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## **Arctic Assimilation: Settler Colonialism And Racialization In The Canadian Arctic And Carlisle Indian Industrial School**

Samantha Kramer

*William & Mary - Arts & Sciences*, [kramersamj@gmail.com](mailto:kramersamj@gmail.com)

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Arctic Assimilation: Settler Colonialism and Racialization in the Canadian Arctic  
and Carlisle Indian Industrial School

Samantha J. Kramer

Brownstown, Pennsylvania

Bachelor of Arts, Washington & Jefferson College, 2021

A Thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty  
of The College of William & Mary in Candidacy for the Degree of  
Master of Arts

Harrison Ruffin Tyler Department of History

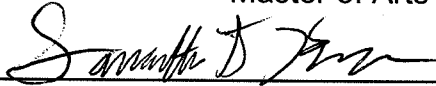
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## APPROVAL PAGE

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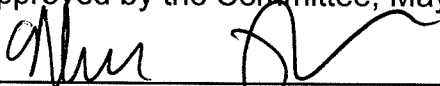
Master of Arts



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Samantha J. Kramer

Approved by the Committee, May 2022



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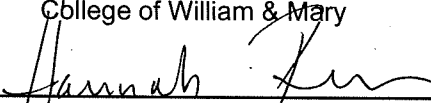
Committee Chair

Nicholas Popper, Associate Professor, History  
College of William & Mary



---

Andrew Fisher, Associate Professor, History  
College of William & Mary



---

Hannah Rosen, Associate Professor, History and American Studies  
College of William & Mary

## ABSTRACT

### Isolate and Assimilate: Settler Colonialism in the Canadian Arctic

Previous generations of Canadian historians have focused on welfare when examining the twenty-first century colonization of the territory of Nunavut. Patrick Wolfe's theory of settler colonialism, on the other hand, presents a form of colonialism that allows for examination through a more cultural-centric lens, while still recognizing the exploitation of economics for purposes of assimilation. Using government reports, Truth and Reconciliation Committee findings, and first-hand accounts from local Inuit, this paper takes Wolfe's theory and analyzes how his idea of "logics of elimination" were exemplified in the Canadian government's actions after the 1930s. The "going away" focus of settler colonialism appeared in both the physical and cultural sense within methods used by the government and the RCMP. Physical logics of elimination occurred in projects such as the various High Arctic Relocations and the building of settlements, used for the purposes of showing sovereignty and effective occupation in the north. Cultural logics of elimination took the form of actions like wildlife and game management laws, the slaughter of sled dogs, residential schools, disc numbers, Project Surname, and healthcare removal. All the above elements are examined within the paper to showcase how the theory of settler colonialism can and should be used to examine the history of the Canadian Arctic.

### Arctic Dislocation: Racialization and Assimilation of Inupiat and Yup'ik Students at Carlisle Indian Industrial School

Opened in 1879 by Richard Henry Pratt, the Carlisle Indian Industrial School was the blueprint for the system of government-run off-reservation residential schools in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Over ten-thousand children would attend the school by the time it closed. Among them were seventeen students, taken from thousands of miles away in Alaska, intended by Pratt to act as examples of how effective Carlisle's assimilation project could be. In the process of assimilation, their tribal identities were erased, and the students were instead recorded as "Eskimo;" no mention of them being Inupiat and Yup'ik exists in the archives for Carlisle. Although Carlisle has generated an extensive historiography, scholars have neglected these students and their unique circumstances, and no one had bothered to attempt to discover where they came from. This paper rectifies this, examining these students and their lives through their student files, newspaper articles, letters, and other primary sources from their time at Carlisle. This paper analyzes assimilation, renaming, before-and-after photography, and the cemetery at Carlisle to showcase how these students were racialized, not just as "Indian" but also as "Eskimo" and "Alaskan."

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### Intellectual Biography

When I arrived at William & Mary, it was my intention to study British Empire and polar history. During undergraduate studies, most of my research and classes focused on both Medieval and Early Modern England. I had precious little time to study my more modern research interests due to scheduling conflicts with my other classes, studying abroad, and the COVID-19 pandemic. I had only one opportunity to write about my interest in polar history in an environmental history class, this allowed me to write about the history of Inuit cultural adaptation to climate change. In the process of drafting this paper, I stumbled upon a variety of sources related to colonialism in the territory of Nunavut but had no time or space to examine the complicated elements of this history.

I revisited these sources while trying to think of a topic for my first semester research paper and I discovered a lack of scholars applying settler colonialism theory to the area of Nunavut. When settler colonialism was mentioned, it was only briefly, with little analysis, and was rather sporadic. No one had yet to dedicate an article or any sort of scholarly work to the topic, and many scholars still followed historian Frank Tester's rather dated use of welfare colonialism from his *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic*. By doing so, they ignored the cultural logics of elimination evident in many firsthand accounts of colonialism in the region. Few scholars had made use of the recent findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee of Canada, which were published in 2015. By using these findings, government and residential school archives, and oral histories, it seemed like it would not be difficult to make

a case for settler colonialism instead of, or at least in addition to, welfare colonialism. I figured that I would be able to focus on England in my historiography paper for Historian's Craft, so I could write about both my research interests in one semester if I focused on polar history for the first chapter of my thesis. I greatly underestimated how many primary sources I would end up analyzing, or how much I would have to delete to keep the paper within a reasonable length. While I would have hoped to have had more time to keep in and pick apart all the sources I had, I hope that my application of the theory will be useful to future researchers. It should serve as a good jumping off point for using settler colonialism as a theory of analysis elsewhere in the Arctic, as it serves as a comprehensive analysis of the various logics of elimination used against the Inuit of Nunavut and cites most of the important sources that a scholar might need. I hope at a later date to expand the themes of this paper to other areas of the Canadian Arctic.

It was my intention to focus my second semester research project on the subjects that I had originally planned to study. I had potential papers planned out related to race in the British Empire and depictions of Matthew Henson, the first African American polar explorer. However, I found myself unable to stop thinking about a set of sources I had found during my first semester studying settler colonialism. In my first semester research seminar, we were given an assignment to search through the Carlisle Digital Resource Center, which contains the records of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, the first off-reservation residential school in the United States. During that assignment I came across the student

files of Cookiglook and Annie Coodalook. I was immediately shocked at the terminology used to refer to the students, not so much at the time, but currently, in the Digital Resource Center itself. While some of the Alaska Native students had apparently been researched enough to have their proper tribal associations labelled on the website even when it was lacking in the official record, these two, and fourteen others, were still labelled as “Eskimo.” For a digital archive that was made recently, and continues to be updated, I could not imagine why they would use such a term when the information of their tribal identities could be found. We cannot change the racial terms used in our sources, but we can change how we label them in the modern day. We do not need to repeat and reproduce the racialization in our sources. I decided to dedicate my second semester to researching these seventeen students, trying to discover who they were and where they came from.

I quickly discovered that there had not been any research done related to these students at all and this might explain the archival misinterpretation. In fact, I was unable to find any scholarly sources that discussed the students from Alaska at length. Despite the extensive historiography on Carlisle, I could find only a handful of brief mentions of these students: Henry Rose in a paper about finding the origins of the graves labelled “Unknown” in the cemetery, and Esenetuck in an article about theatre at the school. Even articles that focused on the use of Before-and-After photography as propaganda for Carlisle’s assimilation did not include the photographs of the students from Point Barrow. These students deserved to be remembered and explained, and to have their

experiences at Carlisle documented and analyzed. These students, in addition to enduring the assimilation program of Carlisle and its subsequent racialization of its students as a collective race of “Indian,” also faced their tribal identities being erased in a way that happened to no other group of students. They were first labelled “Eskimo” and then “Alaskan,” a two-step process of racialization that further hid their Indigenous identity. I discovered when I travelled to Carlisle for research in March 2022 that several of the students from Alaska were buried under those terms, rather than their actual tribal affiliations of Inupiat and Yup’ik. Cookiglook, the student who had originally inspired my research, was buried as “Cooking Look, Alaskan.” She is an Alaska Native, and Inupiaq from Point Barrow, and there are several spellings of her name that would have worked. Cooking Look, though, was not amongst those but rather English words the administrators at Carlisle picked instead.

