contact with the majority society, they must also deal with identity issues related to their ethnicity. Viewed through this lens, the key points flowing from the data present an image of ethnic identity which corresponds very closely to Phinney's (1989) description of the initial foreclosure stage of ethnic identity development. Phinney points out that in this stage, which develops through childhood, individuals may develop positive, negative or mixed feelings about their ethnicity; that it is a stage in which

they have not consciously examined the meaning or implications of their ethnic group membership.

The findings also provide insights into the nature of the dynamic involved in young Inuit developing negative views of themselves and Inuit society. Central to the development of these negative views are perceptions of inferiority, either of Inuit society in relation to Qallunaat society, or of themselves within Inuit society. The development of these perceptions are a reflection of the intergroup comparison dynamic presented by Tajfel (1981), as well as that of intragroup comparison, put forward by Worchel et al. (2000).

The variety of perspectives presented in this chapter speak to the notion of young people coming to the program with conflicting and confusing views of themselves as Inuit and the dilemma to which this leads - a direct expression of Hall's description of the "global village" phenomenon introducing so much change that the cultural world is no longer unified or predictable. On the one hand they do not question their Inuitness, with all of them clearly identifying as being Inuit and most associating a positive specialness and uniqueness in that. On the other hand, many of them also appear to be uncertain about their affiliation with Inuit culture and about what that actually means in the context of modern society. One perspective on their world is that of an either/or circumstance, with traditional ways being identified as "Inuit" and the ever prominent modern ways being seen as non-Inuit or Qallunaat ways.

This framing of their world as a dichotomy of two distinct ways, and their difficulty with reconciling this division is a source of tension. While traditional ways inherently carry high value within Inuit society, it is not clear what the role of those traditional ways is within a modern context. They see themselves as being inadequate in those ways which are highly valued, something which is pointed out, often with derision, by others in their communities.

This circumstance leads to a wide array of feelings: feelings of shame and guilt over their inadequacy in something so highly valued, perceptions that they are somehow betraying or abandoning their culture, and feelings of confusion over their status as Inuit. Yet at the same time, they don't see any alternative. They are following the path that has been presented to them. While they don't see any alternative but to follow this path they've been prepared for, they see this as being in conflict with what they perceive as Inuit culture and thus they are presented with a seemingly unresolvable internal dilemma: while many in society encourage and praise success on this path, they also sense that continuing on it will be an act of abandonment and betrayal of their culture. The students don't appear to consciously analyze this dilemma in order to reconcile it, they simply live it, carrying within them the associated negative perceptions of self.

Another theme extending from the study, one that first appeared in the pilot study, is that of negative perceptions of their cultural group lowering the students' esteem in their cultural affiliation. It was the revelations of Toonoo and Apak in the pilot which first opened the door to this dynamic. It is echoed in the words of Moshi, whose view of the position of Inuit as being lower down on the power and socio-economic rung in his community led to feelings of shame and inferiority, and by Karen, whose interpretation of personal experience had led her to lose respect for her people to the point where she "didn't want to be Inuk".

That this circumstance would lead to internal tension and conflict is supported by social identity theory which suggests that the individual has an internal need to maintain a positive sense of self and that in the face of negative stereotyping from outside their cultural group, individuals will seek ways to affirm their ethnicity in order to preserve self-esteem. The experience of some of the students, however, was that the source of negative perception

was not external, but rather internal, through their own experience with their cultural group, thus leaving them with nowhere to turn for cultural affirmation. For some, such as Toonoo in the pilot study, and Karen and Theresa among the current students, the tension and conflict arising from this circumstance was enough to push them to the extreme, that of outright rejection of their cultural group; a circumstance which is an expression of Worchel et al.'s (2000) position that intragroup comparison also influences social identity.

An additional element influencing the students' perception of themselves centred around a lack of knowledge and understanding of the dynamic involved in the dramatic changes in Inuit lifestyle and the role of Inuit in that change. As John Amagoalik had pointed out to the students, the world they had grown up in was drastically different from that of their parents. While the numerous changes resulting from adaptation to the omnipresent Qallunaat world had created the circumstances leading to the confusion and tension as described above, these changes had also taken place outside the realm of the students' experience, leaving them without an understanding of how life had come to be as it is. They knew that Inuit once lived one lifestyle and that they themselves now lived much differently, but they did not know how that had come about. When Michael said, "I was lost, as to where our people came from and where they were going.", and Leesee said, "I had no clue who I was or where I came from", they were in essence revealing another position that this rapid change had left many young people in. While they knew they were Inuit, their lack of knowledge led to ambiguity around what that actually meant for them within the modern context.

CHAPTER 6

THE EXPERIENCE OF STUDENTS IN NUNAVUT SIVUNIKSAVUT

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe how the ethnic identity of the Nunavut Sivuniksavut (NS) students was influenced by their participation in the program. This chapter adds to an understanding of that relationship by focusing on the third principal sub-question guiding the study, "What is the nature of the student experience in the program?". In doing so, insights are gained into the influence specific elements of the program have on ethnic identity characteristics.

The NS program experience is multi-dimensional, with numerous types of interactions influencing each student and each of the students living the experience in their own individual way. The specific impact of each program element and the meaning each student makes of their experience is as varied as the number of students. As such, it is unrealistic to think of describing categorically the student experience. What this chapter does, however, is present an overview of a range of student responses to different aspects of the program as a means of helping the reader develop an image of the program experience and an understanding of what it can mean for students.

An initial data sorting led to a view of the program as a number of constituent elements, each of which is presented as a section of this chapter: orientation, reaction to course work, interaction with leaders, cultural presentations and performing, international trips and southern urban-living. Due to the wealth of data regarding each program element only brief examples are presented as a means of supporting main themes.

1. Orientation

While this aspect of the program did not appear to directly influence the ethnic identity of the students, the orientation was a pivotal point in their year. An overview of it is presented here to help the reader gain a sense of the students' perspectives as they began the experience.

1.1 Tentative beginnings

It is the first day of the NS year. Assembled around the rather small meeting room are 20 young Inuit and two middle-aged Qallunaat. For the most part, they are all strangers to each other.

The young people have come from distant points on the map, from communities scattered along the Arctic coast, from a land and a lifestyle worlds away from most southern Canadians: places like Kugluktuk in the western Kitikmeot region, two time zones, 4,000 km. and 9 hours of flying away; Gjoa Haven, named for the harbour which provided safe haven to Roald Amundsen and his ship the Gjoa over a long, arctic winter as he waited to continue his quest to be the first mariner to sail the entire North-West Passage – a quest which had been at the heart of bringing these young people's ancestors into contact with the European world; Rankin Inlet, in the central Kivalliq region, established as a community in the 1950's around a nickel mine, one of the first harbingers of the wage economy in the Arctic; Pangnirtung, on Baffin Island, where people's lives had long been tied to the outside world - the oil of the whales they helped hunt and process, fueling the street lamps of Europe in the 1800's; and Iqaluit, created around an American military base constructed during WW II, another event which had tied the Inuit of Canada's Arctic ever closer to southern Canada.

They have gathered here, at Carmen Trails Hostel in the Gatineau Hills some 30 kilometres north of Ottawa, to begin the first steps of the Nunavut Sivuniksavut program. They've all been south before, mostly for short periods of time on school exchanges or holidays with family, but at this moment they're beginning something different, eight months of living and studying in the south on their own. It will be four months, Christmas, before they'll see their homes and families again.

They know that others have done this, have completed this program, but they are still among the first generation of their people to make this concerted step towards post-secondary education in southern Canada. And while they may know much about the southern world and may have adopted many of its material goods and technologies, their lives are not only geographically, but culturally far away from it. Over the next eight months the physical differences created by geography, the climate, the insects, the heat, the winter sun will require some minor adjustments, but it is the cultural adjustments that will really challenge them. Now, as they sit in nervous and excited anticipation, they know they are making a break, separating themselves temporarily from that world. While the southern urban landscape is not new to them, it does represent a dramatic shift, a shift that will present unanticipated challenges and pressures.

The first step in this transition is the Orientation session. For the next five days they will live here, cooking, eating, socializing and learning together as a group about this program that they've come so far to participate in. Officially, the purpose of this Orientation session is to allow staff and students to get to know each other, to clarify the content of the program courses, to outline the operation and expectations for day to day functioning of the program, and to help prepare the students for the first steps of setting up a life in the city.

Prior experience has shown, however, that by the end of the week much of the information will be a blur. Most importantly, orientation is a quiet time away from the stimulation and demands of the city, where the students get a chance to develop a level of familiarity, of comfort and of trust with the program and the people they'll be sharing it with, where they get some sense of reassurance and security that the decision they have made will have a positive outcome.

The next days are taken up with short lectures, writing assignments, group development exercises, hikes through the bush, communal cooking and eating, and socializing around bonfires. A high point of the week is a trip to the local bungee jump, where eight of the 20 decide to take the plunge – an event of high excitement even for the spectators, and an event which is used as a metaphor for what these young people are doing – taking a leap of faith into the unknown, trusting and nervously hoping, based on the earlier success of others who have come before them, that it will bring rewards for them too.

1.2 Motivations for enrolling

As the week went on various activities began to reveal the personal thoughts of the students on their reasons for coming and on the stresses they are feeling. In talking with students about their motivations for coming I found that almost universally their notions were rather vague; they did not attach specific goals to their participation in the program and their enrolment in it was not a part of a specific longer term plan. Although the program has a very specific curriculum focus, very few considered that focus as their prime reason for enrolling. The excitement of living on their own in the south and an attraction to some basic ideas relayed to them by teachers, friends or siblings, ideas such as, it's fun, that you learn lots of interesting things, that it is good for you, turned out to be the prime motivators for

almost all the students. Mark was the only one in the group who had come specifically for the academic course content.

1.3 Starting knowledge and questions

This first week was also a time for exercises which helped the students establish a base line of their starting knowledge and questions. While all the students were aware and quite excited about the new Nunavut Government, two examples demonstrated the limitations of their knowledge of the story behind it:

> Example 1:
> After compiling their individual questions about land claims, students draw up a master list for posting. They are struck by how little they know. Several people had only one or two questions; basic ones such as "What are land claims?" and "Why do we have land claims?". Many, like Moshi, say they know someone who is involved in it but then admit that "they have no idea what it's all about".
>
> Some have pieces of information associated with the claim and their questions are offshoots of that: "What does the Nunavut Wildlife Board do?", "What are they doing with all our money?", "Will we go broke?".
>
> Example 2:
> Students were being asked to write a summary of an article that was written by John Amagoalik in the late '70's. As I distributed the papers one of the students asked, "Who's John Amagoalik?".

The study of Inuit history and political development had not been an integral part of their high school curriculum. A few indicated they had touched on these topics in a Northern Studies course in Grade Ten, but the experience was not uniform and seemed to have been related to individual teacher initiatives. Their initial comments and questions demonstrated that this was going to be new learning for them.

1.4 Early stress and tension

One of the more animated sessions throughout the week focused on students living on their own for an extended period away from home. Although it is an element outside of the

everyday coursework, it is a big part of the program learning experience. For all but a couple of them this was new territory, engendering excitement and nervousness at the same time.

The tension associated with taking this step surfaced early for two of the students. In an information session on student funding, Naudla asked several questions related to the support she will receive from the Nunavut Department of Education, wondering if she will be penalized if she leaves the program before completion. During a break she indicated to me that she was feeling very nervous and anxious about what she has gotten herself into and is not at all certain that she should be here.

Lucasee, a student who had already been in the south for three weeks visiting with friends in Toronto, spent extended periods of time, much of it quite emotional, on the telephone with his family back home. While he had been quite happy to enjoy a vacation, the permanency now associated with this decision had him feeling very uncomfortable and homesick. By the end of the week when the students moved into Ottawa he had decided he should leave. Naudla, however, decided that she would give the experience a try.

1.5 New beginnings

As the Orientation days pass the moments of uncomfortable silence disappeared, laughter became more and more common, as it would be throughout the year, and individuals appeared to be more at ease in speaking out. By the fifth day, as they posed for a group photo just before boarding the bus for the city, jostling and kibitzing with each other, a sense of camaraderie had obviously developed. I had a sense that they already felt like a group with a purpose, that they had created an entity to anchor themselves to and that they no longer felt totally alone on this journey.

1.6 Summary

The Orientation serves as the basis for the beginnings of a process of ethnic identity reflection. By the end of the Orientation the students were aware that the course content would be all about their people's story and that the program had been designed specifically for them, as Inuit, to help prepare them for contributing to that story. The stage for the importance of what they would study had been set. They had begun developing a group identity, a sense of belonging, that reflected that purpose. They had also begun to develop a sense of trust and and security, that they could commit to the program and that there would be support for them, from both peers and instructors.

The examples of the students' starting questions illustrate how far removed the world of these young people was from that of the next generation, how far they were from understanding the major political activities that were being carried out all around them. The fact that even the name of someone who had been central to this story and a major figurehead was now unknown to a student took me completely aback. It had been inconceivable to me that such a question might one day be raised.

2. Student Responses to Course Work

The five courses which have their focus on Inuit studies constitute the core of the NS curriculum, the central feature around which all else in the program revolves. It became evident early on in the year, however, that although the program of study was set out as discrete and distinct courses, in the minds of the students the distinctions between these courses remained vague and seemed to hold little importance.

In reading or listening to their reactions to the content of their studies, they seldom commented in terms of course distinctions, rather, they spoke either in terms of specific topics or events, or in temporal terms. They looked upon their studies either as history, that which is associated with the past, or as current issues, which may have their roots in some historical circumstance, but which are ultimately associated with current and future activities.

In essence, the students' perception of their studies reflected the underlying theme, the story line that was the common thread connecting all the courses; that of the role that various events, circumstances and issues played as part of the Inuit story, either as contributing to the decline of Inuit autonomy or to the rise of it, from earliest times to the present.

From early on in the first term it was apparent that students were experiencing strong and important reactions to what they were studying, reactions which would ultimately influence them in a number of ways. In their reactions to the course content, the students tended to respond on two levels: one, they expressed straightforward emotive reactions based on overall impressions, and two, they expressed reactions at a level I will term as "critical reflection", a level that was observed in conversation and interviews and most commonly in the students' writing. Both levels of commentary provided useful insights but it was through analyzing commentary at the level of critical reflection that evidence of the influence of the course content on the students began to take shape.

2.1 Initial reactions

The students' emotive reactions to the content of the courses were unanimously positive and remained so throughout the year. After a month of classes I began to query students about their thoughts on the course of studies and overwhelmingly the initial

response was best characterized as enthusiastic. To an opening question as general as "What do you think of this stuff?" responses commonly included such phrases as "It's so cool", "It's so amazing", "Really interesting", and "I really like it.".

While several had indicated at the beginning that they weren't all that interested in "history" as they had known it in school, history that had focused on European colonization and development of southern Canada, they were indeed extremely interested in what was being presented to them in these courses. It appeared as if they were awakening to the reality, importance, and significance of their own history, something which at this time and place was very appealing to them.

The appealing nature of their studies was based on a combination of factors such as the newness of what they were learning and the perception that it was uniquely related to them as Inuit. I also sensed that they drew importance from within the group identity that was developing, that it was important that they, as representatives from across their territory, had been chosen to learn this material. Comments such as those provided by Leesee, "I never knew about this stuff. No one ever taught it to us.", by Carmen, "I never thought of it before. There's so much to learn.", and David, "So far I've learned things that I never heard of before, even though they are a part of my culture.", were commonplace.

As a further example of how students tended to "get caught up in" the material, Pauloosie, in an interview in early November, admitted:

> Even myself, I never thought I'd be here everyday. I just wanted to get out of town, that's why I came here. Thought I'd come and do this and just get by. Never thought it'd be like this, that I'd actually like it. I've wondered about some of this stuff for years.

As well as affirming comments there were also those of disgruntlement. These negative expressions however were focused on the newness of the material; the realization that they should be at this age and never have learned about it. As Leesee said: "I'm angry, angry that nobody ever taught us these things we're learning about. I can't believe we don't learn about some of this stuff in school. Why aren't they teaching us this stuff? It's important. It's just ridiculous." When I asked her why it was important "stuff" her reply revealed the meaning she was beginning to make of the material she was studying, "Because it's who we are. How are we supposed to know who we are if we don't learn this stuff?".

2.2 Critical reflection

Students demonstrated through interviews, writing and their behaviour, that as well as producing initial positive reactions, what they were learning was influencing their perceptions of themselves and Inuit society. This was evidenced in three principal ways:

- Their feelings about being part of Inuit society were being influenced;
- Their perceptions of themselves as Inuit were being affirmed and even challenged at times;
- They were examining, and developing a better understanding of, the differences and the relationship between Inuit and the rest of Canadian society.

Many of the accounts here are provided by the key informants, Mark, Leesee and Pauloosie.

2.21 Feelings about Inuit society

In reflecting on what they were learning students expressed positive attitudes about Inuit, they expressed a real sense of attachment and of belonging to Inuit culture, and they expressed value and importance in that culture.

Attitudes: Students commonly reacted to what they were learning, with expressions of pride. The following sequence of Mark's reflections demonstrates how this attitude is connected to learning about the challenges and achievements of those who have gone before, either in the distant past or in contemporary times.

An early part of the introductory history course introduced students to Inuit origins and society before Qallunaat began to influence change. As part of the study of archaeology, students were invited by Bob McGhee, a prominent Arctic archaeologist, to examine the warehoused collection of Arctic artifacts at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in early October. Mark expressed a sense of awe and respect at what he was learning about early Inuit times:

> Tuesday was a cool day. Going to the museum and seeing some actual artifacts that were very old. So many sakkus [harpoon heads]. Some of the stuff was so small it was unbelievable. Hard to imagine how Inuit from the past came up with that stuff. It's incredible to think that our ancestors lived off the land for all those thousands of years with only tools like that.

As a reflection on the early history he has been learning Mark demonstrates how he has come to associate this learning with cultural pride and also how he sees it as being an important element for others, an element that would contribute to maintaining Inuit culture:

> I learned what IHT stands for now [Inuit Heritage Trust – the land claim body mandated to look after all things to do with archaeology]. Nunavut is going to have to get a museum soon. This history stuff is great since it teaches us where we came from and gives me more respect about survival and the people. Everyone should learn about this because it is not just history, it's our identity.

The article in the Nunavut Land Claim dealing with the extinguishment of Aboriginal rights stimulated much discussion and debate in class. In writing on this in his journal in

early November, Mark made reference to his critical evaluation of the clause, expressing approval for what Inuit had agreed to:

> Learning about the extinguishment clause was great. I feel Inuit got what they wanted and needed. Having representation on boards to make decisions is better than going on a never ending road to getting nowhere. Inuit should do well if we stay focused on keeping things organized and well managed.

By February Mark's reflections and ideas showed an awareness of impact from the combination of topics being studied:

> There are days where I don't want to get up, but then I know I'm going to miss something that will get my interest. I'm still very interested in what goes on: past, present and future of Nunavut, like RCMP, missionaries, IGR [the Inuit-Government Relations course], language commission, the Agreement. Makes me realize how much [sic] changes Inuit have gone through in the past 100 years. It makes me very proud to be of the Inuk race.... Making us realize how important identity is and the history behind it.

Attachment and belonging: The interest that students developed in the issues they were studying often became a vehicle for opening doors and adding new dimensions to relationships. The following vignette describes an experience which instilled a sense of belonging in Leesee:

> The group is focusing on the period of early interaction between Inuit and Missionaries, the time of transition and conversion from their traditional belief system to that of Christianity. Leesee had been reading an account of a comparison of the activities of different missionaries and indicated to me that she didn't know all the things that had gone on. She was quite surprised by it and somewhat skeptical of the reading, so she said she telephoned her mother to ask about it. Her mother confirmed what she had been reading and then went on to talk of her own experience with missionaries, describing intimate and painful experiences. Leesee indicated that her mom had never talked to her about this kind of stuff before, that she had never seemed to take her so seriously. She went on to indicate that she had never had any idea that things like that had gone on.

Leesee's voice was full of emotion when she recounted this to me. It had obviously been an important moment for her. It represented not only an important mother-daughter experience, but also the nature of their discussion had connected her to her people's past.

Value and importance in Inuit culture: Students would commonly demonstrate the value and importance they were attaching to Inuit culture as a result of what they were learning. This was often through expressions of curiosity and wanting to know more and also by wanting to get involved. It was not so much that they had been disinterested in the topics they were now studying, as much as they had not been aware of just how much there was to learn about. The following vignettes and journal reflections illustrate how the focus of his studies had led to three important behaviour changes for Mark: the development of a new relationship with his grandmother, a re-affirmation of his language, and a new perspective on his father. Note how his new awareness and interest in Inuit history helped create an opportunity for new avenues of discussion with his grandmother:

> Mark reveals his emotions in subtle ways. As calm as he is there's a real excitement in his voice as he tells me about an encounter with his grandmother over the week-end. She was on her way to the Smithsonian Institute in Washington to look at Inuit clothing, artifacts and photographs. They had been donated by a prominent American whaling captain, George Comer, who had whaled for many years in the late 1800's and early 1900's near Mark's family's traditional home area in northwestern Hudson Bay. In telling his grandmother that he was studying about whalers and other eras of history he learns that his great grandmother had been the "country wife" of Captain Comer. This story was all new to Mark and he told me how he had found himself talking with his grandmother for hours and hours about those things that are in Washington and how they got there. He went on to say how he had never spoken with his grandmother about things like that before. His eyes were bright when he said "She's got so many amazing stories to tell. I never realized that before.". He spoke about wanting to spend time with her now every chance he got.

In a conversation I had with Mark's mother some time later she remarked how his relationship with his grandmother had changed, that every time they were together Mark was off in a corner talking with his grandmother, asking her about the past.

Conversations with Mark through the late fall term revealed the extent to which he was being influenced by this study of history and the political organizations. He described how this continual Inuit focus in his studies has effected his language usage, "I've noticed I'm more interested in Inuktitut now; when I talk with Toonoo [a friend; pseudonym], Geela [a family relative he is living with; pseudonym] and the kids, I talk Inuktitut now – knowing this stuff makes you more interested in it."

Learning about the land claim and Inuit political history also led him to view his father in a new light, demonstrating how compelling the course material can be: "I used to hope that my Dad wouldn't get re-elected so he wouldn't be away so much .... but I've started to talk about this stuff with him.". Clearly, he was beginning to develop an interest in the current political developments: "When you study this stuff in class you learn the shell of it and you want to learn more and understand what's going on – what they're really doing to implement the [land claims] agreement.".

At the same time that Mark was focusing on topics from the first History course, his writing on topics from other courses revealed that they too were leading to a similar process of critical reflection. Much of the Contemporary Issues course involved the study of the history, role and function of various Inuit political organizations which had developed over the past 30 years. At a visit to the headquarters of Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (the organization representing all Inuit in Canada) he learned about the organization's constant efforts to educate Canadians about Inuit, and about one of the projects they were developing, a tour of

Inuit youth across the country to explain to other youth about Nunavut. Mark immediately showed an interest in the idea, writing:

> ITC is an important organization for Inuit. Canada needs to know the difference between Inuit and Indians. I really hope the youth to youth tour goes through. I'm not really sure what I want to do now in life. Keep my options open I guess. The youth today have a load to take off soon. We are going to inherit Nunavut one day and it is our obligation we have if we are proud of our heritage. Preserving tradition, culture and language is so important. With Nunavut we have the opportunity to show our pride and care for our heritage. It will be important so our children will have better than we have.

With this one comment Mark demonstrates how his introduction to historical study and a political organization have led him to reflect on the future role of youth in relation to their cultural heritage.

The importance Mark places on Inuit culture and the extent to which he had been influenced by his reflections on his studies and is highlighted by his deliberations on his future. In March, I discussed future plans with him, inquiring into what he might study or do next. He had come to the program after a year of university and up to now he had always focused on sports and recreation, but now a new idea of teaching was come to him. He says how great if would be to teach Northern Studies (a broad, generic Gr. 10 course delivered in some secondary schools, with content usually determined by individual teachers) in high school so he could teach the kinds of things he has learned here, indicating that people would be so surprised at what there is to learn.

Students came to the program well aware of the uniqueness of their language and the important role it plays as a cultural identity marker. At different times, various organizations would carry out promotional campaigns encouraging people to speak Inuktitut, noting that it was an important element of their culture. Just as Mark had noticed changes in his usage of

Inuktitut, the following vignette demonstrates how other students were also being influenced by discussions of this area of their culture and how they were attaching increased importance to it:

> As the end of an extended period of studying the history of its written form, the students discussed the "state" of the Inuktitut language today, broaching topics which included: talking about the varying degrees of decline in usage and quality among different age groups and different regions; comparing the Inuktitut circumstance to other Aboriginal languages, some of which were on the verge of dying out; the limited use of its written form; and its future. Several students openly admit their low level of Inuktitut ability, saying that while they can understand a lot of what people say, they can't really speak it. They talk about why they think that is, how it makes them feel, and how they really wish they could speak it. There are hushed tones around the class. This is the first time most of them have talked this openly and several are quite emotional, especially as they discuss how others in Inuit society look down on them. The session ends with both understanding and firm words from classmates, as they hear "We know it's not your fault.", as well as, "It's up to you if you really want to do something about it.".

In the final assignment for this area of study, where students act as mock policy advisors to the new government, every one of the students made the recommendation that there should be a full Inuktitut curriculum for students from Grade 1 through to Grade 12.

2.22 Perceptions of themselves as Inuit

The students came to the NS program with a definite awareness that they were part of Inuit society. Throughout the year their understanding of what that meant, however, increased as they proceeded through the course work and reflected on what it all meant. While this process was usually reaffirming, it was not always a comfortable one. Engaging in the topics of study also led to confronting personal dilemmas and insecurities, as these two encounters with Pauloosie reveal:

> In early February Pauloosie is working through the final assignment of the language unit, a case study in which he is to take on the role of a language policy advisor in the government. He says he supported a government position of creating policies for promoting Inuktitut for the sake of the assignment, but that he doesn't necessarily

> agree with it. He states quite adamantly that this is not important and that he feels just as much Inuk as anyone even though he doesn't speak it.
>
> Later in that same week we have a speaker who is down here attending a conference, the head of a school board in Nunavut. Unlike many presenters who ask about fluency before they present, he does his whole presentation in Inuktitut, including questions and answers; operating on the assumption that everyone understands him. Pauloosie is struck by this – as if hit by a brick. This concentrated focus on language issues has obviously created some tension in his mind and this presentation experience has shaken his sense of self. He writes a note to me later that day, referring to the conversation we had had a few days earlier: "After this morning I have figured out a few things. 1)I'm not an Inuk. 2) I don't belong in this crowd of Inuit. 3) I don't think that I will ever be anything like an Inuk. I feel so retarded.".

This was certainly a crisis point for Pauloosie. Fortunately his self assessment didn't stay at this low level. A few weeks later he came into my office, took up residence in the easy-chair in his usual way and began a conversation, in the course of which he admitted that he had been kind of mixed up in matters of identity, saying that "At one time I was so sure of myself". He indicated that since that low point he had talked the issue through with some close classmates and his views were no longer so negative.

Another language-related issue demonstrated how students were beginning to feel comfortable with critical reflection on important issues and also how there was a growing security for some of them about who they were that wasn't attached to words.

One of the stronger symbols of assertion of self-determination by Inuit has been the shift from using the externally applied identification term of "Eskimo" to using the Inuktitut term of "Inuit" when referring to themselves, the term now officially expressed throughout Canada. The term Eskimo carried a negative connotation; it was considered derogatory and in some ways its use appeared to be taboo. Students would commonly speak in exasperating terms of trying to explain who they were to southerners, and of often having to resort, with much chagrin, to saying "you know, Eskimos", to which of course there was usually instant

recognition. The following vignette demonstrates how levels of flexibility or rigidity when dealing with such terms can be representative of self-image:

> Students joking again about explaining to a taxi driver who they are and how once again they had to resort to using the word Eskimo.
>
> I mention I once heard X, a renowned Inuk leader, refer to the COPE (Committee for Original People's Entitlement) as the Committee of Pissed-off Eskimos. There was hesitant laughter but also incredulity that this leader would use the word Eskimo. Rebecca, with a very timid voice, then raises the question "What do you guys think of the word Eskimo?". Two students, Leesee and Elisapee very quickly jump in with negative comments, "That's a bad term." and "It's wrong. That's not who we are. It's such an insult.", to which Rebecca replied, "My dad doesn't mind it. He still likes to call himself an Eskimo.". This immediately tempered the conversation and framed it in a new light, for it seemed as no one was going to say that her father was "wrong" or "bad". Leesee, who had so quickly reacted negatively then asks, "How come he doesn't mind it?" Rebecca went on to say "That's what he grew up with and used his whole life, it never meant anything bad to him." This led to a discussion of evolution of the term, how meaning and connotation of the term had become divorced from its early roots and how it's general early use among Inuit had not associated it with something negative. It ends with several people saying perhaps it's use is okay among themselves but that non-Inuit should not be using the term.

Briefly after this, an incident with Leesee and Hazel in mid-winter reflected a changing sense of self. Everyone else had left for the day, but these two had stayed behind to practice their singing and drumming. Hazel was sleeping on the couch and I noticed Leesee prodding her and saying "Come on Eskimo girl, time to practise." In initial discussions of the term "Eskimo", Leesee had expressed very vocal disapproval of the term, yet here, only a few weeks later, she was using it lightheartedly. I interpreted this as her becoming comfortable enough with who she was that she no longer found the word alone as offensive.

2.23 Understanding of difference and of the position of Inuit within Canadian society

One of the clearest indicators of influence of the new learning on the students was the degree to which their engagement in what they are learning carried on past the confines of the classroom. As study in the courses became a common element in the students'

experience, from time to time they would report on how topics which they were studying in class would become topics of conversation in evening social settings. Sometimes this was a comparing of reactions or stories about different topics, and often it was a comparing of regional differences, but other times strong opinions were voiced. Participating in the program stimulated reflection and the development of perspectives and ideas which could be in opposition to those of their peers. In a one-on-one discussion with Michael on how Inuit had been changing their traditional ways he relayed, in early winter, an incident that had highlighted for him how he was now viewing the place of Inuit culture:

> "Yeah, Pitsi [an Inuk friend from his home town who is in town visiting; pseudonym], Elisapee [NS student] and Toonee [sister of Elisapee; spends much time at the NS program; pseudonym] and I got in a big argument at Cue and Cushions on the week-end. Wendy was really yelling." They had been asking her why she wouldn't speak Inuktitut or wouldn't support all the political things that were happening, like the land claim and the Nunavut government. They spoke about why they saw these things as important for Inuit. "She says we're all human beings, we're all one and we're all going to end up speaking English anyway. She got really emotional and loud – almost got us kicked out. She was really up tight about that stuff." In the end Michael ended up by telling her that she should apply to NS and learn this stuff.
>
> I asked Michael why he thought she had reacted like that: "I don't think she knows this stuff we've been learning, plus coming from Community X, she doesn't speak Inuktitut very well. She doesn't seem to care about being Inuk. I don't think she's too proud."

Critical thinking and evaluation by the students of what they were learning led to intellectual tension in various ways. The following vignette highlighting student debate over provisions in the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement demonstrates their struggle to define their views on the position Inuit society should take with the rest of Canada:

> The students debated today their views on the land claim and whether or not they would have voted in favour of it. At the heart of the debate is the extinguishment clause [an Article which states that in return for the rights outlined in the Agreement, Inuit of Nunavut cede, release and surrender any other rights that they may have to

> the land]. Several students take the position that something like that should never be agreed to, that rights are not something you can give up. Others take the more pragmatic position that it's better to have a deal now that allows them power, control and participation in important areas of life than to hold out for an undetermined period of time on the matter of principle. Debate is passionate and heated and very informed – some of them demonstrate good knowledge of the claim. Some find it difficult not to take views personally. Through the course of the debate four of the students switch alliances, three move to supporting the agreement, and one moves from supporting it to now being against it.

The material of study in each of the courses provided students with numerous opportunities for acquiring new knowledge which influenced their views of Inuit culture and society. During the Inuit-Government Relations course students performed a radio play in class, reading the transcripts of the Coppermine Conference of 1971, the first organized meeting of Inuit, Metis and First Nations people in the NWT. In an informal discussion afterwards, Pauloosie and Mark had lots to say about what they had learned. Their words demonstrate an appreciation for the strides Inuit had made:

> M: It's hard to imagine what it must have been like when there was no way for people to communicate with each other, how they must have felt when they finally learned each other's stories
> P: I think that's why the government was able to do all the things it did, you know, like taking kids for school and getting people off the land; nobody knew what was going on.
> M: It's kind of sad to see how things were, like that guy who was talking about holding the white man's hand and going along with whatever they decided – makes you see the position people were stuck in.
> P: And that was only 30 years ago, makes you see how life has changed, although you know, I still see it like that sometimes.
> M: Oh I don't, it's not like that anymore – look at all the things Inuit are doing.
> P: Yah I know on the big scale it might look like we're doing all sorts of things, but you look at the little guy in the community, I think they still see white people as having all the power.
> M: Yah but that'll change, look at all the things we're doing now.
> P: Yah you have to admit, it's pretty amazing to think that meeting was like the start of everything...ITC, land claims, everything. ...

2.3. NS Courses and ethnic identity

Participation in the NS courses provided a wide array of learning experiences which influenced the various characteristics of the students' ethnic identity. The students' feelings about Inuit society were positively influenced. Learning about their past, of Inuit culture enduring through many changes, and of the contemporary political accomplishments led to respect in what people had done and pride in being a part of that group. As well, they began to see connections between much of what they had learned and their own experience, which enhanced their feeling of being a part of Inuit society. Personal relationships with others in their society, especially older family members, were enhanced, adding to their sense of belonging. The early and widespread positive reaction to their learning in general suggested that what they were learning was meeting some sort of need. They found great interest in the material and expressed a desire to know more, an indication of the value they were placing in their culture.

Learning situations arose which prompted students to explore and helped clarify who they were as individual Inuit. At times this helped them affirm their position, while at others, as demonstrated by the tensions surrounding language use and understanding, their assumptions and self-assessments were challenged.

Learning the story of the political renaissance and the purpose and motivations behind the political achievements enhanced their understanding of the relationship between Inuit and the rest of Canadian society.

3. Interaction with Leaders

Students had several opportunities throughout the year to hear from and interact with Inuit who were in leadership positions, either politically or within their work. Locally based Inuit leaders, such as the Presidents of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, and Pauktuutit, regularly addressed the students as a complement to specific topics of study. Nunavut-based leaders, such as the Minister of Sustainable Development in the Nunavut Government and the President of the Qikiqtaani Inuit Association (a regional organization carrying out many land claim responsibilities), had standing invitations to visit the program and they "dropped in" periodically to take some time with the students. There were also three external events, a presentation by the Premier of Nunavut at the University of Ottawa, a conference on the Making of Nunavut in Quebec City, and a presentation by Inuit leaders to a Senate sub-committee on Aboriginal Affairs, that allowed the students to view their leaders participating in various political forums. Such encounters were extremely popular with the students, and it is clear that these encounters had an impact on the students that went well beyond increasing their knowledge of the specific topics that were talked about. They played a role in increasing the students' feelings of respect and pride, they created a sense of attachment or belonging to Inuit culture, and they helped them develop their understanding of the relationship between Inuit and the rest of Canadian society. With the goal of helping the reader understand how these encounters influenced the students, a series of four vignettes are presented here.

3.1 Encounters with leaders

Vignette #1: A Classroom Presentation by Jose Kusugak, President of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (the body mandated with implementing the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement).

The students are listening to Jose recount his early association with two organizations in the mid-70's: Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, the first Inuit political organization and the one that initiated the land claims movement, and the Inuit Language Commission, a body which developed a standardized orthography for writing Inuktitut. He speaks of how he had been selected to come to Ottawa at the age of 22 to work in the newly formed ITC; how he and others had struggled with trying to understand for themselves and then explain to Inuit back in their communities, the concept of land claims; how he had gone on to chair a committee charged with standardizing the Inuktitut writing system and how there had been opposition from within Inuit society for proposing changes to the ways of writing. He is a master story teller and also master at unveiling the nature of relationships between ideas and events. What the students are witnessing is not just a recounting of his stories, but a sophisticated lesson in sociology. As he deftly weaves together seemingly disparate elements of the story, one minute there are howls of laughter and the next, rapt silence. For an hour and a half all eyes in the room are intently focused on him with unwavering concentration.

As he wraps up the presentation there are numerous questions from the students. Some of these topics had been raised earlier in class and I expected that the students would now try to clarify some of the factual details and events of the story. It is clear from the lines of questioning, however, that what is important to the students is the human relationship side of the story. They eagerly raise questions about what it was like back then to be a young person involved in these kinds of issues; what was motivating people to take on these kinds of challenges; what it was like dealing with the government and how were they viewed by others; why there was religious opposition to the work of an Inuit committee on language. I have the impression that had he been willing and able, the students would keep Jose going for hours.

As a final question they ask Jose if he has any advice for them, and there is rapt silence once again. He explains that while they might see the land claim and the Nunavut government as the end of a story, he still sees it as a beginning, even after all these years; while they've accomplished much, they now have to make the new institutions work. He impresses upon them how valuable they are to the future of this Inuit dream of running their own affairs, how much people will look to them to carry it on and how important it is that they learn as much as possible so that they can make valuable contributions.

As he leaves, Leesee in that ever effusive style remarks, "That was so amazing! I never knew about that stuff, never knew that that stuff went on. And they were so young! It's hard to imagine." And then she joked with a classmate about how they

could never imagine themselves doing something like that – intimating that their lifestyle was far away from something that would lead them to anything so important. At the same time, Naudla had a similar response: "They were so strong. I can't imagine it. It's hard to believe that's how things started.".

It occurred to me that what I had witnessed was not just an expert lecturer captivating his audience, but also an audience that wanted to be captivated, an audience that was eager to know the story in all its human dimensions. Through their engagement, and the manner of their questions and their comments after he left, students expressed not only respect for the work of those involved in that early process, but also pride in understanding that Inuit had actually done the kinds of things Jose had spoken about. What was most striking, however, was the student's desire for the human connection, the human side of the story. It seemed to represent a way for them to attach themselves to the story, to realize that these people had been just like them at one time. In so doing, they were affirming their sense of belonging, of being a part of this same Inuit group. At the same time, however, a comparison of their lives and lifestyle with the work of the early leaders appeared to instill a sense of inadequacy, of disbelief that they too might one day carry on such responsibility.

Vignette #2: A Public Presentation by Paul Okalik, Premier of Nunavut

Just after class had begun on a November morning, a phone call from a media relations aid informs us that the Premier of Nunavut, Paul Okalik, will be addressing a public forum at a University of Ottawa Law Symposium later that morning. We decide to drop what we're doing and take the 15 minute walk up to the university to sit in on the presentation. With the exception of Mark, the university lecture hall is a new environment for the students and as we enter they hesitatingly hang back, trying to figure out what protocol there might be for seating. As they notice apparent strangers randomly choosing seats they realize it's a free for all and they follow Mark's lead, quickly spreading out among the vacant tables.

The Premier is in his early thirties, an age the students say they can still relate to as being relatively young, closer to their generation than other leaders. He is the only

> Inuk from Nunavut to have completed a Law Degree and it is here at the University of Ottawa that he carried out his studies. The students eagerly participate in the warm applause that accompanies the introduction and then they listen intently, as they hear this first Premier of their newly-formed Territory describe what it was like to be a lone Inuk going to university and the difficulties that presented. He then moves on to talk about the enormous challenges that Nunavut faces, describing how the territory tops the charts in all indices of social disruption and economic under-development; a legacy of the social and economic transition that Inuit society has undergone in the past 50 years. Yet his message is not one of despair, but rather of optimism and hope, as he conveys the belief that the autonomy created by this new Territory will lend Inuit the tools to actively address their future. As the talk proceeds I note fixed gazes on the students and that several of them seem to be wearing permanent smiles. As the presentation moves into a question period the two students across from me repeatedly raise their eyebrows in amazement as the Premier handles some very complex questions with some very sophisticated responses.
>
> The session wraps up with wild applause from the students and as the audience files out, they hurry to the podium to gather round the Premier, excitedly shaking his hand and introducing themselves. He takes the time to greet each one of them and then there is a lot of laughter as he questions them about their experience in Ottawa.

This presentation appeared to influence the students in two ways, it added to their sense of pride in being Inuit, and it also contributed to their understanding of what Nunavut was all about and what Inuit were wanting to achieve with it.

As I thought about the students who had been smiling throughout the presentation, I couldn't think that it was the actual words of the presentation that were making them smile for there was little humour or light-heartedness is the words; the message was gravely serious. I could assume that it was for no other reason than they were struck by the image of an Inuk authority, someone who was "one of their own", someone so close to their age, being so at ease and speaking so eloquently to this crowd of southerners. As a role model for the students, here was someone who was undeniably an Inuk who was revered for his ability to function in the modern context.

Vignette #3: A Conference on Creating Nunavut

Here in mid-March, we have traveled by train to Quebec City to attend the "Making of Nunavut" Conference at Laval University, an event which has brought together in one public forum a stellar array of Inuit leaders along with non-Inuit academics and bureaucrats. They will be discussing the very story the students have been studying all year.

The opening presenter is John Amagoalik. Walking the audience through historical circumstances and events he focuses very much on the relationship between Inuit and the Federal Government, describing the colonial atmosphere of the 1960's and the struggle for recognition of ideas of land rights and self-determination. He talks about how the political story of Nunavut has been about changing this relationship.

Again I see rapt attention on the part of the students, with smiles and nods of recognition as John recounts details with which they are familiar. His is not a light-hearted presentation and at times his words seem to cut through the air with their precision. There is silence in the room as he frames an image of earlier times, the late '60's, by recounting how he was once turned away from a prominent Montreal hotel because he was Inuk, of how "Inuit began to see just how powerless they were" and of how he and other young people were inspired by Inuit from northern Québec who were no longer afraid to confront others, to confront governments. "They did not, as we would say, ilirasuktuq [experience anxiety or fear of the unpredictable]" .

There were obvious expressions of pride on the students, both as they listened to the address and in their brief comments to me as they filed out. As well, the story had again been framed in a new light, in which these political developments represented a breaking away from the dependence and subservience of the colonial era. Mark commented that he had never looked at it that way before. While this presentation would have been important, I don't think it would have had the same impact if it had been delivered to the students in the classroom. I think much of their pride was related to seeing John comfortably deliver this story, a story to which they belonged and a story which meant so much to them, to this southern audience.

I had only ever encountered the notion of 'ilira' in Hugh Brody's (1975) treatise on Inuit-White relations in the Arctic in the early 1970's. An Inuktitut concept difficult to

describe in English, it refers to a type of fear, or nervous awe, of someone who is powerful, who commands respect and who may act in an unpredictable nature. Brody has spoken of it as being a principal element in Inuit-White relations and that due to the unpredictable and immature nature of the white people in the community who held so much power, Inuit would associate a nervous tension with dealing with them; whites were to be treated with deference because one never knew what might cause them to act out or withhold something that was essential. After John's presentation I questioned Naudla and Karen about the concept of 'ilira', how they understood it and whether or not they understood what John was getting at when he referred to it. They were quite familiar with the term and they acknowledged that yes, they understood his point. I asked if that dynamic was still at play today in their community and they said that in some cases they felt it was, that there were still many who would relate to Qallunaat in this manner, something they saw as an expression of inferiority. They told me that after listening to John they now see the point of the land claim and the Nunavut government in a whole different way. In Naudla's words, "The way he explains it, it's like we're getting back our dignity.".

Vignette #4: Reaction to conference presentations

As well as plenary sessions there were several smaller workshops which focused on a variety of topics, all related to the Nunavut story. We had initially agreed that students would spread out among all these workshops so that we could then have a later reporting on the substance of the various presentations. This was not to be. It soon became evident that what was most important to the students was watching the Inuit presenters. They were expressing an immense amount of excitement at witnessing these presenters speak to, and field questions from, the various audiences. In listening to the presentations they recognize the more significant moments and often punctuate them with their own spontaneous outbursts of applause or even at times laughter at some of the humorous cultural references which fall on unrecognizing ears among the rest of the audience. There is visible pride on their

> faces and they are unconcerned with the heads of the audiences that commonly turn towards them at such times.
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> I bump into Pauloosie just as he is leaving a workshop where Tagak Curley was the main presenter. He is bubbling with excitement and energy and quickly exclaims, "Oh you should have been there Morley. Unbelievable. Tagak's the man. He's my hero. You should have seen him in there!". And then he went on to explain how Tagak had critically recounted the nature of Inuit relations with southern "Qallunaat" through the '60's and 70's in explaining why Nunavut was such an important step for Inuit.