Though the two papers do not share a country, they do share the overarching theme of assimilation of Arctic Indigenous peoples, and both papers discuss how residential schools were used in that process. I hope that both papers will be useful to other scholars, and the second essay reshapes how the students at Carlisle from Alaska are discussed by scholars and beyond. In the process of drafting the paper, I have helped reclassify several sources in the Carlisle Digital Resource Center that were incorrectly tagged as “Annie Coodalook,” when they actually belonged to Cookiglook. I have larger goals in mind for this paper and for the work I will do after I graduate. I intend to use my research to try to have the student files for these students updated in the Digital

Resource Center and at the NARA. I hope also to be in further contact with the Inupiaq Heritage Center in Barrow to find the families of these students and begin the repatriation process of the student's remains, as only one student from Alaska has been returned so far from Carlisle. I hope at the very least that this paper will help to fix Cookiglook's tombstone, and all of the tombstones marking the Inupiat and Yup'ik students, and perhaps inspire the forensic anthropologists looking for a student named Mary Kininnook to keep an eye out for Henry Rose as well.

### Isolate and Assimilate: Settler Colonialism in the Canadian Arctic

For many of the world's colonizing nations, the decades following World War II were marked by the crumbling of their empires; the colonized peoples left to their own devices to dismantle the harmful structures and systems left behind in the wake of revolutions. Those that had turned internally for their systems of control were forced to reckon with their pasts of assimilation and the federal abuse of their indigenous populations. Many, but not all. Canada, rather than looking at its history and the damage it had done, turned to the north, and doubled down on its colonial ideologies. The Canadian government presented their colonization of the Arctic as a humanitarian effort, as if taking the land and forcing cultural elimination amongst its people would "save" them from extinction.

The idea that the Inuit were disappearing and needed to be "saved," just like the Myth of the Vanishing Indian in the United States, was quite popular from the late nineteenth century into the first half of the twentieth. It was so pervasive both in Canada and internationally that even Roald Amundsen, arriving in the Canadian Arctic in 1903 with the *Gjøa* Expedition, was shocked to find Inuit still alive, believing they, "were extinct, and had been relegated to oblivion."<sup>1</sup> Many publications on the colonization of the Canadian Arctic, even all the way up to 2017, follow this myth as an excuse to call it "reluctant" or even "accidental" colonialism. Edith Iglauer actually praises the Canadian government's actions, "No longer demoralized and half-starved in an ancient and primitive world...the Eskimo is becoming part of our world, of that economically interdependent

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<sup>1</sup> Roald Amundsen, *The North West Passage*, vol. 1 (New York: E.P. Dutton and Company, 1908), 113.

society that we know.”<sup>2</sup> A publication by the Minority Rights Group from 1994 excuses the government’s actions by arguing that the Inuit never attempted to defend their land by force; the government assumed there was no attachment to their country, so “there was no need to obtain their approval before taking their land for Canada.”<sup>3</sup> If this statement is correct, then it says more about the Canadian government’s lack of interest in understanding Inuit culture than it does Inuit attachment. Inuit identity is, and always has been, heavily tied to the land and its resources. Expecting force and violence from a culture largely based on sharing and cooperating, and one with no history of inter-tribal warfare, in order to defend that land is a complete misunderstanding of indigenous traditions. Even respected social anthropologist Robert Paine writes that, “the more noteworthy feature about the Canadian north is still the degree that colonialism there was unintended, even accidental.”<sup>4</sup> No colonialism is accidental, nor is it reluctant. Colonialism requires intent. No one accidentally takes away native land and destroys cultures in their wake. These writings suggest a degree of support towards the Canadian government’s actions; or, at the very least, a complete refusal to engage with indigenous voices and suffering.

For those authors rightly uncomfortable with the idea that any form of colonialism could be called “reluctant,” welfare colonialism remains the most popular alternative for describing the actions of the Canadian government in the

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<sup>2</sup> Edith Iglauer, *The New People: The Eskimo’s Journey into Our Time* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1966), 1.

<sup>3</sup> Minority Rights Group, *Polar Peoples: Self-Determination & Development* (London: Minority Rights Publications, 1994), 112.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Paine, “The Nursery Game: Colonizers and Colonized in the Canadian Arctic,” *Études/Inuit/Studies* 1, no. 1 (2017): 6.



Arctic. Presented by Frank Tester, one of the most respected scholars of Arctic history, this angle focuses on the total forced economic dependencies of the Inuit on the Canadian government. Tester and his constituents present a well-argued and well-researched perspective on the colonization of the Arctic, one that certainly seems to have occurred. Occurred, that is, if economic factors are the only thing being looked at when defining the region's colonization. Tester, however, was writing long before Patrick Wolfe's "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native." Wolfe presents a form of colonialism that allows for examination through a more cultural-centric lens, while still recognizing the exploitation of economics and welfare for purposes of assimilation. It could be argued that settler colonialism does not apply due to the relatively smaller percentage of white settlers in comparison to the remaining indigenous population. Alternatively, because the government never directly told the Inuit that they had to leave to make room for outsiders, or *qallunaat*, the term could not apply. However, neither of these are the case, nor do they erase the widespread government usage of the primary aspect of settler colonialism: logics of elimination. Wolfe designates a series of outcomes of the logics of elimination, almost all of which apply to the colonization of the Canadian Arctic, and include,

Officially encouraged miscegenation, the breaking down of native title into alienable individual freeholds, native citizenship, child abduction, religious conversion, resocialization in total institutions such as missions or boarding schools, and a whole range of cognate biocultural assimilations.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no.4 (December 2006): 388.

The Canadian government used wildlife management laws, residential schools, and control of native health to enforce cultural elimination, resocialization, and religious conversion. Inuit land was broken down into *qallunaat* controlled settlements, where the Inuit would be moved either through force or coercion to be assimilated into Canadian culture, becoming settlers in their own land.

Through a structured and organized invasion of life and livelihoods, the Canadian government used settler colonialism to isolate and assimilate the Inuit in their own Arctic territory.<sup>6</sup>

Initially, the Inuit had been left alone by the Canadian government, and the British Empire before them. The Inuit were not even federally recognized as an indigenous group until 1939.<sup>7</sup> Unless living on the coast, and therefore dealing with whalers and other traders, most Inuit camps on the interior of the Canadian Arctic had no exposure to *qallunaat* until polar expeditions in the nineteenth century. The *Gjøa* expedition in 1903 found numerous groups of Inuit that had never seen a white person before.<sup>8</sup> Following the collapse of the whaling industry in the early 1900's, the Hudson's Bay Company moved in, and proceeded to promote *qallunaat* supplies to any Inuit they could access, even those who had not interacted with whalers. Employees encouraged Inuit to enter the wage economy for things they had never needed for surviving in the Arctic; trading pelts of animals for money to buy rifles, flour, tea, sugar, lard, and alcohol. Some

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<sup>6</sup> One of the most quoted lines of Wolfe, "Invasion is a structure, not an event," focuses on this systematic structure of settler colonialism. Ibid, 388.

<sup>7</sup> Elspeth Young, *Third World in the First: Development and Indigenous Peoples* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 41.

<sup>8</sup> Amundsen, *North West Passage*, vol. 1, 293.