Once again, it was clear that, for the students, what these presenters were doing represented something which had become as important as what they were saying. They were fascinated by the interaction of their leaders with the southern participants, and they were obviously proud of what they were seeing. Rebecca's comments about seeing the different leaders in action highlight this idea:

> It gave me shivers - it was even bone-chilling [not as in fear, but as in excitement] to look at them, to hear what they had to do in making Nunavut...having to hear Tagak Curley talk about history back then was really interesting. It was bone chilling for me to be sitting in that place and listening to that....I felt so proud, of them, of Inuit, everything.

3.2 Interaction with leaders and ethnic identity

The story of the Inuit political renaissance is nothing less than the story of a quiet revolution within Canada. It is a fascinating and compelling story, a story replete with political drama and high stakes confrontation, a story that attests to the patience and steadfastness of the people involved at its centre. For the students in the NS program, it is a story that has been led and carried out by people from their home communities, people they may even know or recognize, and to whom they may even be related. Yet despite this personal proximity to the story, it is one which was outside their life experience and one about which they knew little of its details and significance. For the majority of students in

the NS program it remained a story that in many ways happened "before their time", a story that they may have heard passing reference to, but one which, for the most part, was virtually unknown to them. It had entered the realm of history.

The impact on students of these meetings with Inuit political leaders went far beyond the new knowledge they acquired. What was clear from their reactions, both verbally and non-verbally, was that students felt a sense of awe, admiration and respect towards the leaders. Although they had learned many of the details of the Nunavut story through their studies, the human side that these encounters highlighted influenced the students well beyond that realm of new knowledge. They had been unaware of the personal nature of all the activities that had gone on, that Inuit had been at the heart of so many important accomplishments, that these leaders had effected such significant change at such an early age (most who had been involved in beginning and directing the Inuit political movement had been in their mid-twenties) and that they had devoted so much to the Inuit cause. The students' understanding of that period was no longer an abstract one of events and people of another time, but one that they could now directly relate to and feel a part of.

It was also evident that these encounters not only engendered feelings towards the presenters but that the students also began to see themselves in a different light. They displayed a sense of pride in their association with these people and events, that these were Inuit, just like themselves, who had brought about these important changes and were involved in implementing them. They expressed pride in the fact that their leaders, regular people like themselves, could move comfortably through a southern environment and function as equals with all others.

The meetings also engendered a sense of personal importance and belonging in the students, through the recognition that they received from the leaders. They were struck by the fact that these older people who they so revered, were making explicit efforts of attention just for them. Often, after presenters had left, students would remark on how they felt special that someone would take the time to freely do this.

Not only had these people shown a genuine interest by coming to tell their story to the students but they had also placed a high degree of value on what the students were doing. Each of the in-class presenters would, without fail, speak of their admiration for the students and their efforts, often saying that they knew how difficult it was living in the city on their own; that they wished they had had a chance to study the things the students were studying; that it was so important for the Inuit future that the students be doing this, preparing themselves to face the challenges of the future.

4. Cultural Presentations and Performing

The rationale for having NS students participate in cultural presentations is premised on the benefit of educational outreach to a southern audience and the reciprocal benefit to students in practising their communication skills. It is apparent, however, that the impact of these activities on students went well beyond improvement of their presentation skills; that it entered the realm of their perception and image of themselves as Inuit.

Preparation for the cultural presentations involved developing a slide show on life in the Arctic and developing activities to demonstrate such cultural elements as language writing systems, skin clothing design and fabrication, and traditional Inuit games. As well, the students in the study year added a new element to their own learning and to the

presentations, that of cultural performing. This involved traditional throat singing, ai-ya-ya singing and drum dancing. Observations on the preparation, the performing and the reaction to the performing were all instructive in developing an understanding of how students were influenced by this activity.

4.1 Slide show preparation

The following vignette of the exercise of developing the slide show reveals how the students perceived the position of Inuit society and the Arctic environment in relation to southerners:

> A group of four students volunteered to put together a draft form of the slide show presentation. They quickly developed some general categories of images to depict their lifestyle and from the variety of slides available on-site they selected a number which would represent various aspects of their lives: communities, hunting, travelling on the land, the physical landscape, the animals, etc. When it came time to develop commentary, however, they were hard pressed to say anything but the obvious, usually limiting their comments to a description of the content of each image. Two examples highlighted this: One slide showed a motorized canoe pulled up onto an ice floe, with a rifle leaning against the side and a man standing on a higher ridge looking through a pair of binoculars. Their initial commentary for this was "Here's a man out hunting, probably for seals or walrus." Another showed a tanker ship anchored close to a community with a hose connecting it to some piping installations on shore. Commentary for this was "Here's a ship delivering fuel to a community".
>
> Only when the instructor posed a series of questions in response to their commentary about each slide did they start to realize how the images might be viewed by a stranger and how they would need to provide some contextual references and background before the significance of the image could be understood. In the case of the hunting slide this led to discussion of Inuit being a land-based people where hunting is still a prominent and central part of many people's livelihood; an economic activity that provides them with food, just as working in the south, provides money which is used to provide food. It also led to a discussion of the skills that are necessary to carry out this activity.
>
> The image of the tanker ship led to discussion of the lack of electrical power and transportation connections to the south, the idea that all materials must be imported by sea or air, and that all electrical power needed to be generated on-site.

This exercise demonstrated how anchored the students were in their own world and how unaware they were that southerners would not be able to relate to what they were presenting. They did not have a sense that their unique circumstances and distinctiveness would be foreign to others.

4.2 Cultural performing preparation

The addition of singing and drumming to the cultural presentations was a new development for the program and it was also a new activity for the students. With the exception of Hazel, who had had a slight introduction to some of this prior to the program, none of the students had done any of these activities before. While being an integral part of traditional Inuit culture, it had mainly been associated with the realm of elders, as something they carried with them from the more distant past. The practice had been repressed to a great extent during the period of conversion to Christianity and generally not passed on to younger generations during the changes of moving off the land into communities and of sending young people off to school. It was experiencing a revival among younger people, however, and was a practice which had come to the forefront of the public eye as a performing medium in the past two years.

In October, a local Inuit social support group organized a cultural activity evening once a week for any Inuit youth living in the city. A professional Inuk performer was hired to provide instruction in traditional drumming, throat singing and ai-ya-ya singing, as well as to animate practise of traditional Arctic games. NS instructors encouraged all students to attend the sessions and give it a try, but to their dismay it never sparked the interest of most of the students and only five or six became regular attenders throughout the fall term.

In January, the students suggested that the cultural performing sessions be transferred to the NS site. The earlier site had been inconvenient for travel, and both instructors and students felt that with the activity occurring on site, the chances of engaging more students was greater. This change had an immediate impact. Among those students who had been practising regularly were some of the more dominant and outwardly expressive personalities in the group. With the drums on site they would practise at any opportune moment and their enthusiasm began to rub off on the others. When the evenings for formal practice arrived, several other students were convinced to stay and give it a try.

The importance that the students attached to this activity changed remarkably over the next few months. In the early stages, most of the students were drawn to it out of curiosity. As time went on, however, they began to be more and more captivated by it. I would often see female students pair off and practise throat-singing during the classroom breaks. There was open admiration for those "who were getting it" and this seemed to encourage more and more practise among all of them. The atmosphere was always light-hearted and the singing was punctuated by bouts of laughter. As well, Leesee and Hazel seemed to revel in simultaneously singing and drumming together and this too became a dominant presence during breaks and after class, often with other female students joining in with the singing and a couple of male students with the drumming. The following vignette provides one perspective on how students were viewing this activity:

> In response to a query on how the regular evening practise sessions were going Leesee's answer is enthusiastic, but qualified. She liked it, but she had some reservations. The instructor, in adapting this medium for professional presentation as a cultural and contemporary art form, had developed a style that deviated from what Leesee considered "traditional". In Leesee's mind, and with agreement signaled from others beside her, this modern approach was not seen as proper and in Leesee's words "That's not the way Inuit do it. She even puts on make-up". There was a murmur of agreement among the others.

Although the students were new to this form of cultural expression, their disapproval with the contemporary approach of the instructor revealed their preconceptions about how it should be presented. While eager to learn the performing skills, they appeared to express a desire to be attached to something "traditional", to be seen, and accepted, as doing something which was an expression of traditional Inuit culture.

At the same time as the female students were getting more involved in the singing, several of the male students began to spend more and more time practising traditional Inuit games; games which required much physical strength, balance, and coordination. Five of them were quite experienced and expert in these and they obviously enjoyed the physical nature of it, but they had always practised these within the context of "northern games" where the games were recognized and valued by the public. None of them had ever demonstrated such games before a southern audience as a presentation of something unique to their culture. Those with high skill appeared to look forward to the experience, while those less skilled expressed reticence.

4.3 Cultural Presentations

Interest in cultural performing among all the students increased in early February when the group had their first opportunity to go out into a local elementary school and do a presentation. Two activities associated with the presentation, the slide show and the performing, had a strong impact on the NS students themselves. The slide show highlighted a deeply rooted cultural difference and the performing began to be seen as an exciting medium for cultural expression:

> After introductions of who they were and where they were from, the students moved to the central element of the presentation, the slide show. The slides raised both oohs and aaahs for the images of impressive scenery and the "adorable" animals, along with cries of dismay and derision for the images of dead animals that had been hunted

> and were being cut up for use as food. Some of the NS students were extremely upset and offended by this reaction while others simply laughed at it. At the end of the slides Mark takes the microphone and explains that hunting, rather than farming, provides them with their food and that unlike the southern food supply system, nothing in this process of obtaining food was hidden from those who actually eat it.
>
> While singing and drumming is new for the students it was also something totally new to the audience, something that had never before been seen. They were quite captivated by it and reacted with loud and enthusiastic appreciation. The students, who had been quite nervous before this first performance, came away quite elated. Several of them were beaming and the emotional release that came with successfully carrying it off had many of them quite excited and giddy. There was joking and laughter about mistakes they had made and there was all around obvious pleasure about what they had just accomplished. There were comments of "That felt soooo good!", "I can't believe we did that", and, "They really liked us!".

This new element of performing proved to be a popular addition and one that very quickly took over the central role of most presentations. Enthusiasm grew throughout the late winter and more and more songs were added to their repertoire. In effect, this activity provided the students with a whole new medium of expression. The initial tension and reservation they had expressed about sticking to a traditional mode became less important. While they played close attention to keeping wording of songs authentic, the compelling nature of the medium, combined with the energy and enthusiasm they brought to it, appeared to draw them towards new forms of presentation. In developing a complete performance they adopted enthusiastically the contemporary approach that their instructor had presented, combining traditional songs with innovative drumming.

Although they had been quite nervous about the first two performances, they quickly became at ease with the activity. They realized that in the eyes of southerners, they were the experts and no one would really know when they made a mistake; a circumstance much different than had they been performing before a northern audience. With each new performance their confidence appeared to increase. They continued to practise in the

evenings and as word of their proficiency filtered out, other Inuit organizations began referring requests for both performing and cultural presentations to them. Throughout the winter, variations of the whole group and a sub-group of core participants performed at such venues as the unveiling of the Nunavut Coat of Arms sculpture in the Centre Block of the House of Commons, an Annual General Meeting of Canada Trust Corporation, a cultural evening for the Royal Ottawa Golf Club, as well as several elementary and secondary schools. The culmination of the group's performing was reached with the tour to Australia, where they had repeated opportunities to perform for a variety of schools, Aboriginal groups and institutions.

The cultural performing had become an exciting and important activity for the students. Responses from a brief small group interview highlight their viewpoints. Responses to an initial question on what they thought about performing confirmed what was evident through observation: "We like it."; "It's great!"; "It's awesome.". When asked "What do you like about it?" there were replies of:

- "I like showing people who we are.";
- "It just feels good. It gives you such a special feeling.";
- "I see it as something special. No one else does it.";
- "It's so cool to be doing something that our ancestors used to do.";
- "I never thought I'd ever do something like this. I used to think that drumming was something that old people did long ago.".

I then asked what they thought people back home might think if they saw them doing this performing down here:

- "I think they'd be proud of us because we're showing off who we are. We're educating people about Inuit.";
- "I don't know, maybe they'd say we're doing it wrong.";
- "Yah, I think it's easier to do down here. If we were doing this at home I'd be so nervous. Down here nobody knows if we screw up or if we don't do something exactly right. I'd be scared that people would criticize us.".

In commenting on the importance of this activity and the significance it could have, the following testimony from Leesee expresses just how deeply students could be influenced by presenting their culture in this manner:

> You can be performing for locals or for people half way around the world, it's all such a different feeling of pride. You're so proud to show off your culture – you hit a certain point where you say "WOW, this is ME, this is who I AM."
>
> When I drum danced I felt like I was the only Inuk left on this earth who was showing people what my culture was. When we sang it was stories we sang, they were not just words that came out of our mouths, it was who we are [sic].

4.4 Cultural presentations, cultural performing and ethnic identity

Following the progression of students through this part of the program experience provides insights into several types of changes which are related to the concept of ethnic identity: how they understand their distinctiveness as Inuit, their sense of affiliation and belonging to the Inuit culture, and their confidence in who they are as Inuit.

The initial slide show preparation, where the students did not realize that a southern audience would have little understanding of what they were being shown, demonstrated a limited awareness of cultural difference. While they were quick to identify the more obvious "face value" differences, the meaning of what those differences actually represented culturally was difficult for them to grasp and communicate. This was highlighted during the

first slide show when several students became offended by the negative reaction of the audience to the scenes of killing and butchering animals. They had been taken by surprise, not anticipating that this might be a reaction, that the viewers would not be able to relate to what they were seeing without some in-depth explanation of Inuit cultural ways and values. As the number of slide presentations increased , however, the students became more adept at "deconstructing" their own culture and using the slides as a means of explaining who they were. In so doing, their understanding of their distinctiveness and of who they were as Inuit increased.

The cultural performing of singing, throat-singing and drumming had a dramatic impact on the students, first suggested by the enthusiasm they would show for it and the exhilaration that accompanied public performances. Again, as an illustration of the lack of understanding of the significance of cultural differences, they were initially amazed at the appreciative and enthusiastic reactions of the audiences. These initial reactions could have been seen as those which might naturally come with first presenting a new skill in public, but the significance of the activity grew to represent something more. They seemed to understand their uniqueness, that they were part of a culture that was being admired for its difference and that they were accomplishing something important by weaving an expression of their traditional culture into a contemporary context. Leesee's final words, along with those of the other students in interview, suggest reasons for their attachment to it. While it was an exercise of representing Inuit culture, it also became a vehicle for the students to add to their own sense of identifying with and belonging to that culture. Through recognizing that others were appreciating them and valuing them for what they represented, their sense of value in who they themselves were, also increased. These activities, something that those

within Inuit society would view as genuinely Inuit, and done without criticism from other Inuit, represented an affirmation of their belonging to Inuit culture, a distinctive way to both show, and feel, their pride in being affiliated with it. In a sense, the process of showing people who they were was a process of becoming who they were.

5. International Tours

The year-end international cultural exchange tours are viewed as valuable and exciting ways for students to expand their world view, to learn about other peoples and cultures, while at the same time providing a unique opportunity to inform others about Inuit society and political developments within Nunavut. The Nunavut story is widely regarded as a symbol of hope and success by many other Indigenous peoples in the world and the tour provided the students with an opportunity to put into practice the expression of that story, one they had been learning throughout the year.

These tours are another example of an element of the NS program which was designed primarily for one type of learning but which had important secondary impacts on the students' perceptions of themselves. The experience is instrumental in providing opportunities for the students to reflect on their perceptions of self as Inuit both at a macro social level and at a very personal level.

5.1 The Australian Tour

The two-week tour to Australia involved stops in Darwin, Canberra and Sydney, with an itinerary that involved numerous presentations and exchanges in each location. At each presentation the students were viewed and greeted both as ambassadors and as experts, Ambassadors for Nunavut and Canada, and experts on Inuit culture and politics. The

presentations usually included two segments: cultural performing, interspersed with explanations of clothing, language and lifestyle; and explanations of Nunavut political developments, the history of Inuit relations with the Federal Government leading to the land claim and the new territory. Each session ended with a gift exchange, with the students thanking their hosts for the opportunity, and the host reciprocating gestures of appreciation for having traveled so far to share with them their culture and their story.

In presentations to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians a unique difference was apparent in the dynamic that developed between the students and the two different groups. In the presentations to non-Indigenous groups the communication was usually formal and in one direction, with the students in the position of informing the audience. In the encounters with uniquely Indigenous groups an informal dialogue inevitably developed. There was eagerness to share information, to share stories of history, of culture, of the relationship with the dominant society. This vignette of an encounter at the Bachelor Institute, an Aboriginal College in the Northern Territory, describes a scene that was common throughout the tour:

> Sitting on the floor of a cement patio behind a residence, about eight NS students are chatting and laughing with an equal number of Tiwi Islanders. Questions such as "What do you people eat?" "Do you hunt?" "Do you have songs or dances?" "Do you have any special ceremonies?" are flying back and forth from both sides. Many times I hear from both sides the declaration, usually accompanied by laughter, "Just like us!". The conversation turns to questions of history, the coming of missionaries, government agents and a changing way of life, and again there are the admissions of "just like us.", this time without the laughter. The question of land claims eventually arises and the Tiwi Islanders express amazement at the powers gained by Inuit in their land claim, lauding the students for being a part of something that they can only aspire to. The session ends on a raucous note with the students drumming and singing for the Tiwi Islanders and then attempting to learn some of the Islanders traditional dances; an exercise accompanied by much laughter and expressions of good will.

Initial remarks afterward included such statements as: "That was so cool!", "It's amazing how much they're like us.", "I loved that." , "We should go visit them.","It looks like they've gone through the same things as us.", "They were really surprised by our land claim.". I was to see variations of this scene over and over as the trip through Australia progressed.

Other types of events also highlighted the impact of modern Qallunaat society dealing with Indigenous ways of life and often provoked strong student reaction. At some of the meetings with Aboriginal groups the students learned that an important current political issue was focusing on the indignity and suffering brought about by earlier government assimilation policies which saw thousands of Aboriginal children removed from their families and placed in institutions or with White families, with the goal of having them leave behind their Aboriginal ways in favour of modern ones. The following vignette highlights student reaction to this:

> On the recommendation of groups we've met with in Sydney we've come to see the theatrical production "Stolen", a depiction of the time when Aboriginal children were removed from their families. Upon leaving the production there is an uncharacteristic silence among the students. Slowly they begin to discuss what they've just seen:
> L: "I couldn't stop thinking of my mom the whole time. She was taken away from her family by the missionaries. I just cried and cried."
> K: "Yah, I cried too. It's hard to imagine those things happening."
> H: "That was so bad.".
> D: "How could they do that? It was so cruel!"
> M: "Because they thought they were superior, they thought their way was better. It's just like home."
> H: "Yah, but it wasn't that bad at home."
> M: "No but it's the same thing. Qallunaat always assumed they were superior. They thought Aboriginal people were primitive."

With each presentation, as they realized how interested the audiences were to hear from them, the students became more confident and polished in their delivery. An

accounting of an impromptu presentation illustrates not only how comfortable they had become with their role, but also the enthusiasm and importance they attached to it:

> It's another warm evening in Darwin. We're on a stop-over here, awaiting a flight to Canberra. As I stroll across the street to the popular and often crowded night market across from our hostel I hear uncharacteristic night market sounds. The sounds of the dijeridoo salesman and the quiet music from the kiosks have been replaced by the distinctive sounds of Inuit drumming and singing. Just what are the students up to? There, in the centre of a circle of shoppers are eight of the women and three of the guys, dressed up in their traditional outfits (bare legs and sandals not withstanding) drumming and singing away with their usual vigor and enthusiasm. Between songs Leesee and Hazel take turns explaining to the assembled audience of kiosk owners and tourists a little bit about who they are, where they're from and what their singing represents. They answer questions with the usual joking and laughter about how their world is so different from what they're experiencing here. As the singers take a break the guys intersperse the performance with demonstrations of their traditional games, drawing many oohs and aaahs for their abilities.
>
> I knew they loved spur of the moment action and I couldn't wait to learn just how they had come to be pulling this one off. As it turns out, it was all impromptu. The didjeridoo stand had become a centre of much laughter and joking as they attempted to coax some semblance of sound out of this traditional Indigenous peoples' instrument. Marveling at the sounds created by the kiosk owner, they inevitably asked "How do you do that?", which led to the observation that the breathing control technique was unique like throat singing, which led to reciprocal questions about throat singing, which led to explanations about who they were and what they were doing there. And that's about all it took for them to say "Would you like us to show you?". At that they had run across the street to the hostel, grabbed their tops and the drums and proceeded to put on a half-hour performance for the kiosk keepers and whoever else would want to listen.
>
> Later, sitting at poolside at the hostel they approached me, excitedly showing off the gifts that people operating the kiosks had given them in return for their performance. Nothing seemed to strike them so much as the recognition that came with gift-giving, and here once again they were feeling special, recognized for who they were, Inuit. I asked them if they would ever have thought eight months ago that one day they'd be throat singing and drum dancing in a market in Australia, and of course the reply, accompanied by laughter, was "NEVER!"

5.2 International tours and ethnic identity

Simply by presenting themselves, by being who they were, a group of young people from a common Indigenous minority, the students were recognized as carrying a certain

authority in the eyes of their hosts. In assuming the position of ambassadors and experts, they succeeded in their role by putting into practice much of what they had learned throughout the year, by making connections between themselves and the people they were meeting with. In expressing their culture and their story to these audiences, in continually using the first person plural in reference to themselves, they were also solidifying their sense of belonging, of being a part of Inuit society. I couldn't help but think that for some of the them, this process of talking about who they were was also a process of defining and understanding for themselves who they were.

Through explaining and comparing land claim policies, historical events and government relations, the exchanges also created conditions for students to develop deeper understandings of their relationship with the larger society. They saw that their position in the world as a minority Indigenous culture was not unique, that their relationship with mainstream society paralleled that of many other Indigenous groups, an awareness which gave rise to reflections on the nature of the relationship between Indigenous land-based societies and industrialized Euro-societies.

6. Southern independent living

The southern location of NS is one of its more distinguishing features, and one that played a critical role in the overall influence of the program experience on the students. As various students indicated in their motivations for coming, this southern location created an allure, a mystique which made it a powerful attraction. In contrast to how they often saw life in their communities, their popular image of the south was one of excitement, of action and of endless possibilities, an image often reinforced by brief holidays or school tours.

Living in the southern urban environment of Ottawa, however, was undoubtedly the most challenging aspect of the NS experience, one that often pushed students to confront their limits of adaptability. Not only were the students living on their own for the first time and dealing with all the challenges that any young person faces at that stage of life, they were doing it in a new and very different cultural milieu, far away from the familiarity and support of family and community. While the majority of students completed the program, many indicated there were times when they were in a fragile state; when yearning for the comfort and familiarity of home and wanting to get away from the stress of the southern urban environment was so strong that they were very close to abandoning. During the study year four students left the program. The first was overwhelmed by the challenge within the first week, the second became pregnant in November and felt the need for an "Inuit" food diet in order to have a healthy baby, the third, although full of energy and good intentions, was not able to develop a lifestyle that would allow her to commit to full-time studies, and the fourth accepted in March that he had not been able to maintain a lifestyle that would allow him to succeed as a student.

A description of the southern living aspect of the student experience could highlight the innumerable decisions and challenges which any young person faces when taking this kind of step; challenges of financial management, of lifestyle management, of self-care, of culture shock, and so on. Meeting these challenges led to the understandable and obvious increase in self-confidence which students attested to and demonstrated at the end of the year. This section, however, will focus on the southern experience solely in terms of its relationship to ethnic identity, to the understanding that students develop both of themselves as Inuit and of their relationship to Qallunaat society. Influence on these aspects of ethnic

identity are related to two aspects of the southern experience: dealing with the expectations of others, and viewing their culture and communities from a distance.

6.1 The challenge and stress created by expectations of others

As well as meeting the challenges of day to day life, month in and month out, students also dealt with another stress, that of the expectations of others. While not a prevalent influence on their day to day activities, these expectations did have an influence on them through the year as well as a major impact on them at the end of the program. These expectations existed in two forms. There were the expectations of friends and family that they needed to succeed, and there were also the negative expectations of others in their communities who expected and assumed that they would fail.

6.11 Expectations to succeed

The following exchange with Hazel and Leesee provides insights into the nature of this expectation. They highlighted the intensity of their early feelings of fear, the initial dilemmas of independence, and the pressure to succeed:

H: As for leaving home, I couldn't wait to go....
L: I wanted to get out of Community Z because it was getting too small ...I wanted to leave home because I got tired of the whole isolation.
H: But then you get here and it's so scary. You get so much responsibility.
L: Yah, it just hits you in the face.
H: And you just want to run back to your parents but you can't.
L: Yah it hits you really fast – and nobody is there to help you (there is laughter about this now, at the end of the year)
H: And you get no sympathy for it (laughter again), it's like welcome to the real world – but you wanna cry.
L: You know when you call them for help – like I called Dad once and he said "I knew you'd call" or like I called a couple of months ago and he said, "I'm just waiting for you to call for money"
H: I haven't called my mom or dad – I won't.
L: It's like giving in – you're losing – you've failed
L: And everybody's eyes are on us – for us to leave [home] and succeed – you can't fail – cause then we're letting everyone down....when I came here, the first two weeks, it was so hard, I was saying on the phone to my sister "It's so hard" and

> then she says "Well you're not only going on your behalf, you're going on behalf of Community Z.". It was like, "oh, my God, what responsibility!".

6.12 Expectations of failure

While the students indicated that many friends and family back home wished and hoped and expected a positive outcome for them, they also indicated that there was often a negative expectation associated with their decision to leave home for southern study. They felt that there were those who were waiting for them to fail, to come back home before completing the year. Knowing that this had been a common outcome for people who had left home, it added to both the fear and the resolve of the students. As Leesee recounts:

> ...and just people at home, they'll say "she won't make it, she'll be back before Christmas". Like even last year when I was in high school and people came here, they'd say "oh, she won't last. I give her maybe two months" and sure enough she came back home and people said "see, we said so." It's very sad how much impact people can have on you.
>
> I don't know why they're like that. It's like they don't want you to succeed. They think you're trying to be better than them.

Several students indicated that this stepping away from home to go to school was regarded by some in their communities as doing something that would make them look better than others, would make them stand apart from the group, and that this was a difficult circumstance to deal with. It was not one, however, which caused them to change their ideas, but rather it was expressed more as a regret that others should think that of them.

6.2 Viewing Inuit society from a distance

Students reported that living in the south played an important role in influencing how they saw themselves and their home. This excerpt from an interview with Leesee and Hazel focuses on this issue:

L: Coming down here I felt more Inuk than I did at home.
H: You've got to leave your home to see where you're at, leave home to see what you're doing – you don't think about it at home, you're just there, but when you go away you look back ...you see yourself and how you were. You think about it more when you're homesick. I never thought about being an Inuk.
L: Yah, you spend so much time thinking about home when you're here.
H: I never thought about being an Inuk at home, I just was.

In response to why they thought about "being Inuk" down here their responses highlighted two points. In Ottawa they were distinctive, no matter who they met it was their Inuit affiliation which identified them. As well, the Inuit focus of the studies tended to have them dwell on back home, its history and current issues, and so reinforced their identification with that community, as Inuit, not just as members living in it.

6.3 Southern living and ethnic identity

In recognizing that there was a pressure to succeed, students understood that they were more than individuals in the program, that many back home looked upon them as representatives of their people. This contributed to their sense of belonging, that they were part of something bigger than their own individual worlds.

The negative expectation that they would fail in their attempt to study in the south appears to be related to a dynamic Worchel et al. (2000) refer to in their discussion of developing group identities. They suggest that among collective cultures the defining of group boundaries leads to a focus on group cohesion, a dynamic which discourages "individual group members from standing out within their group." (p.25). In such a situation "Appearing different or better than other ingroup members embarrasses one's colleagues and disrupts group cohesion."(p. 25). Clearly these students were seen by some as stepping outside their group in this manner, leading to the expression of negative expectations. While this created a certain tension for the students it also helped them affirm their commitment to

what they were doing. The overall experience of southern living, of meeting all the challenges of everyday life highlighted the enormity of their accomplishment, an accomplishment which left an important mark. The reality of southern life had been demystified and they had succeeded in this environment so different from their own, this Qallunaat world. They realized that they had lived as equals within that world, something which enhanced their confidence in themselves as Inuit, and which influenced their understanding of their relationship with the rest of Canadian society. As well, the combination of living away from home and interacting with southern society, while at the same time participating in studies which uniquely focused on the history and major political developments of home, caused the students to continually reflect on their Inuit ethnicity and the meaning of what it meant to be Inuit.

7. The NS Experience and Ethnic Identity

This chapter presents a view of the NS program experience as a composite of several elements: the initial orientation, the courses of study, interaction with Inuit leaders, the development of cultural performing and presentation, the international tour, and southern living. An overview of a range of student responses to these different elements creates an image of the program experience and what it can mean for students. In so doing the relationship between this experience and the ethnic identity of the students begins to emerge.

The sub-section summary at the end of the description of each element describes how the various aspects of the program experience influenced, each in a variety of ways, the different elements which make up the construct of ethnic identity. A summary of these influences is presented in Table 2.

Program Experience Elements	INDICATORS OF ETHNIC IDENTITY						
	Affective Components					Cognitive Components	
	Feeling or sense of belonging	Attitudes			Ethnic behaviours and practices	Knowledge of group's history and traditions	Understanding of ethnicity and its implications, vis à vis relationship with dominant society
		pride	respect	pos. feelings			
Orientation	X						
Academic courses	X	X	X	X		X	X
Interaction with leaders	X	X	X	X		X	X
Cultural presentations / performing	X	X		X	X		
International tours	X	X					X
Southern, independent living		X		X			

Table 2: Summary of influence of NS program elements on the components of ethnic identity .

CHAPTER 7

ETHNIC IDENTITY: PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS AFTER NUNAVUT SIVUNIKSAVUT

The Nunavut Sivuniksavut (NS) program presented students with a multi-faceted experience, an experience through which they were influenced in a number of ways. The students acknowledged that one of the principal areas of influence was in how they perceived themselves and Inuit society.

Findings regarding the perceptions of students are presented here from 3 different perspectives, with the goal of helping the reader understand how the students' sense of self and of Inuit society was influenced by the NS experience:

1. the reflections of current students in the program, both as they participated in and completed the program;
2. the year-end reflections of students from earlier years;
3. the reflections of former students at an NS alumni conference

1. Reflections of Current Students

As they progressed through the year, some individual students began to indicate their feelings about their association with Inuit culture. It was at the end of the program, however, when students were asked to reflect back on their whole year and on how they now saw their position in life that they appeared to realize the significance of their experience. In conveying their thoughts on the year they expressed, in a variety of ways, numerous

perceptions of themselves and of Inuit society, perceptions which were invariably positive. These perceptions can be characterized by the following five categories:

- respect for Inuit society;
- pride in being associated with Inuit culture;
- understanding of self within the context of Inuit social and political change;
- eagerness to learn more about Inuit culture and history;
- confidence in self.

1.1 Respect

A common sentiment of the students was one of respect for their people. This respect was usually associated with learning about their history, of how people had once lived and of how they had endured and adapted to the many influences presented to their society over the past century. Students also spoke of respect for those who had led the political renaissance over the past 30 years and who had accomplished so much.

Moshi had at one point expressed feelings of being inferior since he saw all the work of higher positions being done by non-Inuit, but he went on to indicate that, "By the time I got to the end of NS it wasn't a big deal anymore. I saw myself as an Inuk. I moved more to accepting my culture and race.". Much of this change he attributed to his studies, "What I learned here, the history and other stuff we dealt with, made me respect our culture more and made me want to learn more.".

Karen, in a speech to classmates, openly declared how her negative perceptions about being Inuk had changed. She spoke about not having cared about her background or her culture and that she had little respect for Inuit. She then went on to say that because of her studies, "I have learned that Inuit have a lot to be proud of. I have learned to put myself first,

my needs and interests, my Inukness. I am stronger than I thought. .... I long to value my language, culture and history more.".

Carmen had expressed indifference towards Inuit culture, basically finding it irrelevant, but she now indicated, " I also have more respect towards my elders and my people then I did before I came here to Ottawa and learnt [sic] the many different things about my people.".

Rebecca speaks of how learning the political story had caused her to shift her negative views on this aspect of Inuit society to one of appreciation. She had expressed lack of faith and value in the Inuit leadership but now said:

> Now that I've come here I've proved myself so wrong. The leaders that made Nunavut worked so strong and that made a big change of thought for me, cause I really thought Nunavut wouldn't work. It's important to know this story, especially us that are going to work, the younger generation. We really have to know the history of how it became a new territory.

Rebecca's words of appreciation are words of respect, but they also suggest an urgency that people understand the story behind the political changes so that they too might develop this supportive and positive perspective.

1.2 Pride

By far the most common perception expressed by the students was one of pride, pride in being a part of Inuit culture and society. Again, this sentiment was associated with understanding the Inuit story and Inuit political accomplishments. There were also times when it was expressed, however, not as a result of learning anything new about themselves, but of increased learning of Qallunaat culture and a recognition of difference, of Inuit values and ways that were in contrast to what they had experienced in the south.

1.21 Pride from understanding the Inuit story

Theresa had talked about sometimes feeling ashamed as an Inuk, but then she went on to say how learning the story of what Inuit had gone through had brought pride to her:

> NS experience has changed my feelings about being an Inuk. Growing up I wasn't taught about the history of the Inuit, I knew a little bit but not a lot. NS has taught me the history of Inuit. Knowing these things better, I feel more comfortable letting people know who I am and where I come from. After NS I felt more comfortable talking about the history of Inuit and about who I am, maybe because I now have more knowledge about where I came from. I am now proud of who I am and where I came from.

There were students such as Mark who had always demonstrated strong positive feelings about being Inuk, coming to the program with much self- assurance. He described, however, that what he had learned had accentuated those thoughts:

> I always knew we were special, for my parents and grand-parents had always talked about how good it was to be Inuit and how important it was to follow Inuit ways, but I hadn't known all that was behind the land claims and the government. It gives me even greater reason to be proud. We Inuit are now taking our rightful place in Canada.

In an oral presentation to the class Elisapee described her assessment of the meaning of what she had learned and how it had influenced her:

> I am here today to tell you what I have learned. I have learned about my people and about their past. And I believe, that the most important thing that will benefit from my recent education is my future. By knowing this valuable information I now have a greater appreciation of what I have. Knowing that my people, the Inuit, have worked so hard to regain our land, our culture, our identity; who we are. Knowing that they have worked so hard to have me be able to be an Inuk makes me appreciate everything I have more and more. My people argued, struggled, suffered for me and you. What is so significant and what makes me so proud of these people is that they did not bleed. They chose not to fight because the government didn't know any better. So they chose to tell the government about who the Inuit are and what they need. The dumb thing is that it took the government decades to get the message. But my people were patient. They tried and tried and tried and they didn't give up. Knowing this makes me proud of who I am.

In a similar recognition of what had been accomplished politically, Leesee, in her effusive style, declared:

> From what I have learned I feel so amazing to be Inuk... I feel like I can walk into a room full of people and tell them how proud I am to be Inuk...I feel that Inuit are truly amazing. I mean come on look at what we have accomplished. We have NUNAVUT. Which I feel no one really is proud of...well from what I can see in Community Y. Nunavut means so much to me. Nunavut is our history, our people, and our hard work. No matter how hard it was for the people 20 years ago who fought for it, still today it is a battle to prove that WE CAN DO IT. And it will be a battle for another 20 years I'm sure. But from what I have learned at NS I know both sides now.

Clearly, in learning the story of Nunavut, the students had come to see that there was much to be proud of. Coming to this realization, however, was also accompanied by a certain degree of excitement, as Leesee's remarks demonstrate; excitement that there indeed are many reasons for being proud and reasons for refuting negative perceptions that they weren't comfortable with.

1.22 Pride in Inuit ways and values

Living in the south had allowed students to observe and learn about Qallunaat ways and values and note some of the differences with ways and values they had acquired in their own upbringing. Two issues highlighted value differences which were disturbing to students, that of the plight of homeless people in the city and the placement of elderly people in institutionalized care facilities. In reaction to this Hazel said, "Inuit share everything. You're taught to do that from an early age. You can't let someone go without a home.". In response to the position of the elderly in society Leesee expressed, "We respect our elders and take care of them, we don't make them live far away from us. Families take care of each other.". In expressing this negative judgement of Qallunaat ways they were, in effect, recognizing

and reaffirming their own values of family and sharing; principal characteristics of Inuit culture.

1.3 Understanding of self as an Inuk

While the students had made references to their new-found knowledge as being a source of positive feelings such as pride and respect, they also spoke about how this learning had helped them to come to a new understanding of who they were as Inuit. Where once there had been confusion, they now spoke of clarity.

Leesee had always been one of the most expressive and her words sum up this perspective on their learning:

> This year has truly been amazing. It has taught me who I am and where I come from. It made me realize how much we must protect our culture and Nunavut. I know how Nunavut got to where it is now, I know what process it took.... Before NS I had no clue who I was or where I REALLY came from .... When I got to NS my eyes were opened wide. I learned why things are the way they are today. ... Not only did we learn about Nunavut and how hard it was, we learned who we were inside. Sure I cried lots during NS because it made me confused of who I REALLY was, but I think I had more happier tears than sad ones.

Similarly, Michael expressed a new understanding of how life had come to be for Inuit and how this had given him a sense of place and direction. Having begun from a position of saying, "I was lost, as to where our people were from and where they were going.", he then went on to say:

> I also learned that there is a difference between knowing and understanding. As an Inuk I now have a deeper understanding of why we're here and where we should go.... I was able to mingle with Inuit who felt the same way as I did. I was able to let out things that I felt I needed to let out, and get feed back on it. It was great because you guys provided a lot historical documents that supported a lot of my questions. And it gave me a sense of being. I was able to see where I wanted to go. I wasn't lost anymore. I saw areas of improvement, and areas where I wanted to be, within Nunavut. I was also able to enlighten a lot of people on Nunavut.

1.4 Expressing value in culture through wanting to learn about it

An additional way that students expressed their valuing of Inuit society was through expressions of importance in learning about it. Although so brief, Karen's words, "I long to value my language, culture and history more.", carry much weight, coming after she had emotionally declared how there had been a time when she had had no respect for Inuit and no interest in being Inuit.

Moshi had indicated that while growing up he had come to associate Inuit culture with being inferior, but then went on to say, "What I learned here, the history and other stuff we dealt with, made me respect our culture more and made me want to learn more."

Carmen had spoken about how before NS she had had little interest in Inuit culture but how that had now changed, "Now I have been in the NS program, it has taught me the past of my people, culture and traditions. I am now very interested in learning more about the society of my people the Inuit.".

Rebecca expressed a specific desire related to language:

> I know I try to keep my language strong, like very strong. And now that I've been here I want to learn it more. I know a lot of Inuktitut but there are some words that, just simple words that mean a lot of things. Like one word can mean a lot of things and they are kind of fading away. And I've wanted to be in the community especially when there are elders who've known the past and I would like to know them more, their knowledge, all sorts of things. I've wanted to know more since I'm down here.

And Mark, in a straightforward but meaningful statement remarked, "My appreciation for Inuit has grown so much I feel the need to keep learning more about Inuit.".

These statements demonstrate that the students had begun to realize that there was much to learn and the positive feelings they had developed through their initial studies were at the root of wanting to know more.

1.5 Confidence

One of the predominant attitudes which students presented was one of confidence. This confidence was linked to learning new skills, especially those of independent living and of overcoming the many personal challenges they confronted throughout the year, but it also appeared as an expression of affirmation of Inuit society in general, and of who they were as Inuit.

1.51 Confidence from new abilities

Carmen's words highlighted confidence gained from developing independent living skills and meeting many challenges on her own:

> It has also taught me to be independent and to live on my own. Before I came to NS what I thought of myself was I wouldn't be able to survive without my parents and even friends and thinking I wouldn't be able to succeed in school because I would be missing home to [sic] much. Well it has taught me many things in life that I wouldn't have thought of.

Michael expressed his confidence in a similar fashion, of meeting personal challenges:

> This year was significant to me because it rebutted a lot of negative criticism about me and gave me hope and confidence in myself. At first I knew what I had to do but there is a difference in actually doing it. I never thought it would be so difficult.

1.52 Confidence as an Inuk

As highlighted earlier, Moshi's learning had led him to value Inuit society, but his comments also demonstrated a coming to terms with being Inuik in the midst of Qallunaat society. The inferiority Moshi had felt was replaced with confidence and self-assurance:

> Somehow along the line I got confidence – maybe when I first came here I started building that up. With confidence I lost all that feeling of being inferior. Knowing I could do whatever anyone else could. I learned to see ourselves as equals, not higher or lower – if they have the job it's because they are qualified. Now I see Inuit as

> working to get those qualifications. I feel like I have as good a chance of getting qualified as anyone else on the street.

When asked where this confidence had come from he demonstrated that his feelings were not only a confidence in self, but a confidence from seeing Inuit run their own government:

> Understanding the formation of Nunavut and that they're looking for Inuit to fill the positions. One of the things always running through my mind while I was here was that I was learning stuff in the program that I could use back home: knowing the land claim, knowing the organizations – I didn't even know about them before. Living by myself, on my own was another big one.

Leesee also expressed a confidence which was related to her re-assessment of Inuit governance abilities, remarking:

> Before, I was so against NUNAVUT. Before NS, I thought Nunavut was the wrong way to go, I thought that the Inuit were so not ready for this step and were setting ourselves to fail...But now, after NS I feel like I can do anything. Anything at all. I can be president of QIA [the Qikiqtaani Regional Inuit Association] or NTI [the central Inuit land claim organization] and make changes for my people or just be a student for the rest of my life and still make a difference.

Mark had come to the program with significant southern and post-secondary experience and had always demonstrated a high level of self-confidence, a background that initially had us concerned about what value the NS experience might hold for him. He remarked throughout the year, however, on the importance of what he was learning and his final testimony attested to a newly perceived confidence :

> This has been the greatest school year for myself, academically and socially. I have learned so much about Inuit and myself that I feel confident in Inuit and myself. It was an enlightening experience. It it wasn't for NS I would be in a lost position academically. NS gave me the boost to strive to be the best in everything I did.

Michael expressed a new kind of confidence in the terms of personal strength:

> Not only did the NS program provide me with knowledge, but also the strength to be a better person. This I'm passing on to my younger brother. He, like myself when I was his age is lost. But now I care. I don't want somebody to become a nobody, and he was on that road. We've become a stronger family. Most of my strength that I acquired came from the history lessons. Like the Inuk that said "Take only the best things from the southern culture and leave all the garbage to them" or something of that sort that said to take the best of both worlds....A few of the Inuit Leaders inspired me to be something better then what I was previously.

In addressing her hopes and fears for the future Rebecca demonstrated her confidence though a commitment to becoming involved in the future, to hoping to make a difference:

> I have high hopes of keeping it [Nunavut] strong, but I'm just one person who wants that to happen. But in general I fear in some cases that it might really fade away. But if I try to keep my voice up to keeping it strong I think that I would have lots of support in that from the elder people – but maybe not so much in the younger generation, but if I educate them it might change.

The students' perceptions of self and of Inuit society and culture had indeed been influenced in numerous ways by their experience. They had found solid reasons for their feelings of pride, respect and confidence. It was evident that this affirmation, both of themselves and of Inuit society, was also engendering a great deal of excitement and enthusiasm for returning and making a contribution.