Inuit moved closer to these new *qallunaat* settlements, though most remained out in their camps and only came to trade when necessary.<sup>9</sup> Settler colonialism would not apply to this beginning period, with Inuit cultural change based on trade rather than elimination, and the number of *qallunaat* in the region limited to just HBC traders.

Continued international activity in the region, however, drew the government's eye north to the roughly one third of the country's land and marine mass that had been previously left to its own devices.<sup>10</sup> The very explorers that were exposing the Inuit to *qallunaat* were also threatening Canadian sovereignty by laying claims to the region or its waterways. Norway perhaps presented the biggest threat. In 1902 Otto Sverdrup actively laid claim to the islands he discovered on the *Fram* expedition for Norway; claims that created a major sovereignty dispute which would not be settled until 1930.<sup>11</sup> Though not a direct claim, Amundsen's success at finally sailing the North-West Passage in 1906 opened Canadian Arctic waterways to international trade that the government would need to find ways to control and monitor.

Americans were also heavily active in the region, with explorers such as Robert Peary, Frederick Cook, Donald MacMillan, and Adolphus Greely. Aside from a particularly nasty fight over the North Pole, the American explorers largely did not lay direct claim to Arctic territory. Where the American threat to Canadian

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<sup>9</sup> Joe Karetak, Frank Tester, and Shirley Tagalik, ed. *Inuit Qaujimaqatuqangit: What Inuit Have Always Known to Be True* (Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing, 2017), 22.

<sup>10</sup> Mary Simon, "Canadian Inuit: Where We Have Been and Where We Are Going," *International Journal* 66, no. 4 (Autumn, 2011): 879, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23104399>.

<sup>11</sup> Gerard Kenney, *Ships of Wood and Men of Iron: A Norwegian-Canadian Saga of Exploration in the High Arctic* (Ontario: Natural Heritage, 2005), xviii.

sovereignty truly entered the fold was during and after World War II. The United States military constructed airfields in Kuujuaq, Iqaluit, Churchill, and Salliq which continued to be used after the war. New weather stations and air defense stations were added in the 1950's in response to the growing threat from Russia. The United States intended to continue to build in the Arctic, with planned developments of a series of radar stations in 1953. When the Canadian government caught word of the plans, Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent warned that "U.S. developments might be just the only form of human activity in the vast wastelands of the Canadian Arctic... we must leave no doubt about our active occupation and exercise our sovereignty in these Northern lands right up to the Pole."<sup>12</sup> Apparently, the Inuit did not count as humans to St. Laurent.

The Canadian and United States government came to an agreement to build and man the radar stations jointly; the Distant Early Warning Line would run from Alaska to Greenland through the Canadian Arctic. The construction work for these stations and airfields brought a great deal of *qallunaat* workers and their families north. According to Joanne Tompkins, a leading educator in what is now the Nunavut territory, "There was a feeling that with modern, improved technology, people, including southerners, would be able to conquer the North and set up comfortable living there."<sup>13</sup> The DEW line was not the only "improvement" that encouraged settlement. The 1942 construction of the Alaska Highway had made the Canadian Arctic more accessible for *qallunaat*

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<sup>12</sup> Clyde H. Farnsworth, "The Day the Eskimos Were Cast into Darkness," *The New York Times*, April 10, 1992, A4.

<sup>13</sup> Joanne Tompkins, *Teaching in a Cold and Windy Place: Change in an Inuit School* (Toronto: University Press, 1998), 16.

government and companies, allowing them to emphasize the new access to services that the highway provided.<sup>14</sup> By 1944, the semi-official map of “eskimo camping sites” by government geographer J. Lewis Robinson noted “white settlements” as the first category of inhabited places in the Arctic.<sup>15</sup> While this could be due to the map being created by a white man, the fact that there were enough white settlements to require their own category even before the DEW Line is significant in terms of Arctic settler colonialism.

The main problem the Canadian government faced with the increase of white activity in the Arctic was *de facto* sovereignty. International requirement for sovereignty claims required effective occupation; therefore, actual control of the North could fall into the hands of the United States simply because there were more Americans than there were Canadians. Inuit, as a separate indigenous identity, were not included in the equation.<sup>16</sup> The Great Depression and World War II combined also led to a collapse of the fur trade, which had been the only form of wage economy practiced by the Inuit. If the Inuit wished to purchase any of the *qallunaat* supplies they might have grown used to, or to supplement a diet being destroyed by *qallunaat* settlement and climate change, they had to rely on welfare payments and the Family Allowance Program.

Here was an opportunity to enact another aspect of settler colonialism: colonialism that cover its tracks. The Canadian government would move in,

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<sup>14</sup> Andrew Armitage, *Comparing the Policy of Aboriginal Assimilation: Australia, Canada, and New Zealand* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1995), 108.

<sup>15</sup> Qikiqtani Truth Commission, *Nuutauniq: Moves in Inuit Life*, Thematic Reports and Special Studies 1950-75 (Iqaluit: Qikiqtani Inuit Association), 14.

<sup>16</sup> Canada, Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, *The High Arctic Relocation: A Report on the 1953-55 Relocation* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1994), 118.

claiming humanitarian efforts and welfare, and erase the distinction between the Arctic colonies and the Canadian metropole through assimilation. Once the Inuit had become Canadian, both the sovereignty issue and the new “Inuit problem” would be solved in one. The government could act as though the Arctic was nothing more than another part of Canada in the same way that Quebec and Ontario were; settler colonialism operating towards its own self-supersession.<sup>17</sup> The Inuit were treated as if they were children and needed the Canadian government to protect them, as if they had not survived for thousands of years as an independent culture. An example of Canadian paternalism, *The Book of Wisdom for Eskimo*, appeared in 1947. Created by the Department of Mines and Resources, *The Book of Wisdom* is written simply in both English and Inuktitut with instructions on how to keep a clean igloo, how to care for sick people, and how to raise children. “Feed the baby regularly. A new baby sleeps a lot. Baby must be kept clean and dry. Baby will cry when wet and dirty.”<sup>18</sup> Clearly, the government argued, the Inuit needed to be assimilated into the Canadian culture for their own wellbeing. If it showed effective occupation at the same time, that was simply a bonus.

The encroachment of white settlers and their logics of elimination by the government and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police never considered cultural factors or issues when it came to gaining Inuit consent. The RCMP held a great deal of legal power over the Inuit, especially as the wildlife management laws

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<sup>17</sup> Lorenzo Veracini, “Introducing,” *Settler Colonial Studies* 1, no. 1 (2011): 3.

<sup>18</sup> *The Book of Wisdom for Eskimo*, prepared by the Department of Mines and Resources Bureau of Northwest Territories and Yukon Affairs, (Ottawa: 1947), 10.

grew stricter and the fur trade economy collapsed. The Ordinance had created quotas, licenses, and fees for violations- all of which would be enforced by the RCMP.<sup>19</sup> The RCMP also administered the Family Allowance program, administered welfare relief, oversaw firefighting, and were the only police in the region.<sup>20</sup> If Inuit wanted *qallunaat* support for anything, they had to go through the RCMP to get it. This created a relationship based on what is known as *ilira* in Inuktitut; meaning so much respect given to someone that it borders on fear. Tunu Napartuk explains that this mix of respect and fear leads Inuit involved to, “take another person’s word without ever questioning or arguing.”<sup>21</sup> When an RCMP officer made a request, it was seen as an order; Inuit opinion held little sway.<sup>22</sup> Even if an Inuit family might show reluctance, the RCMP would keep asking or threaten the Inuk involved, only furthering the fear-based coercion. Government excuses for the various logics of elimination they practiced in the region often lean heavily on the idea that the Inuit consented to movements, consented to going to residential schools, and consented to being assimilated through settlements. However, if the Inuit perspective is taken into consideration, this “consent” was anything but. They were largely afraid of what would happen to them if they did not say yes and were continually pressured into agreeing to do things they would never normally agree to.

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<sup>19</sup> Natasha Thorpe, “Codifying Knowledge About Caribou: The History of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit in the Kitikmeot Region of Nunavut, Canada,” In *Cultivating Arctic Landscapes: Knowing and Managing Animals in the Circumpolar North* (New York: Beghahn Books, 2004), 70.

<sup>20</sup> Marcel-Eugène LeBeuf, *The Role of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police During the Indian Residential School System* (Ottawa: Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 2011), 215.

<sup>21</sup> Heather E. McGregor, *Inuit Education and Schools in the Eastern Arctic* (Vancouver, UBC Press, 2010), 61.

<sup>22</sup> Shelley Wright, *Our Ice is Vanishing/Sikuvut Nunguliqtuq: A History of Inuit, Newcomers and Climate Change* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press), 19.

These paternalistic and controlling views of the Canadian government, combined with the Myth of the Vanishing Indian, became an excuse for the Canadian government to pass increasingly restrictive wildlife and game management laws during the first half of the nineteenth century. At first, these laws claimed to be trying to preserve the game supply for the primary use of native peoples, thereby preventing their “extinction.” In reality, these laws limited the food indigenous groups had access to, forcing a degree of cultural elimination and assimilation; they needed to turn away from traditional resources and consume southern imported foods to survive. The 1903 Game Ordinance banned the hunting of buffalo and bison, hunting at night, and the taking of game birds or eggs, even to prevent starvation. It also banned hunting on Sundays, enforcing the religious conversions occurring under Catholic and Anglican missionaries; the Inuit either had to have saved food from the day before, or attend church in a settlement to be fed.<sup>23</sup> The language of “preservation” began to appear around 1917, in new laws and revisions like the Northwest Game Act, which restricted the hunting of muskox and elk with special clauses for native peoples hunting during closed seasons. However, within a few decades, the Northwest Territories act shifted government control over game management in the Arctic, repealing the Northwest Game Act and its special protections.<sup>24</sup>

The 1949 Ordinance Respecting the Preservation of Game in the Northwest Territories removed the pretext of “preserving the game supply” all

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<sup>23</sup> Peter A. Cumming, “Inuit Hunting Rights in the Northwest Territories,” *Saskatchewan Law Review* 38, no. 2 (1974): 270.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, 282.



together; directly taking steps to eliminate access to traditional food sources with little concern for cultural factors or survival. Aimed at limiting “waste” of caribou meat, the Ordinance and another in 1953 limited the right of Inuit to hunt caribou—only five could be taken per year per family. For comparison, Peter Irniq recalled that to feed his family of five, his father took in around seventy caribou a year.<sup>25</sup> This new limitation would mean that families like Peter Irniq’s could only legally get enough food to last less than a month. If they wanted to avoid starvation, they had to break the law, alter their hunting strategies, or give up on their traditional practices and eat southern food purchased in *qallunaat* settlements. Further restrictions in 1955 prohibited caribou, muskox, and polar bears on game preserves, and previous special provisions allowing hunting for caribou during the closed season were also repealed. The only way native peoples could ignore the closed season was if they could prove to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police that they were starving.<sup>26</sup> It would then be up to the individual officer to decide if the family was starving “enough” to justify allowing them access to their own cultural foods. George Porter remembers needing to break these laws despite the risk, “The stores were empty and nothing else to eat, but in those days in the western Arctic, if somebody reported somebody and saw the geese, when summer came [the RCMP] went down, picked them up, and put them in jail.”<sup>27</sup> A complete shift had occurred in how the government saw the Inuit and their ability to care for themselves and their land. In 1932, Ralph Parsons, Fur Trade

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<sup>25</sup> Peter Kulchyski and Frank James Tester, *Kiumajut (Talking Back: Game Management and Inuit Rights, 1900-70)* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007), 84.

<sup>26</sup> Cumming, “Inuit Hunting Rights,” 296.

<sup>27</sup> Kulchyski, *Kiumajut*, 47.

Commissioner for the Hudson's Bay Company, wrote, "It is commonly recognized that the Indians or Eskimos, if left alone, will never exterminate the game or fur bearing animals in their territories."<sup>28</sup> Within twenty years, amidst a variety of other elimination and assimilation tactics, the Canadian government had decided that the Inuit could not be trusted to protect their resources as they had for thousands of years.

These legal limitations on traditional diet were soon joined by laws promoting the elimination of the Inuit's traditional method of hunting: dogs. In camps, dogs were essential to hunting, relocation, and protection from polar bears.<sup>29</sup> Dogs were important members of the family units they belonged to, and a family's wealth and influence could often be shown by the strength of their teams.<sup>30</sup> But as people were moved onto settlements, either willingly or by force, these dog teams often did not adjust well to their new lifestyles. After a few incidences of dog distemper epidemics and children injured by scavenging dogs, the Northwest Territories adopted the Ordinance Respecting Dogs, permitting their destruction at the hands of RCMP officers.<sup>31</sup> Amendments made in 1950 permitted a wider net of destruction. They allowed RCMP members and appointed "dog control officers" to destroy dogs who were "running at large," but did not specify what that term meant. Under section 9(6), an officer had

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<sup>28</sup> Ralph Parsons, Letter to H.H. Rowatt, 1932, G79-042, Box 22, Folder 1, Northwest Territory Archives, Quoted in Kulchyski, *Kiumajut*, 59.

<sup>29</sup> Qikiqtani Truth Commission, *Qimmiliriniq: Inuit Sled Dogs in Qikiqtaaluk*, Thematic Reports and Special Studies 1950-75 (Iqaluit: Qikiqtani Inuit Association, 2014), 11.

<sup>30</sup> Frank Tester, "Mad Dogs and (Mostly) Englishmen: Colonial Relations, Commodities, and the Fate of Inuit Sled Dogs," *Études/Inuit/Studies* 34, no. 2 (2010): 129-132, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42870094>.

<sup>31</sup> Karetak, *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*, 25.

permission to destroy a seized dog “as soon as he sees fit” with no compensation to the owner or family. Some officers took “running at large” to mean dogs who were tied up to a sled outside a Hudson’s Bay Company store while the owner was shopping inside. Owners came out, with supplies for their life in camp, only to discover that they could not return home because their entire team had been killed.<sup>32</sup> John Amagoalik recalls leaving for school and returning to find that every dog in their settlement had been shot. When families still living in camps would come to buy supplies, “they would tie up their dogs on the beach,” and therefore away from the settlement itself, “and when they came back from the store all their dogs had been shot.”<sup>33</sup> Unable to return to their camps by way of their own culture, they had to remain in the settlements or find other ways of getting home through hitching rides or using the imported wage economy to purchase a ski-doo.

It was not until 1966 that an amendment was passed that clarified the term “running at large,” but it just opened the possibilities of more slaughter. Any dog off the premises of its owner and “not muzzled or is not under the physical control of any person,” or youth under sixteen, was at large and allowed to be shot.<sup>34</sup> Inuit traditionally began to learn self-sufficiency and had their own dog teams at thirteen or fourteen, but if they performed this cultural practice near a *qallunaat* settlement, they ran the risk of being stranded. Many Inuit, however, had little to no idea why their dogs were suddenly being shot and killed. The Ordinance, and

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<sup>32</sup> Tester, “Mad Dogs,” 135.

<sup>33</sup> Qikiqtani Inuit Association, Interview with John Amagoalik, Testimony (Iqaluit, 2016), <https://www.qtcommission.ca/en/qtiq31>.

<sup>34</sup> Tester, “Mad Dogs,” 136.

its subsequent amendments, were not translated into Inuktitut, made widely available, or explained to the Inuit in any systematic way. Instead, they would learn of their new cultural limitations the hard way.