2. Reflections of Former Students

An analysis of the year-end reflections of all the NS students from six former years revealed perceptions which, for the most part, directly paralleled those of the current students, with numerous ways of expressing value in Inuit culture and society. Three differences, however, were apparent: one, unlike the current students there were few expressions of a desire to learn more of the Inuit story; two, an additional theme emerged

which could best be described as an enthusiasm or commitment for becoming involved in the Inuit cause; and three, the notion of confidence expands to include linkages to persevering through personal struggles through the year. The words of the students are presented here within the framework of these central analytical themes:

- respect for Inuit society;
- pride in being associated with Inuit culture;
- understanding of self within the context of Inuit social and political change;
- confidence in self;
- enthusiasm for becoming involved in Inuit affairs.

While these distinct themes characterize the perceptions of former students, it is important to note that the boundaries between them are not always clear, and that in certain situations they converge. For example, respect for others in the group often leads to pride in being part of that group, and understanding of the relationship of a minority group to the majority can be a factor in promoting confidence as part of that minority.

2.1 Respect

As with the current students, the common sentiment of respect was associated with learning Inuit history. Karen ('95) described how the respect she had developed for Inuit society was directly related to understanding the process behind Inuit political accomplishments:

> Before attending the program I never really understood how things developed and all the changes that happened that led up to modern Inuit society. The creation of Nunavut wasn't an overnight thing – Inuit have worked very hard for it over the years and I feel that the Land Claim Agreement is a symbol of their perseverance and dedication that should be commended, respected and appreciated.

In a more enthusiastic fashion Apak ('99) expressed similar feelings:

> I've learned to appreciate all things this year... Then there's my ancestors and leaders. My appreciation is deeper than ever because over the past 8 months I've learned to some extent what Inuit did to survive – how they reacted when they first saw Qablunaat ... then there's our political leaders. They are absolutely amazing – what people like John A, Jose, and everyone else did for the past 30 years to accomplish and push bit by bit to get where we are today. You know folks, it's real! Nunavut is real!

Others expressed, as Rita ('99), how coming to an understanding of the life struggles of Inuit over time had instilled a deep-seated respect:

> I have gained more knowledge and I am now more aware of who I am and what's going on around me. I am proud of my identity, I have great respect for my ancestors, and I would do anything for my people....When I think of these people who lived in the most coldest regions of the world, I always tell myself, life can't get better than this. Because I feel this bond that I have never felt before. It's so close to my heart and thinking that they risked their lives to save their people, their children, and what I finally understand now, they kept their culture strong in their hearts for us to understand and accept that we are these people and that we should be proud. It's not because we have to be, but because we are, it's in our blood and that's the most special gift that we have as Inuit.

In parallel to the sentiments of the current students, the respect that former students developed was based on recognition of the perseverance and the steadfastness of those who had gone before them, those who had struggled politically and those who had struggled through the hardships and challenges of earlier times.

2.2 Pride

As with the current students, the most commonly expressed sentiment was one of pride, pride in being a part of Inuit culture and society. This pride was most often linked to having knowledge and understanding of the Inuit story, of recognizing the many changes, struggles and accomplishments throughout their history.

Salome ('97) expressed this pride as a recognition of Inuit society regaining some power to direct itself:

> I have become even prouder to be an Inuk woman with a unique history and I feel fortunate to live in this generation where the Inuit are taking back the control they once had....This is the only college program where I have heard a graduate say they are really proud to be who they are. Every Inuk high school graduate should take this program because it prepares you to be that future leader Nunavut desperately needs. Each graduate always ends up being proud to be Inuk.

In a similar way, Ooleetoa ('97) expressed pride in having new awareness of political steps being taken within Inuit society:

> The things that I've learned during this year have meant a lot to me because I can and will use them in the future. I would have to say that the most important thing that I have learned is in the land claim. This program gave me a better understanding of all the steps of the negotiations with the Canadian government. All the things that go on that we don't hear about. Now that I know these things that we don't usually hear about I can now pass it on to the people who aren't really sure about it, educate them and make them feel proud of who they are. Inuit will be in control and I'm really proud of who I am and proud of the people who worked hard on it.

Barbara ('98) drew parallels between her personal growth towards independence through the year to that of Inuit society, expressing her pride in Inuit society as a parallel to pride in herself for what she had accomplished:

> I learned about the land claim, Inuit history, and at the same time I lived on my own. I became more aware of who I am and what I should do with my future. I feel I have grown more than the people my age at home. Learning about these things makes me think about the Inuit society finally beginning to surface again. The power and control are being gained back by us, and young Inuit can make a difference if they know the land claim for the future - this program, it makes you proud to be Inuk, especially since we're surfacing again.

Angela ('96), as well as expressing pride in home, indicated that much of this was a result of reflection which was prompted in part by her being so far away from home, that it allowed her to see her home in a new way:

> The most important thing I would say I have learned this year would be the fact that I'm proud of where I come from – being homesick and looking at your culture from a far distance can really change your perspective in terms of how you look at yourself and your people.

The students saw the political accomplishments as a regaining of autonomy they once had, and learning the story behind this had become a source of inspiration to them, along with a source of pride in being a part of a group which had worked so hard and achieved so much.

2.3 Understanding of self as an Inuk

In various ways, students from former years spoke about how learning the story of their people had given them a new sense of self as Inuit. Some also appeared to attach an importance to this learning taking place "away from home", suggesting that it gave them a different perspective by looking back "from the outside".

Larry ('98) spoke directly to the notion of identity, and expressed this as a heightened sense of belonging, of being part of the larger group of Inuit:

> You cannot imagine the person I have become after experiencing Nunavut Sivuniksavut. Even at times, I want to break down and release the joys and triumphs which I have conquered as a result of taking the program. I am close to my people, I am close to my land, I am close to the heart of the culture of the Inuit, and that makes me happy. Day by day I get closer, and each day I continue to discover pieces of my culture and add to my identity.

Juanita ('97) spoke of having gained a new sense of identity as an Inuk through learning the Inuit story from a distance:

> Studying all the different topics this year has meant a lot more than what I had expected it to. Finding out about the land claim, the history, most of the Inuit organizations, and current issues has been very beneficial to me. That being because I had next to zero knowledge about them. Learning something about yourself makes you more appreciative of who you are...The past eight months taking NS and living

> independently in Ottawa has made me become more aware about the Nunavut territory and my Inuit culture. The things I have learned about myself paints a clearer picture of my identity of being Inuk. This program has enabled me to re-discover my roots.

For Pat ('96) the increased sense of self as an Inuk was something that he only realized was important after he had been through the program, and he described the various elements which had contributed to this:

> Before I decided to apply for this program I had some doubts as to the usefulness of the things taught here. I was afraid that I would be wasting my time, that I didn't really need to learn about my culture and that I already knew how to live independently down south. Well, now I realize that I was all wrong and naive. The things taught here are much more important to me than ever before. Now I know much more about my people's past, my cultural history, the issues Inuit are presently dealing with, and life in the south. I found this so interesting because I really needed to know who I was, who I represented and why today is the way it is. The things that I have learned have helped me to identify myself as an Inuk in a much more detailed way, for many years of my life were void of much needed information and experience. I can say now that I am a proud Inuk that is literate and ready to make a difference.

These comments demonstrate how students had made conscious, direct links between their studies and their sense of who they were as Inuit. They recognized that there had been many gaps in their knowledge, with many questions about "who they were", and that through discovering what those gaps were and finding answers to these questions they were defining a clearer image of themselves and their people.

2.4 Confidence

The expressions of confidence presented by former students paralleled those found with current students. There was confidence that represented cultural confidence, the notion that they were capable, as Inuit. There was also confidence that was associated with learning

to live on their own, this time expanded to include reference to persevering through the many struggles that the year had presented to them.

2.41 Confidence as Inuit

Rita ('99) talked of drawing strength and inspiration from understanding how her people had persevered through many difficulties and how she must have those same qualities and abilities within herself:

> I didn't know what my ancestors went through. I'd heard bits and pieces from the elders back home. I felt really angry and yet sad for my people. I've never had a feeling like the way I had....I am very proud of my ancestors and my culture. Since I've heard the kinds of things that they went through I can tell myself, "They went through the hardest things that I can't even imagine. So if they were able to get through it, then I can too.".

Pauline ('97) related her self-confidence from understanding the political process Inuit have been involved in, suggesting that she would now like to be a participant in that process:

> Many Inuit don't understand or are very confused about what politicians are talking about. I know this because I was one of them. It was like they were speaking a different language. I didn't know anything about the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement or anything to do with northern politics or Inuit issues. I never had any interest in any of these issues because I never understood them or they weren't taught to me. I've changed because I'm now aware of different things to do with Inuit issues. I now read the newspapers and listen to the radio and understand what they are talking about. Just these little things make me happier and more self-confident. I've learned to have more confidence in myself and to take pride in my Inuit heritage....The Inuit future looks promising with the coming government and I am proud to be a part of it and to have a role in its development.

Sylvia ('96) combined sentiments of pride and a better understanding of the past and current position of Inuit society as the basis for her new-found confidence as an Inuk:

> As for my self-confidence it has helped me believe in who I am and that I am proud to be an Inuk. I am not ashamed of myself anymore. I have the knowledge of my past that I didn't know of before I came to the program. I know of my history and the

> land claim, which has helped me understand why we're trying to get our own government.

Iain ('97) expressed a certain cultural confidence in Inuit, indicating that what he had learned of the story leads him to feel that Inuit can be leaders in other ways in the future:

> What I got out of this program is a better understanding of my culture, history and political issues. In learning all this stuff I can walk away a happier, more knowledgeable man, proud of all the accomplishments of my people and their ability to survive and endure throughout all the hard times. And now I see Inuit traveling across untraveled lands, blazing new trails for all the world to see. I am happy to have gone through this program otherwise the whole world would have passed me by and I wouldn't have known it.

2.42 Confidence from independence skills and personal struggle

For some of the former students there was straightforward confidence that arrived with new learning, as with Naan ('96) who simply said: "In taking the program I am now more sure of myself, I know that I can accomplish things on my own and make it in the city and I now have an idea of what I want to do in the future".

Pauline ('97) expressed her confidence as a result of learning how to be independent, a process which she compared to that of Inuit society:

> Independence is also what I've learned while living in Ottawa. I don't need to rely on so many people to survive. It's sort of like the Inuit, we don't want to have to rely on the Federal government to control our lives. We want to be able to control our own lands.

In addition to learning how to be independent, however, many made reference to the struggles involved in doing that and how enduring through those struggles gave them confidence. The words of Mona, Krista, Larry and Apak typify the nature of the experience and what it had meant to them:

Mona ('98)
If I had never come down here, I know I would be the same old person who didn't have an idea how the rest of the world works. This course helped me in so many different ways, like living on my own, being able to make my decisions (big ones!) budgeting, how to do homework instead of slacking off. Sometimes I feel like I'm a whole new person. In the past eight months what I've learned about myself is that I can do many different things even if it looks impossible. No matter how things get hard now I know I can push myself more to reach my goal.

Krista ('95)
Living down south away from home has been hard for me. At times I just wanted to drop everything and go home. What kept me going was the tremendous support from my instructors and my fellow students, who were also struggling to survive and achieve what they had come here for, to do their best and get through the year in one piece. Your really get to know yourself when you're on your own and that is a big relief because then you know what you want and where you're headed.

Larry ('98)
When I look back on this school year I find it has probably been the most difficult time in my life. There were many times when I had to try and overcome temptations. Sometimes I was too weak - but afterwards they only made me a stronger person, someone who believes in himself.

Apak ('99)
I've learned to appreciate all things this year. First there was the whole budgeting thing. Second there was paying bills and finding an apartment. ...I wrote an article in Kivalliq News sometime in the first semester about my experiences so far. And I'll say it all again. I was so scared. Big city. Not knowing anyone ... and immature in the sense of living in the "real" world of paying bills ... but it has all changed. I've grown up more (a little) this year.

As with the current students, these former students had drawn strength and confidence, both as individuals and as Inuit, from what they had learned about their people's accomplishments and from having successfully lived on their own in this new cultural environment. In addition, a pattern emerged which indicated that beyond living on their own and meeting the challenges of everyday life, they attached importance to having persevered through their own personal hardships throughout the year, something which was an important factor in building their confidence.

2.5 Enthusiasm for committing to the Inuit cause

The final theme generated from the former students' reflections speaks to an optimism and enthusiasm for becoming involved in the story they have been learning about.

> Pauline ('97)
> To learn about what my ancestors went through and their great accomplishments made me see them differently. The Inuit future looks promising with the coming government and I am proud to be a part of it and to have a role in its development.
>
> Ooleetoa ('97)
> Life after here is going to be really different for me. I have a better understanding of who I am, where I came from and what's available for me in the future. I have always told myself that I am not a quitter and what I set my mind into, I do it. This program will make a lot of difference to my future because I now have a better understanding of the new territory that will take place in 1999 and what goes on in order for it to really happen. My dream is to work for Nunavut in the future...This program gives you the ability to become mature and brave.
>
> Angela ('96)
> Learning about the history of Inuit and Nunavut and being away from home and living on your own at the same time makes you really eager to finish and go back to your community to accomplish something that involves your people and to better your community.
>
> Rita ('99)
> Having learned the history of my people, it has changed my view about Canada, other countries, people of other cultures. I never knew why our leaders were doing what they were doing, why they were constantly trying to get something. Now I know what that something is, and I want to continue what they have been doing for so long. I can finally feel that I can show who I am and where I come from without the thought that someone might say that it's wrong to feel this way.

The students appeared to demonstrate a sense of gratitude for the position they now found themselves in, for being able to step into a world which had changed so much as a result of the work of others in their society. Learning of this work inspired them with enthusiasm and optimism that they too could and should go back home and make their contributions.

3. The Ajurnanngimmat Conference

The student reflections presented in the first two sections of this chapter were written, for the most part, at the end of, or shortly after, the NS experience. Reflections from the 65 alumni to attend the Ajurnanngimmat Conference, however, expressed student views after some years of distance between them and their NS experience.

In the many round-table discussions which focused on their NS experience the former students continued to speak about how the NS experience had had a profound impact on their lives. An analyses of the commentary from the discussion groups, which took place prior to the analyses of the other data in this study, identified themes which parallel those resulting from the analyses of the current and former students' reflections. Foremost among these were attitudes about their Inuit identity, along with an increased understanding of the position of Inuit society in the world.

3.1 Personal Attitudes

The new knowledge and learning had contributed to attitudes of respect and pride in themselves and their Inuit identity, along with confidence in themselves:

- " I didn't care much about Inuit before, now I have pride."
- "NS made opportunities to create pride in who you are and what you can accomplish"

3.2 Increased knowledge and understanding of the position of Inuit society

Alumni reported that the study of Inuit history, culture and issues had brought knowledge to them that is still seen as important:

- "NS made me learn about myself as an Inuk and my people the Inuit"

- "I used to hate to talk about [the] Nunavut and government, it's history, because I thought it was a waste of money and time...eight months later, I wish it was a two or three year course! I wanted to know more."

3.3 Attitudes about life and the future

Many of the alumni spoke of the NS experience as one which gave them a new outlook on life and what they could do:

- "NS helped me become assertive, people actually listen to me now."
- "NS had a profound impact on my life. It changed my goals for the future. I matured."
- "opened up a world of possibilities, opened my mind"

It was evident from the commentary of the former students that much of what they had learned, about their society and about themselves, was still important to them and was still a factor in their lives.

4. Summary

The goal of this chapter was to address the study question "What changes occur in the ethnic identity of students in the NS program?" by presenting data which speaks to its second sub-question, "How do characteristics of students' ethnic identity evolve as they participate in and eventually complete the NS program?". The data are presented in a manner which creates images of student experience that will help the reader understand how the students' sense of self and of Inuit society was influenced by the NS experience. To do this, the reflections of NS students were presented from three different perspectives:

- the reflections of current students in the program, both as they participate and when they complete the program;
- the year-end reflections of students from earlier years;
- the reflections of former students at an alumni conference to discuss the NS program.

The presentation of the reflections of the students, within the framework of prominent themes, creates an image of young people undergoing personal change. As a reflection of the phenomenon of minority group members devaluing their group, as described by Tajfel (1981), or of individuals perceiving an inferior status within their own group, as described by Worchel et al. (2000), many of the students had begun the program with negative feelings pertaining to their ethnicity: feelings of inferiority, lack of pride and respect, and lack of interest in their cultural group. For many, the experience transformed their perceptions of themselves, both as individuals and as Inuit, along with their perceptions of Inuit culture and society. Their reflections demonstrated development of positive feelings and attitudes as well as the development of deeper understanding of the meaning of their ethnicity.

Students indicated that the NS experience had influenced the development and reinforcement of such positive feelings and attitudes as: respect for their people, pride in being part of Inuit society, confidence in self and in Inuit as a group, a desire to know more about their people's story, and an optimism and enthusiasm for becoming involved in the Inuit cause. These attitudes reflected a valorization of themselves both as individuals and as Inuit, in relation to their own society and within the context of the larger Qallunaat society.

Students also demonstrated that the NS experience enhanced their understanding of themselves and their position within Inuit society, as well as their understanding of the position of Inuit culture within the context of the larger Qallunaat society.

These changes were directly linked to the courses of study, to the acquiring of new knowledge and understanding of the Inuit story, as well as the other components of the program. Learning the details of this story, of the many changes Inuit have lived through and adapted to over the past century, and of the political struggles and accomplishments of recent times, had inspired respect for those who had gone before them. At the same time understanding this story instilled pride in being a part of the group, as well as developing a sense of confidence in Inuit as a group. Learning of the perseverance and achievements of their people has also inspired confidence in themselves that they too could achieve and contribute to the Inuit future and they developed enthusiasm for becoming involved in Inuit affairs.

The students also saw their own experience of living in the "Qallunaat world" during the program as one of overcoming many challenges and struggles and this too inspired confidence and influenced their image of the relationship between Inuit and Qallunaat.

Learning this new knowledge led to a new understanding of themselves as individual Inuit and added to their perception of "who they were". As well, undergoing this process allowed them to see Inuit as a collective group in a new light, a perspective of understanding "why things are as they are" both politically, socially and culturally. The development of this understanding was also enhanced by being far from home in southern Canada, a circumstance which put them in a position where they could look back at Inuit society "from

the outside" and also one which provided opportunities for them to be accepted by others and to view themselves as equals.

All of these themes representing the students' reflections are elements which are recognized as being components of ethnic identity. The attitudinal themes of pride and respect are directly cited as part of the affective components, while those of confidence, desire to learn more, and enthusiasm for becoming involved all represent the notion of positive feelings associated with belonging to the group. Self-confidence, demonstrated by a member of an ethnic group which is rapidly adapting to the ways of a dominant society, represents valuing and understanding of the individual's ethnicity. The theme of understanding of self and of the position of Inuit in relation to the majority is an element within the cognitive component of ethnic identity. Interpreted within the framework of Phinney's (1989) developmental approach to ethnic identity development, the positive nature of the feelings, attitudes and understandings which students have developed through their NS experience would suggest that the students are progressing towards an achieved ethnic identity.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS

The goal of this study was to explore the relationship between ethnic identity and a unique educational experience, to describe how the ethnic identity of young Inuit is influenced by their participation in the Nunavut Sivuniksavut (NS) program. The results of the study create a series of images, images of the nature of the students' ethnic identity when they came to the program, of the NS program experience and how students responded to it, and of the nature of their ethnic identity as they participated in and completed the program.

The central purpose of this chapter is to discuss these results within the framework of the guiding research questions as well as the broader questions arising from the literature review. The conclusions from this discussion will then be discussed in terms of their implications for education and social development.

1. Discussion of Research Findings

The two main questions guiding this study are, "What changes occur in the ethnic identity of students in the Nunavut Sivuniksavut program?" and "What aspects of the program influence ethnic identity change?" Responding to these questions required exploring a series of subquestions. This section will discuss the findings of the research with respect to each of these questions.

1.1 What changes occur in the ethnic identity of students in the NS program?

In this study I examined characteristics of the students' ethnic identity as they entered the program, as they progressed through it, and as they completed it. Presentation of data

from these stages created an image of considerable change in the students' perceptions of their ethnicity.

1.11 What are the characteristics of the ethnic identity of the students when they begin the program?

Each student came to the program with their own individual ethnic identity, one which had been developing, in response to life experiences, since early childhood. As Phinney (1989) has described, their ethnic identities were multi-dimensional, consisting of a variety of feelings, attitudes and understandings about their ethnicity, their ethnic affiliation. The study has examined this question from a number of perspectives in order to develop an image of the nature of these ethnic identities. In so doing, the findings of this research demonstrated that while each student strongly identified him/herself as being Inuk, to varying degrees, many of their ethnic identities were mixed, with students harbouring both positive and negative feelings and attitudes, along with ambiguous and confused perceptions of what "being Inuik" actually means. These characteristics are an indication that the students' identities corresponded to what Phinney (1989) has described as the initial foreclosure stage of ethnic identity development, a stage in which individuals may develop positive, negative or mixed feelings and a stage in which individuals have not yet consciously examined the meaning or implications of their ethnicity.

In illustrating this stage of ethnic identity development, the data not only provide insights into the nature of the positive and negative perceptions students held, but also describe the origins of these perspectives, along with the effect these perceptions can have on individuals. The positive perceptions which students held were principally connected to the good feelings associated with land-based activities and the uniqueness of this way of life, and

in a few cases, to the commonly held value placed on sharing and family, as well as pride in recent political achievements.

The negative feelings and attitudes which students expressed, a lack of pride and respect in being Inuit and a lack of valuing of their culture, appeared to stem from a number of perceptions:

- viewing Qallunaat society as more powerful and important;
- perceiving Inuit society as inferior;
- perceiving Inuit culture as irrelevant;
- being perceived as inadequate as Inuit.

The first three of these perceptions reflect a phenomenon which Tajfel (1981) has described as commonly characteristic of relationships between social groups. He describes how distinctive minorities can often be viewed as inferior, either from outside the group by the dominant majority, or from within through the assessment of group individuals. He adds that children are especially prone to devaluing their own group and adopting preferences for the dominant group. The fourth perception, that of being perceived as inadequate as Inuit, is a reflection of the importance of intragroup comparison resulting in perception of status within the group, as proposed by Worchel et al. (2000). All four perceptions are a reflection of the social identity notion that group membership contributes either negatively or positively to the self-image of the individual.