The Canadian government insisted that the dogs being killed under the Ordinance were not intended to act as a logic of elimination, but for public health and safety. However, Inuit both at the time and in modern testimonies state that healthy dogs were being killed en masse.<sup>35</sup> If the concern was for health that does not explain why the RCMP never attempted to treat the ill dogs. Traditional approaches to dog diseases that had worked for centuries were completely ignored. Even when presented or taught by the Inuit, the RCMP preferred mass killings.<sup>36</sup> One single RCMP officer in Pangnirtung reported that he had shot 275 loose dogs in 1966 alone “to prevent distemperment,” but had not consulted the owners if the dogs were sick or not.<sup>37</sup>

It does not help the government’s case that in many instances, the dogs being shot belonged to those trying to avoid settling with the *qallunaat*. If someone were to stay in a settlement temporarily to visit family, they often came out to discover that their teams had been destroyed. Apphia Agalakti Awa and her husband had been in Pond Inlet with their daughter Oopah, only to find that the RCMP came around and shot all their dogs. “It was our dog team we used to travel with, the one we used for hunting. They were the only travelling dogs that

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<sup>35</sup> Qikiqtani Truth Commission, *Analysis of the RCMP Sled Dog Report*, Thematic Reports and Special Studies 1950-75 (Iqaluit: Qikiqtani Inuit Association, 2014), 23.

<sup>36</sup> Qikiqtani Truth Commission, *Qimmiliriniq*, 21.

<sup>37</sup> Karetak, *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*, 25.

we had!... We were about to move back to our camp near Igloolik.”<sup>38</sup> In another instance, Natsiq Kango’s family had twenty-five of their family’s dogs shot outside their home with no warning after the parents had resisted their children going to school.<sup>39</sup> By the mid 1970’s nearly every dog team in Qikiqtaaluk had been destroyed, and the numbers of teams elsewhere had been thoroughly depleted.<sup>40</sup> As many as 25,000 dogs would be shot by the RCMP over a twenty-five-year period. Without them, hunters wishing to even attempt to remain self-sufficient were forced to enter the Canadian cash economy to afford a ski-doo and its maintenance; now entirely dependent on the settler colonial authorities that had been the cause of the dogs’ destruction.<sup>41</sup>

Those who avoided the slaughter of their dog teams still had to struggle with changes in migration patterns and decreased numbers of game animals brought on by both *qallunaat* settlements and climate change. The noises created by government settlements and the motors of ski-doos alerted animals to human activity, forcing hunters to travel farther from their homes to find any game.<sup>42</sup> The creation of the DEW Line also contributed heavily to changes in migration. The stations were often placed directly in traditional hunting territories, and their large scanners and communication dishes sent out a constant radar

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<sup>38</sup> Nancy Wachowich, Apphia Agalakti Awa, Rhoda Kaukjak Katsak, and Sandra Pikujak Katsak, *Saqiyug: Stories from the Lives of Three Inuit Women* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press), 111.

<sup>39</sup> Janet Mancini Billson and Kyra Mancini, *Inuit Women: Their Powerful Spirit in a Century of Change* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2007), 98.

<sup>40</sup> Qikiqtani Truth Commission, *Qimmliriniq*, 32.

<sup>41</sup> Alun Anderson, *After the Ice: Life, Death, and Geopolitics in the New Arctic* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 33.

<sup>42</sup> Pitseolak and Dorothy Eber, *Pitseolak: Pictures Out of My Life* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2003), 53.

pulse. Manned and built almost entirely by *qallunaat* with supplies flown in from the south, these settlements disrupted migratory patterns of game both on the ground and in the air while simultaneously producing enormous amounts of waste.<sup>43</sup> This waste from white settlers along the DEW Line, combined with waste being produced from other bases and industrialization, slowly contaminated what remained of the indigenous food supply. A Nunavik epidemiological study from 1989-1991 discovered high amounts of persistent organic pollutants in the Arctic food chain, going from the water into the marine organisms. Human exposure to these contaminants came from consuming traditional foods, with infants being exposed through breast milk transmission. The study discovered a tie between these pollutants, lowered immunity in adults, and higher rates of infectious diseases in infants.<sup>44</sup> This lack of concern for waste production worsened Inuit health to an almost ecocidal degree, making the water and food they consumed, and the land itself, dangerous to live on. The Inuit were forced to choose either to starve and possibly get ill from the traditional diet or to move onto a settlement and enter the Canadian wage economy to afford southern food.

Initial settlement projects followed the mentality of settler colonialism in which the indigenous population is sent away, either physically or culturally. The Inuit would be “allowed” to retain their cultural independence if they were moved away from white settlements by the Canadian government. The first High Arctic

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<sup>43</sup> Sam McKegney, *Magic Weapons: Aboriginal Writers Remaking Community After Residential School* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2007), 65.

<sup>44</sup> Eric Dewailly, “Canadian Inuit and the Arctic Dilemma,” *Oceanography* 19, no. 2 (June 2006): 88.

Relocation project occurred in 1934 when the Inukjuamiut living in Baffin Island and Devon Island were to Dundas Harbour. In doing so, keeping with the need for the Canadian government to lay claim to the Arctic, they became the only Canadian citizens north of Lancaster sound. This relocation failed due to lack of resources, and in 1936 the Inukjuamiut demanded to be returned home. Perhaps if the Canadian government was truly moving them for their benefit, they would have been. Instead, they were all moved to the north coast of Baffin Island to provide settlers for a Hudson's Bay Company trading post that was about to be re-opened. For the Devon Islanders, it would take decades to gather enough money to return home, if they managed to return at all.<sup>45</sup> A second relocation followed in May of 1950. An entire camp of Ahiammiut were moved to make room for a Canadian Army Signal Corps radio station that had been built in their territory the previous year. When the Ahiammiut slowly migrated back to their original land due to scarce food resources in their new location, the RCMP had them forcibly removed a second time, ignoring their complaints of struggle.<sup>46</sup>

Partially inspired by claims of starvation, and apparently undeterred by previous failures, the May 1952 Conference on Eskimo Affairs declared that a third attempt would be made, "initiated from over-populated or depleted districts to areas not presently occupied."<sup>47</sup> This relocation would ignore the key factors of why the "depletion" existed in the first place. If people were starving, it was due to

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<sup>45</sup> Alan Marcus, *Inuit Relocation Policies in Canada and Other Circumpolar Countries, 1925-60*, Special report prepared for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (Ottawa: 1995), 15.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, 17.

<sup>47</sup> Alan Marcus, *Out in the Cold: The Legacy of Canada's Inuit Relocation Experiment in the High Arctic*, Special report prepared at the request of the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, Document 71 (Copenhagen, 1992), 11.

*qallunaat* induced climate change and increasingly restrictive wildlife management laws. The areas in question were only overpopulated due to white settlers arriving from the south and laying claim to the land. All the areas used in the relocations had become centers of white occupation in the north, and not a single family was taken away from any larger camps of Inuit.<sup>48</sup> Inukjuak, one of the areas targeted as “struggling” with overpopulation and the subsequent lack of game, actually translates to “place of many people” and had traditionally been a larger Inuit settlement. Any issues with a sudden change in game and population were from *qallunaat* encroachment, not from the settlement of large amounts of Inuit in one location. However, according to the Inuit who lived through the relocation, this struggle didn’t exist in the first place. Elijah Nutaraq, who was selected as part of the structured removal, recalls, “I do not remember ever experiencing hunger” in Inukjuak.<sup>49</sup>

In 1953, ten families were chosen to be sent up into the High Arctic, seven from Inukjuak and three from Pond Inlet. Told that the new location was abundant in traditional game and resources and far from *qallunaat* settlers, all ten families, a total of fifty-four people, volunteered for the movement. However, they were lied to. The government had done no wildlife resource studies of the area to prove their claims of traditional living situations and abundant game. In fact, the difference between the High Arctic and Inukjuak is the same distance as Toronto, Ontario to Miami, Florida. The landscape, game availability, temperature, and ice formations were completely different from what those from Inukjuak would be

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<sup>48</sup> Marcus, *Inuit Relocation*, 7.

<sup>49</sup> Canada, Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, *The High Arctic Relocation*, 24.



familiar with. Even the Pond Inlet group, chosen because of their experience with the High Arctic and its three months of darkness, would still be traveling 440 kilometers, and thus would be similarly struggling.<sup>50</sup> The High Arctic also fell under the Arctic Islands Preserve, which meant the largest game in the area, musk-ox, would be forbidden meat under the Northwest Game Act.<sup>51</sup> The Inukjuak Inuit would have no knowledge of how to hunt the other wildlife that was available or how to navigate the region. If the move had been to prevent starvation and not for land claims, the Canadian government would not have sent an entire camp to suffer from even worse starvation.

The RCMP in charge of convincing the families to volunteer were not above using coercion and lying to convince the Inuit to agree. The Pond Inlet families believed that they were going to be paid and taken care of by the government, since their inclusion was intended to teach the Inukjuak families to survive. Samuel Arnakallak agreed to bring his family because it would give him enough money to buy a boat. Jaybeddie Amaraulik was told he would be able to travel freely back and forth with the government providing for all their needs. Simon Akpaliapik was told he would earn money, the game was plentiful, and the government would give him housing. All were told that they would have unlimited access to caribou and musk-ox.<sup>52</sup> The group from Inukjuak, led by John Amagoalik's father, only volunteered after the RCMP, "agreed to two conditions we insisted on, the first was that we would be allowed to return home if we didn't

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<sup>50</sup> Qikiqtani Truth Commission, *Nuutauniq*, 22.

<sup>51</sup> Marcus, *Out in the Cold*, 28.

<sup>52</sup> Canada, Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, *The High Arctic Relocation*, 23.

like this new place, and secondly we would stay together as one group.”<sup>53</sup> This agreement did not even last a year. After the Pond Inlet group was picked up and all the families were on board the icebreaker with no way of returning home, the RCMP revealed that the group would be split into two. The Inuit were forced to decide which families amongst them would be sent to Resolute Bay, and which would be sent to Grise Fiord.<sup>54</sup> Their protests ignored, and with no choice but to decide, three of the Inukjuak families and one of the Pond Inlet families were chosen to be dropped off at Resolute Bay while the rest went further north to Grise Fiord.

The families soon discovered just how little the government cared about anything but moving them away from the *qallunaat* and towards the threatened land claims. According to firsthand accounts like that of Martha Flaherty, the Inuit were dumped without the promised facilities, housing, and supplies, and left to fend for themselves with inadequate clothing and hunting gear.<sup>55</sup> They had only what they came with, and whatever they could purchase from the barebones supplies brought by the RCMP staying with them to keep them in check. The promised access to forbidden meat was also immediately rescinded, and even worse, due to it being a nature reserve, their yearly allowance of caribou was dropped from five per family to just one. Samwillie Eliasialuk recalls, “We were told right off that, “you can only catch one caribou per year for your family. That’s the regulation... You are not allowed to kill any musk-ox. You are liable to a

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<sup>53</sup> Wright, *Our Ice is Vanishing*, 18.

<sup>54</sup> Qikiqtani Inuit Association, Interview with John Amagoalik.

<sup>55</sup> Farnsworth, “The Day the Eskimos,” A4.

\$5,000 fine or be arrested if you kill any musk-ox.”<sup>56</sup> Grise Fiord had the marine mammals to supplement their diet, but Resolute Bay did not.

The Inuit left behind in Resolute Bay were forced survive by scavenging from the dump of the nearby air force base for food, clothing, and shelter. The dump’s wood scraps became the only way for them to survive the cold winter. The tents they brought were summer tents, and the snow in the region was not the right snow to build igloos.<sup>57</sup> The *qallunaat* at the base seemed to have little concern for the Inuit taking their scraps, but if an RCMP officer discovered them, every tent was searched and all of the food was confiscated, even if it was the only food a family had.<sup>58</sup> At numerous points during the first year, groups of Inuit attempted to convince the RCMP to uphold the second part of the bargain. Rynee Flaherty’s husband’s family was told to “induce other people to come up instead,” when they asked to leave.<sup>59</sup> Samwillie Eliasialuk’s parents were even outright told that “there’s no possible way for them to ever go back... if you want to return you are going to have to find other people to take your place before we allow you to go back.”<sup>60</sup> If this movement was in any way for their benefit, and not for the expansion of settler colonialism into the Arctic, the Canadian government would have given them the necessary supplies and abilities to thrive. They would have at the very least allowed them to leave when it became clear that relocation was doing more damage than good, and certainly would not have insisted that

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<sup>56</sup> Canada, Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, *The High Arctic Relocation*, 26.

<sup>57</sup> Qikiqtani Truth Commission, *Iquliriniq: Housing in Qikiqtaaluk*, Thematic Reports and Special Studies 1950-75 (Iqaluit: Qikiqtani Inuit Association, 2014), 13.

<sup>58</sup> Wright, *Our Ice is Vanishing*, 162.

<sup>59</sup> *The Star News Canada*, “High Arctic Exiles Still Feel Raw,” November 30, 2009, [https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2009/11/30/high\\_arctic\\_exiles\\_still\\_feel\\_raw.html](https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2009/11/30/high_arctic_exiles_still_feel_raw.html).

<sup>60</sup> Canada, Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, *The High Arctic Relocation*, 30.

the starving settlers be replaced by new Inuit. Instead, it took until the 1980's for any of them to receive government support to return to their homes.

The High Arctic Relocations were not, however, the only attempts by the Canadian and provincial governments to move Inuit off their traditional lands and onto *qallunaat* run settlements. Canadian Arctic policy of the 1940's and 1950's stressed the need to relocate people by cost of access, with no recognition of systems of kinship that had previously designated camp location and population. Instead, it was based on what the government wanted and needed. Settlement was a tool to have the Inuit go where the government wanted them to be so they could be assimilated through the delivery of public services like healthcare and education.<sup>61</sup> Aside from the issue of *de facto* sovereignty, the discovery of mineral deposits in the Arctic after World War II resulted in a desire for the Inuit to be removed from their land so that both the government and southern businesses could access and exploit these new resources.<sup>62</sup> Inuit could be moved from the lands where the deposits were located and onto settlements, freeing the land and assimilating them at the same time. Alvin Hamilton, who was the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources at the time, recalls that, "we wanted to make sure Canada owned the oil and mines in the Arctic archipelagos. Our big secret was to maintain an effective occupation, then get the International Court to accept the Canadian claim to the territory."<sup>63</sup> The drilling

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<sup>61</sup> Frank James Tester and Peter Kulchyski, *Tammarniit (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic, 1939-63* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 20014), 9.

<sup>62</sup> McKegney, *Magic Weapons*, 65.

<sup>63</sup> Quoted in Michael J. Kral, *The Return of the Sun: Suicide and Reclamation Among Inuit of Arctic Canada* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 11.

in turn created pollution and disrupted wildlife, harming Inuit subsistence hunting, forcing more Inuit to rely on southern food. This land exploitation was recognized by Inuit as one of the causes of their resettlement. Anthony Thrasher writes that, “if the Arctic coast was made of solid mineral of economic value, the Eskimo people would be pushed right into the ocean to get what is under his foot.”<sup>64</sup>

Used as centers of assimilation, the settler colonies were staffed by southern administrators, teachers, missionaries, and traders. Everyone in a position of power would be a southern *qallunaat*, encouraged to bring their families with them to live “normal lives.” The subsequent generations would continue to live in the settlements, taken care of and housed by the government. They would take over their parent’s jobs, and slowly increase the percentage of *qallunaat* in the region.<sup>65</sup> The Inuit who lived on the settlements were not treated nearly as well as the *qallunaat*. They were not permitted to continue their traditional living arrangements and had to move into government-built houses referred to by the Inuit as “matchboxes.” Designed for a nuclear family with rooms divided in the southern style, they ignored traditional extended family living arrangements. Up to eight people would live in only 240 square feet of living space. The “matchboxes” were not even provided to the Inuit for free, but instead placed the Inuit immediately in debt. With many of them having no income aside from welfare, they were given a \$1,500 loan. As noted by the Director of the

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<sup>64</sup> McKegney, *Magic Weapons*, 66.