Along with positive and negative perceptions, students expressed ambiguity and confusion concerning the meaning of their ethnicity, a situation often accompanied by tension and stress. Berry (1987) has highlighted the idea of acculturation being accompanied by stress; stress stemming from the adaptations required in responding to the many

influences on values and attitudes, on economic and cultural activities, and on personal and ethnic identities. This study provided insights into specific sources of ambiguity and confusion leading to stress on ethnic identities. The confusion students experienced was related to a number of factors: one, lack of knowledge and understanding of their past and the evolution of Inuit society and lifestyle, which left them wondering how life had come to be as it was; two, viewing life as an either/or choice between cultural worlds, with the choice of modernity seeming inevitable yet leaving them with feelings of abandoning their culture; and three, self-assessment of personal inadequacy in ways that were associated with being Inuit, leaving them uncertain about their own Inuitness.

That students would arrive at the program with conflicting and confusing perceptions of themselves and their sense of ethnicity is supported by Hall's (1991) ideas of the global village phenomenon introducing such rapid and pervasive change that the stable union between self and society has been disrupted. He suggests that the structures which provide a framework for cultural continuity have been broken. No longer is ethnicity a secure and stable identity anchor. Within this context his work suggests that the desire of Inuit to maintain cultural integrity will become increasingly complex.

For the most part, the students, upon entering the program, appeared to manage fairly well the dilemmas and tensions associated with harbouring these multiple and varied views. For those who were conscious of this circumstance it did not appear to be a matter which preoccupied them. Others were not even aware of their perceptions, remarking that they had only come to recognize in hindsight what their views had been. They all still saw themselves as being Inuit and there was no evidence of anything close to acute psychological distress associated with these perceptions. For some of the students, however, the tensions they

carried within were very strong, with one of the students presenting herself as having wanted to leave her culture, indicating that she had wished she wasn't Inuk, although her enrolling in the NS program might be interpreted as perhaps a way of searching for positive value in her ethnicity. Tajfel (1981) remarks that if membership in a group does not contribute to positive self-image, the individual, in the interests of maintaining a positive self-image, will leave the group, either physically or psychologically, which is the action this young woman was considering. Given this circumstance, a social group can only maintain its integrity and protect the social identity of its members if it manages to portray its distinctiveness as positive. There are also parallels to this in Berry's (1988) ideas of acculturation, in which he suggested that those of the minority culture implicitly respond to questions of value in their cultural affiliation. Given these perspectives provided by Hall, Tajfel, Worchel et al., and Berry, the negative perceptions and the confusion that students were experiencing would suggest that they would be vulnerable to movement away from their culture if many of their dilemmas were not resolved.

1.12 How do characteristics of students' ethnic identity evolve as they participate in and eventually complete the NS program?

The NS program experience was very much a journey for the students; a journey which took them far from home and which introduced them to new people and places, to new information, and to new ideas and views of life; a journey which both challenged and stimulated them, emotionally, psychologically and intellectually; a journey which changed their view of themselves and their world.

As they progressed through the program the students participated in a broad range of experiences which influenced their views and understanding of their ethnicity. The

reflections of the current students, combined with those from former years, created an image of considerable positive enhancement of all the various characteristics of ethnic identity.

They expressed positive feelings and attitudes both about themselves as Inuit and about Inuit culture in general. These expressions were sometimes indirect, as in declarations which depicted a strong sense of belonging and of being a part of Inuit culture, but more often they were direct. Most commonly, students directly expressed attitudes of respect and pride: profound attitudes of respect for those who had gone before them, for the perseverance and accomplishments of earlier generations, along with a great deal of pride in being associated with their cultural group. Upon completing the program, students also expressed a great deal of confidence and enthusiasm, confidence in themselves and in Inuit society, and enthusiasm for becoming involved and participating in that society.

As well, students expressed a greater understanding of the meaning and significance of their ethnicity. They had a clearer understanding of themselves as Inuit and what that meant, having begun to resolve the dilemma of contrasts between traditional and contemporary ways and how they could be true to their ethnicity in the absence of practising those traditional ways. They also had a clearer understanding of the relationship, both historical and contemporary, between Inuit as a minority group and the broader majority society. Where some had seen inferiority and second class status, they now showed a confidence in their people, a confidence which demonstrated a stronger sense of being equal with Qallunaat society.

These perceptions expressed by the students are similar to those characteristics which Phinney (1989) associated with the developmental stage of an "achieved ethnic identity", one in which she indicated that individuals are more secure in their ethnicity, they identify with

their group with confidence and pride and they have a clear understanding of their group in relation to the majority. She argues that individuals move towards the stage of an achieved ethnic identity only through a period of conscious exploration of their culture, its history and its relationship with the majority society. This would suggest that the experience of the NS program has played a role in what she refers to as the "exploration" stage.

The term "achieved ethnic identity" is somewhat misleading in that it implies achieving some final or absolute state, something that would be difficult or perhaps impossible to do within such a multi-dimensional construct. Phinney does indicate that this stage is not static and that individuals are continually open to new influences which may alter their perceptions. While the students demonstrated characteristics similar to those associated with this term, they certainly had not "arrived" at some ultimate identity state, but rather their attitudes, perceptions, and understandings had moved considerably along a positive continuum. From this position they would appear to be better equipped to deal with the forces and tendencies, highlighted by Tajfel, Hall and Berry, which challenge and apply pressure to the integrity of minority cultures.

Social identity theory, as described by Tajfel (1981), suggests there is a tendency for distinctive minorities to both devalue their group and view it as inferior, a tendency which, when combined with the need of the individual to maintain a positive self-image, can readily result in individuals moving away from their cultural group. This tendency was evident in the perceptions of the students as they began the program; perceptions resulting from both intergroup and intragroup comparisons. The positive perceptions which students expressed, however, as they experienced and completed the NS program indicated that they saw positive

value in their distinctiveness as Inuit and that they would be less likely to move away from it; belonging to this group now enhanced their self-image.

In Hall's (1991) terms, having a more secure sense of who they were would provide the students with a firm anchor, a position of stability from which to deal with the ever-present influences external to their society. These influences are part and parcel of the dynamic of acculturation; influences which are omnipresent and ever-changing and will require continuous accommodation. Within the framework of Berry's (1987) acculturation theory, however, the students now appeared to have a firmer basis from which to say "yes" to that implicit question of whether or not there is value in maintaining one's ethnic distinctiveness; being able to do so allows individuals to resist assimilation. As well, in having a clearer understanding of their relationship with the majority society, they are in a position to resist retrenchment in their traditional ways and separation from the majority. This results in a circumstance in which individuals value association with both cultures, thus becoming, to varying degrees, bicultural.

At this time, while traditional practices and the holders of traditional knowledge remain part of Inuit society, there are still clear elements of cultural distinctiveness for young Inuit to find value in. But as the older generations pass on, and as economic, social, and cultural change continue, it may become less clear as to what those essential elements of that cultural distinctiveness might be. It is in response to this that Hall (1991) suggested that hybrid identities develop. In accommodating changes which are seen as necessary or inevitable, groups consciously identify and maintain strong links with traditions and ways that define their distinctiveness. Rather than abandoning their traditional cultures completely, and rather than viewing themselves as "stuck between two worlds", they

re-define and re-assert their cultural position. It would appear that the NS students are in a position to enter into this process.

The changes to their sense of who they are and who Inuit are, has helped them put to rest, or come to terms with, the dilemma of seeing the world as an "either-or" choice; one in which following the "modern" route represented a position of inadequacy as an Inuk and a betrayal of one's culture and people. They no longer feel this betrayal. What they have learned has helped them better understand who Inuit are, and what the Inuit position is, within Canada and the modern world. With what they feel about their culture, and with what they have learned about their story, they sense that they are placed to contribute, as competent Inuit, to the Inuit future, not betray it. This is not to suggest that the path is clear and that they are totally secure in it, but that they feel they are on the right one.

1.2 What aspects of the NS program influence ethnic identity changes?

The findings of the study establish that participation in the NS program contributed to important positive changes in the various elements of the students' ethnic identities. Through examining the students' experience in the program and their reaction to the various elements, the study then addresses the question of the dynamic behind this change.

In exploring this question the NS program was examined from two different perspectives: the curricular perspective which focused on the participatory elements of the program and the structural perspective, which focused on features which influenced the nature of the experience but which were not actual elements of participation.

1.21 What curricular elements of the program influence students' ethnic identity?

The NS program experience is multi-dimensional, with numerous types of interactions influencing each student and each of the students living and making meaning of

the experience in their own individual way. There are, however, a number of program elements which are common to all students and which tend to contribute to a common set of influences, namely, course work, orientation, interaction with leaders, cultural presentations, international trips and southern urban living. Drawing from a myriad of observations and reflections collected throughout the year, the data presented provide an overview of a range of student responses to these elements as a means of creating an image of the program experience and an understanding of how it influenced students' ethnic identity. What it demonstrates is that while there was one principal element influencing the students, the overall impact on their ethnic identity resulted from the cumulative influence of the various program elements.

The principal element influencing student ethnic identity is that which is the central focus of the program, the Inuit-centred courses of study. For the most part, all of the material presented to the students was new to them and for many it represented a startling revelation which led to a new awakening in their perceptions of who they were. They acquired knowledge of both their distant and more recent past, of the events and circumstances which brought change to the Arctic, of the relationship between Inuit and the Canadian government, of the distinctive political developments, and of the many issues Inuit are currently addressing. This learning led to initial reactions of respect for their people, a respect for their perseverance and their accomplishments, which often left them in awe. This respect which students developed was in turn linked very closely to the development of a feeling of pride in being Inuit. They felt proud in belonging to a group of people who had adapted to such drastic change and who were now regaining, through new institutions and political agreements, the power and control over their society which they once held. It is this new

knowledge which led students to a new understanding of themselves as Inuit and of the relationship of Inuit to Qallunaat society. This critical knowledge is at the base of helping students understand "who they are" and "where they come from".

The other elements of the program experience were also instrumental in influencing various aspects of the students' ethnic identity. From the very beginning at the Orientation session, the notion of belonging, of being a part of Inuit culture and society was reinforced. At the Orientation they learned that the program existed for Inuit-specific reasons and that they were accepted into it as individual Inuit.

The interaction with leaders, both prominent politicians and others who were leading by example in their contribution to the Nunavut project, an integral but not standardized element of the program, was most influential in enhancing the students' sense of belonging. These leaders represented the political achievements of which they had become so proud, along with the ongoing efforts to implement those achievements. Recognition and acknowledgement from these leaders, recognition of the work the students were doing and the efforts they were making, along with the inspirational messages that they were needed and that their contribution was vital to the future success of Nunavut, had a strong affirming influence on the students' feelings of belonging. This affirmation from leaders helped the students come to an understanding of the meaning of being Inuit today, helped them come to terms with the tension created by the juxtaposition of traditional and modern ways. While this direct interaction with leaders was invaluable, it was also of great importance for the students to observe these leaders in high level political and academic forums in the south. These instances appeared to greatly influence the students' sense of Inuit being able to interact on equal terms with Qallunaat.

The affirmation of their ethnicity that students received from others through the cultural presentations and performing, both in the Ottawa area and on the international exchange tours, played an important role in influencing the students' sense of belonging, as well as developing their pride associated with that belonging. The revelation that others from both mainstream Qallunaat culture and other minority cultures so accepted and valued what they had to present played a major role in influencing their own perceptions of value in their culture and in their acceptance of themselves as being part of it.

Living in a southern urban environment represented an enormous challenge for the students, one that pushed many to their limits of adaptability. Certainly the southern living element created strain and tension for all the students. Many spoke of walking a fine line at times between remaining in the program and going home. The stress of living on their own for an extended period, away from home and family and all that was comfortable to them, ebbed and flowed throughout the year, framed by the expectations they had developed for themselves along with both the positive and negative expectations of others. Ultimately, however, the reasons for staying in the program were more compelling for most, with but 4 of the students leaving the program.

Succeeding in this daunting task led to a powerful sense of achievement and inspired confidence in the students, confidence that was not only related to having met a challenge on their own, but one that was linked to the notion of cultural confidence. They realized that as Inuit, they had "made it" in that Qallunaat world that had been the source of so much influence in their lives. In the process they further affirmed their Inuitness, realized and valued their distinctiveness, and gained new understanding of their relationship with

Qallunaat culture. The significance of this might be closely linked to the concept of "ilira" which has been associated with Inuit-Qallunaat relations.

John Amagoalik, in his presentation to the Building Nunavut Conference in Québec City, made reference to the Inuktitut concept of "ilira", a concept described by Brody (1975) as characterizing Inuit-Qallunaat relations in the 1970's; one in which Inuit assumed a subservient position, feeling compelled to appease the power-wielding and unpredictable Qallunaat. Amagoalik suggested that the regaining of political control should put Inuit in a position of no longer having to harbour this feeling of "ilira". While this concept is not commonly or openly referred to in terms of current Inuit-Qallunaat relations, the reference by Amagoalik and the negative perceptions of some students, suggest that vestiges of this perceived inequality still linger within Inuit society. The combined influence of the above program elements may have actively influenced this perception. Through their NS experience, the students understood more clearly how the relationship between Inuit and Qallunaat had developed over time and how that relationship had been influenced by various factors; they viewed their political circumstances as one which would allow them to exercise increased power and control over much of their lives; they had developed increased sense of value in their culture; and they had demystified much of the Qallunaat world by successfully living in it for eight months. From this position it appeared that the students, as Inuit, now sensed that they were on a much more secure and equal footing with Qallunaat society; a representation perhaps of pushing aside this deep-rooted sense of inequality which had long characterized Inuit-Qallunaat relations.

For the most part, the development of positive attitudes and feelings appeared to come fairly easily to the students. They eagerly participated in the various courses and it

almost appeared that they were in a state of readiness for what they were learning. This may have been related to the expectations which came with entering into the program and its "Inuit focus" from the beginning and/or it may also have been related to their age and stage of life, a reflection of Phinney's (1997) assertion that it is often in adolescence that individuals are most apt to enter into exploration of their culture. For many, the learning allowed them to answer questions they had never explored and enabled them to refute negative feelings and attitudes which they had uncomfortably harboured within themselves. For some, however, the development of responses to what they were learning was not entirely smooth, as it caused them to confront perceptions about the meaning of their ethnicity which were uncomfortable to deal with.

These findings of the influence of curricular elements on the students add new insights into the process of ethnic identity development. The experience of the students bears close resemblance to the "exploration" phase of the developmental process of ethnic identity development as presented by Phinney (1988). Phinney suggests that a "triggering" event or circumstance can lead individuals, usually in adolescence, to examine and question the perceptions and assumptions of their ethnicity which they have developed since childhood. This phase of exploration, characterized as a search to know more about "who they are" and "who their people are", leads them to the stage of an achieved ethnic identity. The NS program experience provided the opportunity for this process of exploration, with students being immersed in studies of the history and activities of their people and then expressing, upon completion, strong positive feelings and attitudes about their ethnicity along with an enhanced understanding of the relationship between Inuit and Qallunaat society. This suggests that "triggering", which is key to initiation of the exploration phase, is brought about

through the context of the NS program. In such a case it is no longer the result of random, happenstance experience, as Phinney implies triggering usually is, but rather the result of conditions which can be deliberately created. As well, Phinney presents the exploration phase as being characterized by certain types of activity, such as individuals immersing themselves in their history and traditions, which, from her perspective, appear to be random and very individualized. The findings of this study identify specific elements of activity which have been combined and presented to a group of people in a systematic process which reflects that of the developmental phase of "exploration".

1.22 What structural elements of the program influence the students' ethnic identity?

While there are numerous factors within the day-to-day NS experience which influence the various elements of the students' ethnic identity there are also structural characteristics which play a role in the overall impact on the students. These include the deliberate Inuit focus, with Inuit-centred courses and exclusive Inuit enrolment, the presentation of history from an Inuit perspective, the southern location, and the program enrolment level.

The NS program is designed exclusively to assist in the long-term goal of preparing young Inuit to contribute to the Nunavut project, with the assumption that certain kinds of knowledge and skills are invaluable to that end. The combination of specially designed courses being delivered specifically to them, as beneficiaries of the Nunavut Land Claim, created an important mind set with the students. From the very beginning they realized they were part of something which was larger than their own individual needs and interests. It was a perspective which prepared them both psychologically and intellectually for the singular focus of the courses.

Within the presentation of those courses, the deliberate attention to the Inuit perspective appeared to play a vital role. Premised on the Inuit right to self-determination, all the course material was presented within the framework of the relationship between historical or current events, circumstances and issues, and, the central theme of Inuit power and control over their society. This framework led students to reflect continuously on the relationship between Inuit society and Qallunaat society.

The southern location is certainly one of the more distinctive features of the program. As the data presentation illustrates, this feature contributed in several ways to influences on the students' ethnic identity: it highlighted their distinctiveness, leading them to continuouly reflect on the meaning of it; provided an opportunity for a challenging living experience where they saw themselves as equals with Qallunaat; and increased student interest and motivation by creating a juxtaposition between the course focus and their actual living focus.

The southern location also played a negative factor in the students' experience. During the research period, all four students who left the program did so as a result of inability to deal with pressures associated with this geographic and culturally distant location. Program records show that each year several students (approximately 15 to 20 per cent) were overwhelmed by the challenge this presented and they decided to leave the program and return home. In some instances this was due to homesickness, but for the most part it was due to lifestyle difficulties. The city presented endless lifestyle options and some were not able to maintain the focus and regular time commitment for successful study. Alcohol and drugs were most often a factor in this. For those who returned home, they would have lost some confidence and esteem in themselves and they would also have affirmed for naysayers that the task was too difficult. Despite these negative consequences for some students, the

success of the other students is seen to be at a level which warrants continuation of the program in the current fashion.

Part of the success of students in coping with the cultural adaptations required for southern living and study appears to be attributable to the supportive environment of the program. While there is high demand for entry into the program, staff have purposely kept enrolment levels relatively low. The rationale is that this allows for the development of a close-knit group environment, one which allows instructors to develop a personal relationship with each individual student and one in which students become mutually supportive of each other. Instructors interpret their role and that of the program as more than an academic one. They adopt the position that students will only be successful when their full range of personal needs are addressed, including those which are of a physical, emotional, psychological and social nature.

Certainly a close-knit living and learning environment did develop at the NS program. While this appeared to play a critical role in supporting students throughout their year, there were indications that this same characteristic ironically played somewhat of a negative role in preparing students for further independent post-secondary study. There was such comfort in it that many students jokingly requested to come back for another year, and many seriously requested that the program offer a second year. This latter request was also one of the clear recommendations coming out of the alumni conference. Besides a fondness for the security and support of the NS environment, what this revealed is that the students had not yet developed the confidence or inclination to step out on their own. This is a conclusion which is partially supported by the low percentage of graduates who do go on to other post-secondary programs. At this writing the program is actively planning a second

year offering which, while retaining some of the elements of attachment to the NS home, will be deliberately designed to help students participate successfully on their own in other college and university courses.

As an example of successful Aboriginal education, the NS program both affirms and provides contrasting variations on factors which Harrison (1993) has identified as being associated with successful Aboriginal education. Two important factors which Harrison noted as common to successful efforts were: one, the presence of mainstream administrators who were willing to work with local people in decision-making, and two, the participation of local people in developing a curriculum which reflected local concerns. The NS program reflects these factors, having the flexibility to design and deliver in response to expressed needs and wishes. The term "local people", however, requires a unique interpretation. The NS curriculum has gradually evolved and developed through mainstream educators working in concert with students since its inception. It is the students (interpreted now as local people) who have both driven the development of, and affirmed the value in, the Inuit-centred curriculum.

Harrison (1993) also speaks of the need for local people to define what success means. This factor is echoed by the dual certification of the NS program. As well, she notes that parents will support schooling only when they feel they have some power in its direction and when they see positive outcomes in the process. Again, a unique interpretation of this factor reveals certain parallels in the NS case. Financial support from Inuit organizations has continued to flow to the program from year to year, solely on the basis of recognition of positive outcomes. As well, the primary reason for students applying to the program is based on the perceived positive outcomes among former students.

There are also factors in the NS case which are inconsistent with some of Harrison's ideas. While Harrison (1993), Kirkness (1999), and Stairs (1988) suggest that participation of minority members as staff is important in establishing successful Aboriginal schooling, the NS experience demonstrated that success is possible with non-Aboriginal staff, albeit when the other important factors of local participation which Harrison has identified were attended to. This appears to be a reflection of Smith-Mohamed's (1998) findings, in which certain personal qualities and attitudes allowed non-Native instructors to be seen as effective instructors of Native students.

The distant-from-home southern location is inconsistent with Harrison's "local" focus, and as such it provides a new dimension to ideas regarding factors for successful Aboriginal education. The irony of this circumstance was not lost on the students. Many remarked it was ironic that they should have to come to Ottawa to learn, with Qallunaat instructors, about their culture and how to value it. Several deplored the fact that there were no systematic Inuit history and land claims programs in Nunavut high schools and that NS should be their first exposure to such material. This circumstance has long been highlighted by many in Inuit society as one which should be addressed but it has never yet been of high enough priority to be attended to by planners and policy-makers.

2. Implications of the Study

2.1 Issues raised by the literature

The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 raised several issues related to the focus of this study, issues which will now be discussed in light of the study's findings. Initial reflections leading to the study centred on the concern that Inuit youth might be developing a negative

sense of self as Inuit and that given the high proportion of young people in the population, this might have negative implications for the goal of Inuit society to maintain its cultural integrity.

The literature on social identity and acculturation suggests that the status of ethnic identity for culturally distinct minority groups, and especially for youth within those groups, is problematic. Tajfel (1981) discusses the tendency for members of distinctive minorities to view their groups as inferior and to demonstrate preferences for ways of the majority and Worchel et al. (2000) present a dynamic for individuals developing a perception of inferior status within their group. When individuals do not find positive reinforcement or self-esteem in their own group situation they may abandon their group, either becoming assimilated into the majority culture or marginalized within their own. This process of adopting the ways of the majority culture, of acculturation, is not inevitable, however. As Berry (1987) suggests, it involves deliberation, either explicit or implicit, on the value of one's culture. This leads to the question of how to ensure that young Inuit develop positive secure Inuit identities so that they maintain value in their culture as they deal with the powerful influences of Qallunaat society. Phinney (1989) describes a process individuals may follow in moving towards this type of secure "achieved ethnic identity". It is a process, however, which appears to rest on random, happenstance events. This leads to the question of whether or not the process could be intentionally facilitated.