<sup>65</sup> Hugh Brody, *The People’s Land: Eskimos and Whites in the Eastern Arctic* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1975), 35.

Northern Administration, “Inuit were going to get used to living like other Canadians, including having the burden of a mortgage.”<sup>66</sup>

Placing them in these settlements also gave missionaries easier access to those Inuit who had yet to convert, and force them into a religion that was actively hostile to traditional culture, thereby discouraging them from leaving *qallunaat* controlled settlements.<sup>67</sup> Those like Ujarak who wished to become shamans as adults would be Christianized, their lifelong ambitions forced away.<sup>68</sup> Practices associated with traditional religion and shamanism were even outright banned, such as the practices of tattooing, drumming, and dancing.<sup>69</sup> The sheer size of the settlements also broke traditional arrangements. The largest camp size reported by Amundsen in 1904 had been sixteen huts.<sup>70</sup> Recollections by Inuit elders reveal a similar number of families, with one Inuk elder recalling that the number of individuals in camps “never go beyond 50.” When they came into *qallunaat* settlements, however, those numbers became 200-300.<sup>71</sup>

Once on the settlement, traditional survival was discouraged and often impossible. The increasing need to use ski-doo's to make up for the killed dogs pushed up the cost of hunting, and settlement increased the distance they had to go to hunt, leading to higher gas prices. Many men had to leave their equipment and dogs behind when ferried to the settlements because they could not fit in the

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<sup>66</sup> Karetak, *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*, 29.

<sup>67</sup> Simon, “Canadian Inuit,” 880.

<sup>68</sup> Bernard Saladin D’Anglure, *Inuit Stories of Being and Rebirth: Gender, Shamanism, and the Third Sex* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press), xxiii.

<sup>69</sup> Kral, *The Return of the Sun*, 32.

<sup>70</sup> Amundsen, *North West Passage*, vol. 1, 162.

<sup>71</sup> Billson, *Inuit Women*, 15.

planes.<sup>72</sup> This was not accidental. As part of the assimilation and cultural elimination process, the Canadian government “intended” to create a wage economy in the North like what was practiced in the South. With a wage economy, in theory, the number of Inuit relying on the Family Allowance program for their income could diminish. However, Canada was trying to set up a *qallunaat* economy without the jobs or education that would allow the Inuit to find an income. Most of the jobs available were working for the DEW Line, but even then eighty percent of the positions went to *qallunaat* moving up from the south.<sup>73</sup> The few positions that the Inuit could hold were usually the lowest levels possible with the worst pay and forced the men that held them to leave their families for months at a time, furthering the food strain on the family if they lacked another adult male that could hunt for them.<sup>74</sup> Instead of helping the Inuit, the wage economy tended to force more Inuit to become reliant on Canadian welfare. This centralization, with more hunters in one area, lead to overexploitation of local resources, which then created a spiral in which more and more Inuit became fully reliant on the Canadian government to survive. It is entirely possible that this was the intended goal, and the idea of self-sufficiency was mere lip service to cover the tracks of the settler colonial ideology at play by disguising it as welfare. After all, there are Inuit testimonies, such as that of Angmaalik, that recall Inuit attempts at following the southern style of self-employment. Angmaalik’s namesake, Ammalik, had a store while they still lived out on the camps, “He did

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 96.

<sup>73</sup> Tompkins, *Teaching*, 17.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 18.

this for some years until the government stopped him, saying they did not want an Inuk to have a store.”<sup>75</sup> It seems that Inuit were only permitted to earn a living when it was under the direct permission and control of the Canadian government, and only when they were engaging in settled assimilation.

Acting as another cog in the elimination machine, Arctic residential schools followed a long tradition of schools in Canada meant for the resocialization of indigenous children. Residential schools prior to the 1950s had been run by missions and served the dual purpose of religious conversion and assimilation resocialization, with education provided by the church under operating grants from the federal government.<sup>76</sup> After the government took over the residential school system, these missions were transferred to federal or territorial control, and the coercion related to attendance grew tenfold.<sup>77</sup> Settlement managers would threaten struggling families that their access to food and welfare would be cut off if they did not send their children away.<sup>78</sup> Children being treated for illnesses or injuries in *qallunaat* communities would be placed into the local school without their parents knowledge or consent. According to the testimony of Apphia Agalakti Awa, her husband had to steal their son Solomon back after this occurred to them. They were then told that if he did not go to school, the government would cut their family allowance. They refused once

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<sup>75</sup> Saullu Nakasuk, Hervé Paniaq, Elisapee Ootoova, and Pauloosie Angmaalik, *Interviewing Inuit Elders*, vol. 1, *Introduction* (Iqaluit: Nunavut Arctic College, 1999), 111.

<sup>76</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Canada's Residential Schools: The Inuit and the Northern Experience*, vol. 2 of *The Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015), 7, <https://nctr.ca/records/reports/#trc-reports>.

<sup>77</sup> Armitage, *Comparing the Policy*, 105.

<sup>78</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Inuit and the Northern Experience*, 105.



again, and the government stayed true to their word, willing to starve the family out for resisting the resocialization of one child.<sup>79</sup> In some cases, like that of Sam Kautainuk, the children were physically abducted after the RCMP officers forced the parents to sign the paperwork, “The special constable lifted me by my shoulders and put me in the boat... they ignored my cries for my mother.”<sup>80</sup> The government would even pretend that consent was involved by tricking parents who didn’t speak English into signing the residential school papers. Rhosa Akpaliapak Karetak remembered authorities going from home to home making people sign documents. When she asked, “why do we have to sign these papers?” the authorities lied and told her, “We just want to make sure we have records of your signature.”<sup>81</sup>

Many of these children would be sent hundreds if not thousands of miles away to schools, sometimes travelling 1500-2200 kilometers.<sup>82</sup> Students were even billeted with *qallunaat* families in Alberta, Ontario, and Nova Scotia through the “Eskimo Experiment” to see if “Inuit kids could compete in the southern education system.”<sup>83</sup> Those that stayed close to home, however, were used as bait to coerce their families into moving onto settlements. Unless their parents lived in government approved housing in a *qallunaat* settlement, the children would be housed with strangers in hostels, and only permitted to see their families during the short breaks. If the family moved on site, however, they would

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<sup>79</sup> Wachowich, *Saqiyug*, 108.

<sup>80</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *The Survivors Speak*, Report prepared by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2015), 30, <https://nctr.ca/records/reports/#trc-reports>.

<sup>81</sup> Karetak, *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*, 186.

<sup>82</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Inuit and the Northern Experience*, 102.

<sup>83</sup> McGregor, *Inuit Education*, 67.

be able to see their children or even have them live with them under the day school system. Testimonies from children and parents alike reveal repeated intimidation by the RCMP to “encourage” resettlement. Jaco Anaviapik’s parents, for example, resisted movement for two years before relocating to Pond Inlet, “they were put in a position where they could not say no.”<sup>84</sup> Even those who had gathered a southern popularity and a steady income through their camp-related art, like renowned Inuk photographer Peter Pitseolak, had to move onto a settlements to follow their children.<sup>85</sup> Peter, and parents like him, had little choice but abandoning their traditional camps and following *qallunaat* assimilation if they wanted to try to preserve their families and remain with their abducted children.