The findings of the study suggest one way of approaching these questions. Students did come to the program with negative perceptions of their ethnicity, and while some of those perceptions may have endured, the study shows that as a result of their program experience they developed strong positive perceptions and sound understandings within each of the

dimensions of ethnic identity. The experience they went through resembled very closely the developmental process described by Phinney, with the whole program experience paralleling both the "triggering" of the exploration phase and the actual exploration phase itself.

The findings also identify specific programming elements which are influential in the development of the students' positive views. Prime among these is the study of history and current issues from an Inuit perspective, along with other such elements as interaction with leaders, cultural performing and southern location.

As such, NS may be seen as representing a "deliberate" approach to helping young people achieve a positive ethnic identity as well as an example of education contributing to cultural continuity. While this was not the program's original intent, it is, nevertheless, a positive unplanned outcome. This does not mean that the program should be seen as a model that could be directly transferred to a different setting with a different group, with the expectation that it would have similar results. It does, however, demonstrate a connection between theory and practice and it does embody elements from which others, who are concerned with similar issues, might wish to draw lessons and inspiration for practice. One area might be in the development and application of systematic Aboriginal-focused history programs for educational settings.

2.2 Implications for educational practice

I believe the findings of the study have strong implications for current views and practices in education within Aboriginal communities. Aboriginal groups are looking to schooling as a means to promote cultural revitalization and enhancement. Much of the approach to this focuses on cultural programming which seeks to enhance pride and respect in traditional culture through interaction with elders and the instruction in, and practice of,

traditional ways and values. While this addresses an important component of ethnic identity, it is an approach which represents a limited view of the concept and how it is influenced, one which fails the needs of both the students and the group which is wishing to maintain cultural integrity. The approach does not help young people develop an understanding of the implications of their ethnicity, given the relationship between Aboriginal societies and the majority. It does not prepare young people for dealing with the many pervasive and powerful influences of that majority society. It does not help them come to a positive and secure understanding of "their place in the world".

If young people are to develop a secure position within their ethnicity for dealing with the majority culture they must develop an understanding of the meaning and significance of the relationship between their culture and the majority culture and they must develop a positive sense of their culture, a sense that it is worthy of being valued, within the contemporary context. It is these developments which will help them develop a secure view of what it means, as an individual, to be a member of their group today. Learning traditional ways is one part of this process, but it does not reflect the lived reality of the young people; it does not provide them with a secure position in their ethnicity from which they can deal with change. To meet the goals of maintaining cultural integrity, local educational practices will have to broaden to encompass other learning which will help young people see value in their culture in contemporary terms.

I believe the results of this study allow us to bring new perspectives and understanding to this educational endeavor. Consideration of the following four elements are key in developing a framework within which to view education for ethnic identity enhancement:

i. The basis for understanding the nature of the pressures on young people's ethnic identity and the difficulties for minority groups to maintain cultural integrity are clearly outlined by Berry (1987), Hall (1991), Tajfel (1981), and Worchel et al. (2000);

ii. An operational definition of ethnic identity, one which describes its various dimensions has been developed by Phinney (2000);

iii. Phinney (1988, 1997) presents a view of ethnic identity development as a process through stages, with the implications of each stage well known;

iv. The student experience in NS mirrors the critical developmental stages of this process. The results of this study demonstrate links between the NS program elements (study of history and contemporary issues, interaction with leaders, cultural performing, etc.) and the development of positive perspectives within all the dimensions of ethnic identity (sense of belonging, positive attitudes which include pride and respect, knowledge of history, understanding of their ethnicity and its implications vis à vis their relationship with the dominant society).

With respect to the development of positive feelings and attitudes towards their group the linkages with the courses of study are very direct and have been well-described through the students' reflections. In helping the students develop an understanding of the meaning and significance of their ethnicity, however, the linkages with program elements appears more complex. It is the cumulative effect of the interaction of the various elements of the program which appears to help bring students to this type of understanding. An analyses of

this interaction of elements reveals the process of students developing a secure and positive valuing of their distinctiveness. This process can be described by the following model:

Step 1: Through their courses of study and the various program activities which are designed to have them interact with leaders, as well as to develop and perform skills in cultural arts, students explore their culture.

Step 2: As they do this they continuously compare their culture to the majority group, through the Inuit-centred perspectives of their studies and by virtue of being immersed in Qallunaat society.

Step 3: In doing this they make several discoveries: one, that there is much to value in their culture; two, that others, both within the majority group and other minorities, also value their culture; three, that the majority culture does not represent perfection, nor something of greater value; four, that their own culture while not being perfect either, is certainly of equal value and status when compared with the majority.

Step 4: These discoveries lead them to fuller acceptance of their cultural heritage.

Condition: An important condition of this process is that it takes place within a relatively risk-free environment, where both instructors and peers provide continuous support.

It is my position that consideration of the first four framework elements, in conjunction with the model for the development of positive valuing of cultural distinctiveness within a contemporary context, could support the development of educational

initiatives which would better respond to the pressing identity needs of young people in contemporary Aboriginal societies, as well as contributing to the long-term goal of maintaining the cultural integrity of those societies.

2.3. Limitations of the research

As a response to issues focusing on the identities of Inuit youth and the maintenance of Inuit cultural integrity, this study provides valuable insights into the dynamic of ethnic identity development in young Inuit. It highlights several linkages between extant theory on cultural change, ethnic identity development and Aboriginal schooling, and, the practice of the Nunavut Sivuniksavut program. It also develops a framework for viewing similar questions in other settings, and it presents a model for helping students develop a valuing of their cultural distinctiveness and an understanding of their relationship with the majority society. That being said, it should be noted that there are several limitations to the study.

1. Despite certain features which make the NS context appear similar to other minority contexts, especially Aboriginal ones, the narrow focus of the program and the circumstance of it being a stand-alone, unique initiative involving a select group of young people, make direct transfer and application of the findings to other contexts difficult. Further study, as suggested in section 2.4 of this chapter, is necessary to determine to what extent features of the NS program might be transferable.

2. The circumstance of my simultaneously being both researcher and long-standing instructor in the program was a unique research situation with both positive and limiting features. I argued in Chapter 3 for the specific advantages this circumstance embodied; such things as ability to utilize appropriate and sensitive communication patterns, to detect nuance, and to establish close, trusting relationships with the participants. These advantages were

indeed apparent during the project. It is also clear, however, that there were specific disadvantages to such a context. My attention was first and foremost focused on my role as teacher and program coordinator and, as such, there were no doubt times when I missed key opportunities for data collection. There were certainly times when I failed to precisely remember details of important moments, not having found the time to record them. My extensive experience with former students meant that I took much of the student experience for granted and it was difficult to continually view the experience with a fresh and critical eye. Also, interpretations of events and reflections sometimes lacked this same fresh and critical perspective, being founded on similar circumstances from previous years and no doubt some pre-conceived notions.

3. Utilizing the case study approach carried several limitations. One, the findings provided a snap-shot of one experience, that one cycle of the NS program. That snap-shot covered an extended time-period and numerous participants, and triangulation of data from the participants with that from former students makes for a strong case, but it had limitations all the same. First, participants were not representative of the general Inuit youth population. These students, and those from prior years, were chosen over their peers, on the basis of a number of personal qualities, and they thus constituted a "select" group. Although referred to as Inuit "youth", the students were of a particularly age group within that category. Second, as a broad overview case study, the focus is on a generic approach to ethnic identity and it groups all the students under the same umbrella. Within all societies, however, it is well known that there are important differences in how individuals of different gender view themselves and their position in their society. Although this factor undoubtedly played a role in the students' perception of their experience the study does not take it into consideration.

4. The NS program has a unique pedagogical history, both in the area of curriculum development and instructional approach. The influence of the curriculum, both formal and informal, has been a major focus of this study. The influence of the instructional approach, however, particularly the focus on the student-teacher relationship, has not been closely examined. This relationship, along with the instructional methods employed, no doubt played an important role in shaping the student experience.

2.4 Suggestions for further research

The findings of this research paint a clear picture of the process and the foundations of positive ethnic identity change for the Inuit students in the NS program. They also establish links between theory and practice. The study is, however, an initial exploration of these issues and as such it opens the door to several questions for further exploration and study:

1. The NS program experience clearly influences the students in a positive manner over the short term, and the results of the alumni conference indicated that many positive perceptions endure. How does the influence of this experience over the long term, however, contribute to their visions of Inuit culture and society? Does it increase their resilience to the pressures of acculturation? Does it indeed lead to the development of stable and secure bicultural or hybrid perspectives?

2. NS is a self-contained institution which works with a small and select group of students. What would be the influence on ethnic identity of introducing elements of the NS program, such as the courses on history, land claims, and Inuit issues, into the public school curriculum in Nunavut? Given the insights developed in this study, what other means might be employed in other settings to help young Inuit enhance their ethnic identity?

3. The issue of cultural change and the position of youth within that change is salient to Aboriginal societies throughout Canada and many other parts of the world. To what degree might the insights gained in this study be applied to similar programs for other Aboriginal groups with resulting similar influences on ethnic identity development?

This study takes an initial step in presenting a model for developing a sense of value in cultural distinctiveness and an understanding of relationships with the majority society. The model should be examined in other contexts to determine the extent to which it might represent a transferable process.

3. Concluding remarks

The first time I wrote about the students in the Orientation session I noted that it seemed to represent an important break from their communities. What I would come to learn over the course of the study, however, is that the break would lead to profound changes in their perceptions of their world. They would never see their home and their place in the world in the same way again. Through leaving their world behind they would, somewhat ironically, become more closely attached to it.

I began this thesis with observations of comments made by a student at an NS graduation ceremony. It was, to a great extent, reflections on students' comments at the end of their NS experience which eventually led to this study. The students' declarations of gaining extreme pride and respect had indirectly suggested that they had held some sort of negative perceptions related to their ethnicity. Prior to this study, however, I had never discerned the nature or the extent of these perceptions, nor did I understand their origins (I was not yet aware of social identity and acculturation theory). I was initially taken aback in

the study by their direct expressions, and in some cases confessions, of negative feelings and attitudes. These were often deep-seated feelings and perceptions they weren't eager or even proud to admit. Understanding now that their experience had helped them to rid themselves of many of these feelings, and helped them to gain a more secure sense of themselves explains, in part, the elation and exhilaration students expressed upon completion, along with the optimism, enthusiasm, and commitment they showed for entering into Inuit affairs.

Through the study I came to better understand the importance of the notion of ethnic identity, along with its complexity. The study revealed how a myriad of events and experiences could positively influence the students' perceptions of themselves. Viewed through Phinney's (1997) lens the students could be seen to be progressing towards an achieved ethnic identity, a state in which one might think that all questions of cultural identity and place in the world could be securely dealt with. This secure position appears to be an illusive state, however. In the post-modern world, which Hall (1991) describes as being characterized by the relentless globalizing forces of mass media and technology, it is apparent that even strong ethnic identities will be continually challenged. Change brought on by these forces will be a constant factor in the students' lives. How they cope with that change and how well they can maintain their cultural distinctiveness will depend in part on how well they understand their position vis a vis the rest of the world, and how well they understand what is critically important within that position. There were elements in the study which suggested that the students were defining what was important to them. They were, perhaps, developing what Hall termed a hybrid identity. They began to accept that many former ways were being left behind, but they also recognized that there were many ways for them to draw inspiration from that past and to define that which would still keep them

distinctive and true to their roots as they lived in a contemporary and ever-changing context; a position which brings hope that they will carry on the work of those who have gone before them, of those whose work they had come to so much admire.

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Appendix A

Nunavut Sivuniksavut Student Survey - 1998

Introduction

In January of 1998, 15 Nunavut Sivuniksavut students conducted surveys in their home communities to determine peoples' attitudes and knowledge about culture and language.

The students surveyed 441 Inuit from across the 3 regions of Nunavut. Results of the survey were tabulated using Filemaker II software. The following is a profile of the people surveyed.

Regional Distribution:

Baffin Region: total number surveyed = **238 (54%)**

- Iqaluit: **33**
- Pangnirtung: **86**
- Kimmirut: **33**
- Grise Fiord: **23**
- Pond Inlet: **40**
- Hall Beach: **27**
- Arctic Bay: **3**
- Cape Dorset: **3**
- Ottawa: **3**

Keewatin Region: total number surveyed - 150 (34%)

- Rankin Inlet: **50**
- Arviat: **51**
- Baker Lake: **25**
- Whale Cove: **26**
- Chesterfield Inlet: **1**
- Ottawa: **3**

Kitikmeot Region: total number surveyed - 53 (12%)

- Kugluktuk: **31**
- Taloyoak: **26**

Gender distribution: (441 responses)

Females: **256 (58%)** Males: **185 (42%)**

Age distribution: (441 responses)

12-15: **73 (16.7%)**
16-19: **107 (24.5%)**
20-25: **90 (20.5%)**
26-30: **55 (12.5%)**
31-39: **52 (11.9%)**
40-49: **30 (6.8%)**
50 +: **30 (6.8%)**

Marital Status (437 responses)

Married: **95 (22.1%)**
Single: **210 (49%)**
Other: **124 (29%)**

Education (436 responses)

Grade 8: **116 (26.6%)**
Grade 10: **210 (48%)**
Grade 12: **82 (19%)**
Post-secondary: **28 (6.4%)**

Present situation: (407 responses)

studying in High School: **165 (40.5%)**
Arctic College: **16 (4%)**
employed: **154 (38%)**
In training: **14 (3.5%)**
Homemaker: **27 (6.6%)**
Carver: **13 (3%)**
Hunter: **18 (4.4%)**

This survey was done as a learning exercise by a group of students doing this for the first time. The results of this survey cannot be interpreted as scientifically valid. Many communities did not participate in the survey and there was an uneven distribution of people in each age group. As well, question design did not always lead to conclusive results. Nevertheless, the fact that such a large number of

people were surveyed from all 3 regions does ensure that the results are strong indicators of the attitudes and knowledge of Inuit regarding the following issues.

Survey Questions:

1. Do you think Inuit in your community are losing their traditional culture? (424 responses)

2. If you answered yes, how much do you think this is a problem? (299 responses)

3. Which of the following activities do you know how to do?

a) hunting
b) fishing
c) sewing
d) story-telling
e) drum-dancing
f) square dancing
g) carving
h traditional tools
i) dog-sledding
j) Inuit games

4. Which of the following activities do you want to learn?

a) hunting
b) fishing
c) sewing
d) story-telling
e) drum-dancing
f) square dancing
g) carving
h traditional tools
i) dog-sledding
j) Inuit games

5. **Which of the following activities do you know how to do but want to learn more?**

a) hunting
b) fishing
c) sewing
d) story-telling
e) drum-dancing
f) square dancing
g) carving
h traditional tools
i) dog-sledding
j) Inuit games

6. **How well do you speak Inuktitut? (436 responses)**

very well
fairly well
only a little
not at all

7. **How well do you understand spoken Inuktitut? (435 responses)**

very well
fairly well
only a little
not at all

8. **How well do you read Inuktitut? (434 responses)**

very well
fairly well
only a little
not at all

9. **How well do you write Inuktitut? (434 responses)**

very well
fairly well
only a little
not at all

10. When you are with your friends, what language do you most commonly use? (437 responses)

Inuktitut all the time
Inuktitut most of the time
Half Inuktitut/Half English
English most of the time
English all the time

11. What language do you most commonly use at home with your family? (437 responses)

Inuktitut all the time
Inuktitut most of the time
Half Inuktitut/Half English
English most of the time
English all the time

12. How important to you is it that the Inuktitut language be kept strong? (431 responses)

very important
fairly important
not very important

13. What language do you think your children will use when they are your age? (433 responses)

Inuktitut all the time
Inuktitut most of the time
Half Inuktitut/Half English
English most of the time
English all the time

14. What language do you want your children to use? (436 responses)

Inuktitut all the time
Inuktitut most of the time
Half Inuk/half English
English most of the time
English all the time

Appendix B

Introduction to Inuit History (HIS 6100)

Course Description

Over the past century Inuit culture has been transformed from an isolated and completely independent hunting culture to one that is integrated with the southern industrial world. In this course students will explore the foundations of Inuit culture and society and examine some of the major external influences that initiated the process of change.

Course Curriculum

I. Course Learning Requirement / Embedded Knowledge and Skills

Learning Requirements	Knowledge and Skills Addressed in this course:
When you have earned credit for this course you will have demonstrated an ability to:	
1. describe the process archaeologists use to develop theories of the past	• what archaeologists do and why they do it (archaeologists' motivations and methods) • main findings of Arctic archaeologists
2. critically compare traditional and personal views and beliefs about the origins and development of Inuit culture with current archaeological theories.	• traditional Inuit explanations of the past • explanations and theories of Inuit past developed by archaeologists • introspection, reflection, clarification • written expression
3. describe and critically discuss the archaeological provisions of the Nunavut Land Claim	• rationale behind the arch. provisions • role and operations of the Nunavut Heritage Trust
4. describe some of the major characteristices of Inuit culture and society before contact with Qallunaat.	• difficulties in reconstructing valid descriptions of the past • bias among observers of culture • concept of culture • Knud Rasmussen and the 5th Thule Expedition • early Inuit society: social structure, spiritual beliefs and practises, material characteristics • gathering, interpreting, synthesizing information • documentary research - library • oral presentations

Learning Requirement cont'd:

5. describe the nature of early Qallunaat activity in the Arctic

6. explain the Inuit response to early interaction with Qallunaat and the resulting changes in Inuit culture

Knowledge and skills cont'd:

- early waves of Qallunaat contact: explorers and whalers: their reasons for coming to the Arctic, activities they carried out, interaction with Inuit
- effect of Qallunaat interaction on Inuit culture

II. Learning Resources

People:

Keith Crowe, Northern historian
John Bennet, Whaling era historian
Bob McGhee, Arctic Archaeologist, Canadian Museum of Civilization

Visual:

Origins video series, Parts 1,2,3
National Film Board, The Last Days of Okak
The Netsilik Eskimo series
Igloolik Isuma Productions, Nunaqpa and Qaggiq

Documentary:
for Archaeology unit:

McGhee, Bob,1978, Canadian Arctic Prehistory
Morrison, David, 1992, Arctic Hunters, The Inuit and Diamond Jenness
Rousseliere, Guy-Marie (1987) "How Old Monica Ataguttaaluk Introduced Me To Arctic Archaeology", Inuktitut magazine, Spring,1987

for Social History unit:

1. Inullariit Society, Igloolik; Inuit History - Northern Foxe Basin, Celestial
2. Arctic College "Interviewing Inuit Elders" series:
   Vol. 1: Introduction; Saullu Nakasuk,Herve Paniaq, Elisapee Ootoova, Pauloosie Angmaalik; edited by Jarich Oosten and Frederic Laugrand\
   Vol. 2: Perspectives on Traditional Law; Mariano Aupilaarjuk, Marie Tulimaaq, Akisu Joamie, Emile Imaruittuq, Luacassie Nutaraaluk; Edited by Jarich Oosten, Frederic Laugrand and Wim Rasing
   Vol. 3: Childrearing Practices; Naqi Ekho and Uqsuralik Ottokie; edited by Jean Briggs
   Vol. 4: Cosmology and Shamanism; Mariano and Tulimaaq Aupilaarjuk, Lucassie Nutaraaluk, Rose Iqallijuq, Johanasi Ujarak, Isidore Ijituuq and Michel Kupaaq; edited by Bernard Saladin d'Anglure
   Inuit Perspective on the 20th Century, The Transition to Christianity, Victor Tungilik and Rachel Uyarasuk; Edited by Jarich Oosten and Frederic Laugrand

3. Knud Rasmussen, Report of the Fifth Thule Expedition 1921-24 *
   Intellectual Culture of the Igloolik Eskimos Vol.VIII No.1
   The Netsilik Eskimos, Social Life and Spiritual Culture, Vol.VIII No.1-2
   Observations on the Intellectual Culture of the Caribou Eskimos, Vol.VII No.2
   Intellectual culture of the Copper Eskimos, Vol.IX
   Intellectual Culture of the Hudson Bay Eskimos, Vol. VII
   Iglulik and Caribou Eskimo Texts, Vol. VII,#3

4. David Boult, The Inuit Way, published by Pauktuutit
5. Robert Williamson, Eskimo Underground, Socio-Cultural Change in the Canadian Central Arctic, Chapters 2,3 and 4
6. Tannaumirk, "Tannaumirk's Reactions to Stefansson, 1910" in Northern Voices, edited by Penny Petrone
7. Gail Roberts, "Shamanism: Will it Ever Be Revived in the Arctic?" Inuit Circumpolar

   Conference Publication
8. Daniel Merkur, Becoming Half Hidden: Shamanism and Initiation Among the Inuit
9. " " , Powers Which We Do Not Know, the Gods and the Spirits of the Inuit
10. Franz Boas, The Central Eskimo*
11. Henry Rink, Tales and Traditions of the Eskimo*

* can only be found in the Indian and Northern Affairs Library

for Exploration unit:

1. Daniel Francis, Discovery of the North, Ch. 1,5&9
2. Alan Cooke, A Gift Outright: The Exploration of the Canadian Arctic Islands After 1880,paper published in A Century of Canada's Arctic Islands, 1880-1980
3. Ohokto, Ross Meets the Netchiliks, from Paper Stays Put, edited by Robin Gedalof
4. Knud Rasmussen, The Fate of the Franklin Expedition, as told to Rasmussen by Qaqortingneq, taken from Northern Voices, edited by Penny Petrone
5. Penny Petrone, Northern Voices, comments on Ada Blackjack Johnson, an Inuit woman who was the lone survivor of an exploration party
6. " " , comments on Ipirvik and Taqulittuq, two Inuit who had accompanied Charles Hall on several of his voyages.
7. Leslie Neatby, Exploration and History of the Canadian Arctic, from the Arctic volume of Handbook of North American Indians, published by the Smithsonian Institute
8. Roald Amundsen, The North-West Passage, pp. 78-79
   -on the naming of Gjoe Haven harbour
9. Andrew Nikiforuk, The Great Fire, from Equinox magazine (issue unknown)
10. Bob McGhee, Disease and the Development of Inuit Culture, in Current Anthropology,'94

for Whaling unit:

1. W. Gillies Ross, Whaling and Eskimos: Hudson Bay 1860-1915
2. Daniel Francis, Arctic Chase, Introduction, Ch. 1, pp. 40-46
3. Dorothy Eber, When the Whalers Were Up North, Prologue and Chapters 1 and 2
4. Aksaajuuq Etuangat, The Whalers of Pangnirtung, in Recollections of Inuit Elders printed by ICI.
5. Carolyn Lecker, "The Last Whaler", Globe and Mail, Jan.4,'92

6. Jean-Pierre Proulx, Whaling in the North Atlantic from Earliest Times to the Mid-19 Century, pp. 31-35, "The English in Davis Strait"
7. Kenneth Martin, "Life and Death at Marble Island 1864-73", The Beaver, Spring'79
8. George Anderson, "A Whale is Killed", The Beaver, March '47

for General use:

Brody, Hugh ( ) "Ilira: Meeting with the White Man", article in CASNP Bulletin
Crowe, Keith,1991, A History of the Original Peoples of Northern Canada
Ipeelie, Alootook ( ) "The Colonization of the Arctic", essay in Indigena

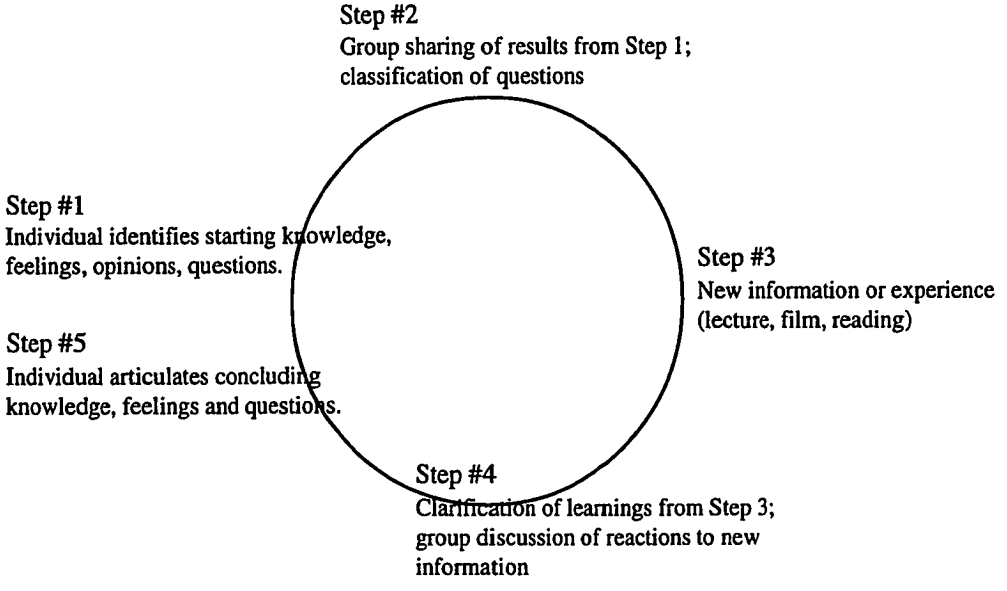
III. Teaching / Learning Methods

During this course you are likely to experience:

- group discussion
- lecture
- video
- individual reading and research
- group collaborative projects

* Learning cycle: A 5-stage learning cycle is frequently used as the guide for the instructional approach used with many of the topics in the program. This cycle is designed to ensure the maximum participation and contribution of individual learners. The cycle is described below:
Adherence to the cycle offers a number of advantages over traditional learning cycle models:

* it ensures that each student has a "pre-test" measurement or indicator of their starting knowledge or ability
* it recognizes and allows for the contribution of the valuable knowledge that students posess when they come into the program
* it provides a role for students in defining what's important to learn (ie. their own starting questions play a role in guiding the process)
* it provides instructors with an indication of "where students are starting from", thus enabling them to respond more effectively to trainees needs
* it takes full advantage of group analysis of information and experience



IV. Learning Activities

Some of the learning activities included in this course are:

- participating in a NGT to identify starting questions related to archaeology and the Inuit past
- participating in group discussion and debate concerning the origin and validity of ideas related to the origin of Inuit culture.
- preparing written critical comparison of personal views and beliefs with those of southern scientists.
- reading assignments and group discussion on various aspects of early Inuit culture
- research (locating, interpreting, synthesizing, evaluating, summarizing) from a variety of sources regarding particular aspects of early Inuit culture
- oral presentation on research topic
- seminar on writing effective essays

V. Evaluation

The following will provide evidence of your learning achievement:

1. Archaeology: **15%**

a) A written explanation of the work of Arctic archaeologists and a critical discussion of their theories. (validates requirements #'s 1&2)

b) A written analyses of certain archaeological provisions in the Nunavut Final Agreement. (v#3)

2. Social History: **15%**

a) Oral presentation of rsearch on a specific aspect of early Inuit culture. Topic to be selected by the student. (v. #4)

b) Written discussion of various aspects of early Inuit society. (v.#4)

3. Explorers: **15%**

a) Written response to questions regarding the nature of Arctic exploration and the impact of diseases introduced to North America. (v.#5)

b) Essay outline for the era of Arctic exploration. (v.#5)

4. Whalers:

a) Written response to questions regarding whaling activities in Hudson's Bay and Cumberland Sound. (v. # 5,6) **25%**

b) Written essay on the history of whaling in the Arctic and the impact of this activity on Inuit culture. (v.#5,6)

5. Final fact exam in December: covering all topics in the course. **15%**

6. Final essay exam in April: covering all topics **15%**

Inuit History - The Government Era to 1965 (HIS 6101)

Course Description

For thousands of years Inuit independently occupied the Arctic regions of North America. In the past century these lands have become Canadian lands and the Inuit occupying them have become Canadian citizens. This development took place without any clearly defined decision on the part of the Inuit. In this course students will examine the major policies and historical activities which led to the Canadian government establishing its presence in the eastern Arctic, as well as the impact this has had on Inuit society.

Course Curriculum

I. Course Learning Requirements / Embedded Knowledge and Skills

Learning Requirements	Knowledge and Skills Addressed in this course:
When you have earned credit for this course you will have demonstrated an ability to:	
1. describe the nature of early trading and missionary activity in the Arctic	• traders and missionaries: reasons for coming to the Arctic, activities and interaction with Inuit
2. explain the Inuit response to traders and missionaries and the resulting changes in Inuit culture	• effect of interaction with traders and missionaries on Inuit culture
3. identify and describe the main areas of early federal government activity in the Arctic between 1900 and 1965.	• making the Arctic "Canadian" • Canadian Arctic sovereignty and the introduction of the southern Canadian justice system to Inuit society
4. explain the impact of federal government activities in the north on Inuit culture and society	• federal government involvement in Inuit society with programs in the areas of: health, relief and education. • status of Inuit as Canadian citizens, Indians or not? • the militarization of the North • development of a federal northern administration; northern service officers • northern economic development • establishment of permanent settlements • relocation of Inuit: high Arctic and Keewatin • impact of federal government interventions on Inuit culture and society.

Knowledge and Skills continued.

- gathering, interpreting, synthesizing, evaluating information
- documentary research - National Archives
- formal essay writing

II. Learning Resources

People:

Keith Crowe, Northern historian

Visual:

Kikkik, film by Elisapee Karetak
Between Two Worlds, National Film Board,
Coppermine, " "
Yesterday-Today: The Netsilik Eskimo, " "
Nuliajuk, film by John Huston

Documentary:

for Traders:

1. Peter C. Newman, Merchant Princes, Ch.9 "On the Trail of the Arctic Fox" pp.176-177, 189, 192-193.
2. Richard Diubaldo, The Government of Canada and the Inuit, pp.57-69
3. Keith Crow, AHistory of the Original Peoples of Northern Canada, pp.110-120
4. Peter Tulugajuak, A letter of Complaint,1927, in Northern Voices, edited by Penny Petrone
5. Robert G. Williamson, Eskimo Underground, Socio-Cultural Change in the Canadian Central Arctic, pp. 65-71
6. Jette Ashlee, Inuit Integration with Denmark and Canada, p.79-82
7.. Peter Usher, Fur Trade Posts of the Northwest Territories: 1870-1970, from the Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project, Vol.2
8. Peter Murdoch. "A Peripatetic Trading Post Clerk". Magazine article in ?

for Missionaries:

1. Leslie Neatby, "The Old Man From Makkovik, Hermann Theodor Jannasch", The Beaver, Winter'78
2. Keith Crowe, A History of the Original Peoples of Northern Canada, Ch.7
3. Peter Pitseolak, The First Religious Time, from Paper Stays Put, edited by Robin Gedalof
4. Kit Minor, Issumatuq, Learning from the Traditional Healing Wisdom of the Canadian Inuit, pp.65-76
5. From the Handbook of North American Indians Vol.5 Arctic:
   * Leslie Neatby, Exploration and History of the Canadian Arctic, pp.386,387
   * Bernard Saladin d'Anglure, Inuit of Quebec, pp.501-505
6. Robert G. Wiliamson, Eskimo Undergound, Socio-Cultural Change in the Canadian Arctic,
7. Inuit Perspective on the 20th Century, The Transition to Christianity, Victor Tungilik and Rachel Uyarasuk; Edited by Jarich Oosten and Frederic Laugrand

pp. 72, 79

for Government:
Justice:

1. Atagutsiaq, Anna and Rousselière, Guy-Marie. "An Eyewitness Account of Robert Janes' Murder", an article in Eskimo magazine. Spring/Summer '88
2. Stevenson, Alex. "The Robert Janes Murder Trial at Pond Inlet", article in The Beaver. Autumn.1973
3. Douglas, W.O. "All in a Winter's Patrol", article in The Beaver, Winter.1978
4. Inuit Cultural Institute. "Inuit and the Law", article in Ajurnarmat magazine, Summer,1978
5. Qitsualik, Rachel. "Law of the Land", article in Nunatsiaq News,Aug. 21,1998
6. Bourgeois, Annette. RCMP Apologize. Article in Nunatsiaq Newss Feb. 26,1999
7. Hallendy, Norman. "The Last Trial". article in Equinox magazine, Sept. 1998
8. Morrison, William.1984. Under the Flag: Canadian Sovereignty and the Native People in Northern Canada*i*. DIAND, Internal document
9. Dorothy Harley Eber.1997. Images of Justice. McGill-Queen's University Press

for Relief,Education, Health

1. John matthiasson,1996, Living on the Land, Change Among the Inuit of Baffin Island. Broadview Press.Peterborough
2. Frank Tester and Peter Kulchyski.1994.Tammarniit (Mistakes) Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic 1939-63.UBC Press.Vancouver
3. Valeri Alia.1994.Names, Numbers, and Northern Policy - Inuit, Project Surname, and the Politics of Identity.Fernwood Publishing.Halifax
4. Jenness, Diamond.1964. Eskimo Administration in Canada
5. Diubaldo, Richard.1985. The Government of Canada and the Inuit. Internal DIAND document;
6.. Diubaldo, Richard ( ) "The Absurd Little Mouse: When Eskimos became Indians", article in The Journal of Canadian Studies Vol.16,#2
7. Finnie, O.S. ( ) Government Moves North
8. Government of Canada, ( ) Report of the Royal Commission to Investigate the Possibilities of the Reindeer and Musk-Ox Industries in the Arctic and Sub-Arctic Regions of Canada
9. Life as a TB Patient in the South. Article in Inuktitut Magazine. #71.1990
10. "The Inuit Educational Concept". Article in Ajurnarmat, publication of the Inuit Cultural Institute.1979
11. Residential Education for Indian Acculturation Paper by the Indian and Eskimo Welfare Commission and the Oblate Fathers in Ottawa.1958

III. Teaching / Learning Methods

During this course you are likely to experience:

- group discussion
- lecture
- video
- individual reading and research
- group collaborative projects

* Learning cycle: As per course outline for History I.

IV. Learning Activities

Some of the learning activities included in this course are:

- identifying and retrieving relevant documents from the National Archives
- participating in a group project to develop summary notes of lectures by guest presenters
- selected reading and written assignments and group discussion on early federal government activity in the North
- research (locating, interpreting, synthesizing, evaluating, summarizing) from a variety of sources regarding activities of the federal government in the arctic in the early and mid-1900's
- essay writing

V. Evaluation

The following will provide evidence of your learning achievement:

1. Written response to questions regarding the nature and activities of missionaries and traders and the impact of this on Inuit culture. (validates requirements 1&2)	20%
2. Written and oral responses to questions regarding the policies and activities of the federal government in the areas of justice, relief, health, education, economic development. (validates requirements 3&4)	60%
3. Final exam covering all aspects of the course.	20%

Land Claims - The Nunavut Agreement (SSC 6102)

Course Description

The Nunavut Land Claim Agreement is now included in the Constitution of Canada as law. The implementation of this agreement is one of the central political issues in Nunavut today. In this course students will become familiar with the specific terms of the Agreement and the process of its implementation.

Course Curriculum

I. Course Learning Requirements / Embedded Knowledge and Skills

Learning Requirements	Knowledge and Skills Addressed in this course:
When you have earned credit for this course you will have demonstrated an ability to:	
1. describe the details of the main sub-agreements of the Nunavut Land Claim.	• the negotiation process through the 1980's • details of the main provisions of the Nunavut Land Claim
2. describe the functioning of the various organizations and institutions of public government established by the land claim.	• ratification of the claim • details of the contract regarding implementation • gathering, interpreting, synthesizing, evaluating information

Inuit - Government Relations (SSC 6103)

Course Description

The implementation of the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement is one of the central initiatives in Inuit society today. In this course students will examine the historical foundations of land claims, as well as the circumstances and processes which led to the signing of the Agreement.

Course Curriculum

I. Course Learning Requirements / Embedded Knowledge and Skills

Learning Requirements	Knowledge and Skills Addressed in this course:
When you have earned credit for this course you will have demonstrated an ability to:	
1. describe the early policies of the federal government towards Aboriginal peoples, including the beliefs and attitudes they were founded on.	• colonization of southern Canada • the Indian Act • treaties • concepts of colonialism and paternalism • attitudes of government towards aboriginal people
2. explain the concepts of Aboriginal right and Aboriginal title and their relevance to the establishment of the Nunavut Land Claim.	• concepts of Aboriginal rights, title and extinguishment
3. identify and describe the various events and issues of the late 60's and early 70's which led to the development of a federal land claim policy.	• federal Aboriginal policy reform in the 60's • the Nisga'a claim to the Nass Valley and the Calder Supreme Court case • oil and gas exploration in the Arctic in the early 1970's • the Berger Inquiry • establishment of Aboriginal political organizations such as Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, the National Indian Brotherhood, Indian Brotherhood of the NWT. • federal land claim policy

Learning Requirements

3. discuss the development of the initial Inuit land claim proposal and the basic principles put forward in it.

Knowledge and Skills continued.

- developing the very first Inuit land claim proposal
- early negotiations between Inuit and the Federal government
- division of the NWT: land claims and an Inuit Territory
- the negotiation process through the 1980's
- ratification of the claim

- gathering, interpreting, synthesizing, evaluating information
- formal essay writing

II. Learning Resources

People:

John Amagoalik, Chief Commissioner, Nunavut Implementation Commission, and founding member of Inuit Tapirisat of Canada
Murray Angus, Aboriginal policy historian
Francois Bregha, energy policy analyst

Visual:

National Film Board, The Inquiry Film
" , Nunavut
CBC, Journal Series on Aboriginal issues

Documentary:

Inuit Response to Government Actions and events of the late '60's and the '70's

1. Coppermine Conference of Arctic Native People, July 1970, minutes of proceedings
2. ITC, Chronology of Events 1968-1981, ITC internal document
3. ITC, Chronology #2, 1972-1979
4. Inuit Land Claims Commission, "The Struggle", from Inuit Nunangat: The People's Land

4.b. "Proposed Agreement in Principle for the Establishment of Inuit Rights between the Inuit and the Government of Canada"

5. Ian Creery, "ITC, History of Negotiations"
6. CASNP, "Nunavut-Our Land", CASNP Bulletin, March 1976
7. "- " , "Making A Case for the Inuit", " "
8. Marc Denhez, "Baker Lake -What Aboriginal Rights", in Inuit North (date unknown)
9. "Royalties could pay for Nunavut Government", interview with John Amagoalik in Inuit North
10. Gary Yabsley, "Inuit Title to Arctic Lands", CASNP Bulletin, March 1976
11. "Political Development in Nunavut", ITC Report to General Assembly, Sept. 1979
12. Murray Angus, "Cope Claim", from Implementation of Federal Claims Policy
13. Hugh McCullum, "Cope and James Bay Models - No Precedent"
14. George Erasmus, "We the Dene", from Dene Nation, The Colony Within, 1977
15. "The Dene Declaration", " "

The Times

1. Edgar Dosman, The National Interest, pp. 119-124, pp. 191-195
2. CARC, "Canada's Energy Crisis: A Bizarre Case of Bungling", Northern Perspective, Vol.4#1,
3. " , Makenzie Valley Route", map in Norhtern Perspective, Vol.1, #8, Sept.'73
4. " , "Alaska Highway Natural Gas Pipeline Project", " " , Vol.8,#7, 1980
5. " , "Gas Transport Schemes", " "
6. "Opening Statements to Berger Inquiry", Northern Perspectives, Vol. 3,#4, 1975
7. "A Time for Choosing", " " , Vol 17, #2, 1989
8. "Arctic Offshore Drilling", " " , Vol. 2 #4, 1974
9. "Arctic Pilot Project", " " , Vol. 10 #3, 1982
10. ICC, "The Quiet Passing of the Arctic Pilot Project", in Inuit, #1, 1984
11. Paul Marshall, "Rapprochement -The Southern Trapline Inquiry", Vanguard magazine, May'77

Government Policies and Legal Events:

1. Thomas Berger, Fragile Freedoms, Ch. 8
2. Donald Purich, Our Land, pp.51-59
3. "The Problem of Abbrogation of Inuit Aboriginal Territorial Rights: A Chronology", TFN internal document
4. "A History of Native Claims Processes in Canada", pp.154-156
5. CARC, "The Baker Lake Decision", in Northern Perspectives, Vol.7 #3, 1980

The Land Claim

1. The Agreement Between the Inuit of the Nunavut Settlement Area and Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada (the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement)
2. A Contract Relating to the Implementation of the Nunavut Final Agreement

III. Teaching / Learning Methods

During this course you are likely to experience:

- group discussion
- lecture
- video
- individual reading and research
- group collaborative projects

* Learning cycle: A 5-stage learning cycle is frequently used as the guide for the instructional approach used with many of the topics in the program. This cycle is designed to ensure the maximum participation and contribution of individual learners. The cycle is described in the History course outlines.

Contemporary Inuit Issues (SSC 6104)

Course Description

Events of the past century have brought dramatic change to Inuit culture and society, resulting in, among other things, a loss of independence and autonomy for Inuit. Over the past twenty-five years Inuit have created a variety of organizations, from the community to the international level, with the goal of regaining and maintaining control over their lives. In this course students will study the history and present functioning of national and international Inuit organizations. Students will also examine many of the issues that these organizations are dealing with.

Course Curriculum

I. Course Learning Requirements / Embedded Knowledge and Skills

Learning Requirements	Knowledge and Skills Addressed in this course:
When you have earned credit for this course you will have demonstrated an ability to:	
1. identify and describe the functioning of the various regional, national and international Inuit-run organizations that have been established to deal with Inuit concerns 2. identify the major issues that Inuit are dealing with today and explain how they are being addressed.	• Inuit Tapirisat of Canada • Pauktuutit • social issues of spousal and child abuse, suicide, health care, smoking, AIDS • Inuit Cultural Institute • standardization of Inuktitut • Inuit Broadcasting Corporation • telecommunications and cultural survival • Inuit Circumpolar Conference • environmental concerns • development of an international Inuit identity • international issues of circumpolar trade and movement • sea mammal harvesting rights and the the International Whaling Commission • the sealing economy and the animal rights movement • Nunavut Implementation Commission • the establishment and operation of the Nunavut Government • interviewing • documentary research • essay writing

II. Learning Resources

People:

Nancy Karetak-Lindel, Member of Parliament for Nunatsiaq
Veronica Dewar, President, Pauktuutit
Sheila Watt-Cloutier, Canadian Vice-President, Inuit Circumpolar Conference
Jose Kusugak,, President, Inuit Tapirisat of Canada
John Amagoalik
Mary Simon, Canadian Ambassador to Denmark
Staff of the above organizations

Visual:

Pauktuutit, Ikajurti - Midwifery in the Canadian Arctic
NFB, Magic in the Sky

Documentary:

Pauktuutit, Annual reports and proceedings of Annual General Meetings
Inuit Cultural Institute, Isumasi, journal of the Inuit Cultural Institute
" , proceedings of Elders conferences
Lynge, Aqqaluk (1993) Inuit, The Story of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference
Lauritzen, Philip (1979) Oil and Amulets
Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, Annual reports
Inuit Circumpolar Conference, Reports to General Assemblies
" , Circumpolar Whaling and the ICC Whaling Agenda
Herscovici, Allan (1985) Second Nature, The Animal Rights Controversy, CBC
Freeman, Milton (1992), Recovering Rights, Bowhead Whales and Inuvialuit Subsistence in the Western Canadian Arctic, Canadian Circumpolar Institute
Freeman, Milton.,Bogoslovaskaya, Lyudmila. Caulfield, Richard. et.al.(1998) Inuit, Whaling and Sustainability
CARC (1997) Voices from the Bay, Traditional Ecological Knowledge of Inuit and Cree in the Hudson Bay Bioregion, Canadian Arctic Resources Committee
Wenzel, George (1991) Animal Rights, Human Rights, Ecology, Economy and Ideology in the Canadian Arctic