Once they were sent to school, the students would be separated by gender and taught to be Canadians, rather than Inuit. If they were not Christian prior to schooling, they would be baptized, and all students would have an almost constant exposure to Christianity. After the mission-run schools were taken over by the federal government, the hostels that housed the children were still run by the competing Anglican and Catholic churches.<sup>86</sup> Staffed by either volunteers or nuns, and run by priests, children were often exposed to both physical and sexual abuse by the staff. One former Oblate in Igloolik, Eric Dejaeger, was convicted in 2014 of twenty-four charges of assault related to Inuit children in his mission-run hostel, after having already served a previous sentence for eleven

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<sup>84</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Survivors Speak*, 15.

<sup>85</sup> Peter Pitseolak and Dorothy Eber, *People from Our Side: A Life Story with Photographs and Oral Biography* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1993), 13.

<sup>86</sup> Karetak, *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*, 26.

counts of assault from Baker Lake.<sup>87</sup> Even if the children had willingly converted to Christianity, there was no escape from the religion once inside the walls of the compounds. The school attended by Allan Makhagak had two compulsory church services on Sunday; only students too ill to get out of bed could avoid them.<sup>88</sup> The Department of Northern Affairs banned country foods in the schools, forcing students to change their entire diets to supplies from the south, much of which they had no experience with. The children were taught that the raw meat that formed the basis of their traditional diet was to be blamed for all the illnesses the Inuit were suffering, not diseases brought by the *qallunaat*.<sup>89</sup>

The parents, however, would not learn about such things until the children came home. There was little communication between students and their families, and they were not even permitted to leave for funerals. The only way to receive any sort of communication was through letters, but only if the parents lived in a settlement, and only after the letters had been approved by the staff. For some, this meant that children and the parents would have no interactions for months or even years. Children had to attend ten months out of the year, and with the long distances they travelled, return could be next to impossible, especially for smaller holiday breaks. Allan Makhagak, for example, was unable to go home for break for ten years.<sup>90</sup> Even if they could return, if the agents in charge of the students

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<sup>87</sup> Bob Weber, "Ex-Priest Found Guilty of 24 Sex-Abuse Charges Involving Inuit Children," *The Globe and Mail*, September 12, 2014, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/ex-priest-eric-dejaeger-found-guilty-of-24-sex-crime-charges/article20573953/>.

<sup>88</sup> Gordon Spence, Interview with Allan Makhagak, *Roots and Hoots*, Podcast audio, January 26, 2021, <https://legacyofhope.podbean.com/e/episode-12-roots-and-hoots-interview-with-allan-makhagak/>.

<sup>89</sup> Madeline Dion Stout and Gregory Kipling, *Aboriginal Peoples, Resilience and the Residential School Legacy* (Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2003), 41.

<sup>90</sup> Gordon Spence, Interview with Allan Makhagak, *Roots and Hoots*.

did not approve of their parents, they did not have to send the children home.<sup>91</sup> A parent of former students, Apphia, remembers that, “We couldn’t communicate with them because there were no phones, and since we were in the camp, we didn’t get any letters from them. We didn’t hear from them for a long, long time. We didn’t know how they were down there. I remember being so worried about them.”<sup>92</sup> With the gender separation, families could be torn apart in the same school. Peter Ernerk recalled that, “a lot of the people had sisters right upstairs...I remember the other boys were not allowed to see their own sisters upstairs.”<sup>93</sup> If caught trying to be with their siblings, the students risked violent punishment, and were thus denied the family bonding so important to Inuit culture. The children were not even identified by their names; instead they were instead given numbers based on their order of arrival.<sup>94</sup>

Children left to be raised in camps would have learned the skills and knowledge necessary for everyday life through playing and other communal activities. Learning would be accomplished through observation and imitation, though verbal instruction would be used for kinship relationships and social norms.<sup>95</sup> School learning, with its individualist and lecturing approach, was removed almost completely from the traditional methods of watching and observing until comfortable enough to participate.<sup>96</sup> Residential schools also

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<sup>91</sup> Armitage, *Comparing the Policy*, 110.

<sup>92</sup> Wachowich, *Saqiyug*, 106.

<sup>93</sup> Stout, *Aboriginal People*, 40.

<sup>94</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Survivors Speak*, 107.

<sup>95</sup> Hideaki Terashima, “Hunter-Gatherers and Learning in Nature,” In *Social Learning and Innovation in Contemporary Hunter-Gatherers: Evolutionary and Ethnographic Perspectives* (Osaka: Springer, 2016), 225.

<sup>96</sup> Marie Battiste and Jean Barman, ed, *First Nations Education in Canada: The Circle Unfolds* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1995), 141.

ignored Inuit beliefs surrounding ages and their ability to reason. Children from four to thirteen, referred to as *nutaraat*, were traditionally permitted to focus on learning through play and through speaking, as they were not seen to be old enough to have reason and naively followed their desires. Proper “learning” would not begin until ages thirteen to twenty, *inuuhuktut*, when reason had been gained and they could work toward social independence. *Inuuhuktut* would learn subsistence techniques and the gendered division of labor in preparation for having their own families.<sup>97</sup> Residential schools instead taught all the students the same material as southern *qallunaat* children, giving them no lessons that related to survivability in the Arctic. After all, why would they need to know how to survive on the land if they were going to become settled Canadians?

If this disconnect from their traditional learning was not enough, the residential school education was taught completely in English, despite most students not speaking anything but Inuktitut; in many schools the children were forbidden from speaking their native tongue at all.<sup>98</sup> According to the testimony of Paul Okalik, “What you were taught in school at that time was that as Inuit, you were lesser... we were forced to think that English was better than Inuktitut.”<sup>99</sup> If students spoke Inuktitut in class, teachers often physically abused them. One former residential school student recalls that, “we were taught to speak English

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<sup>97</sup> Keiichi Omura, “Sociocultural Cultivation of Positive Attitudes Toward Learning: Considering Differences in Learning Ability Between Neanderthals and Modern Humans from Examining Inuit Children’s Learning Process,” In *Social Learning and Innovation in Contemporary Hunter-Gatherers: Evolutionary and Ethnographic Perspectives* (Osaka: Springer, 2016), 272.

<sup>98</sup> Canada, National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, *All Saints Residential School Narrative*, Completed June 6, 2005, 10, <https://archives.nctr.ca/NAR-NCTR-060>.

<sup>99</sup> Gordon Spence, Interview with Paul Okalik, *Roots and Hoots*, Podcast audio, August 18, 2020, <https://legacyofhope.podbean.com/e/roots-and-hoots-episode-3-paul-okalik/>.

as if they were trying to change us into white people... I remember some students being thrown across the classroom and abused with a ruler. I remember one teacher who actually punched the students.”<sup>100</sup> No leniency was given to students, like Allen Kagak, who didn’t speak a word of English, “I couldn’t help it, I had to speak my Inuktitut language... they, teachers, strapped, strapped, strapped me, pulled my ears, let me stand in a corner all morning.”<sup>101</sup> This punishment extended beyond the classroom and onto the entire school grounds, and even the communities around them. In Mary Simon’s community, Kangiqsualujjuaq in Nunavik, children were punished if they were caught speaking Inuktitut, even in private.<sup>102</sup> Through physical and mental abuse, the school system rendered its students mute in their own language. By 1971, thirteen percent of Inuit no longer considered Inuktitut their mother tongue, and many more could only speak a little Inuktitut, if at all.<sup>103</sup>

The abduction of children and the forced separation of family units did not stop at just residential schools. Rising numbers of *qallunaat* in the region brought diseases, such as polio and tuberculosis, that the Inuit had little to no prior exposure to. Combined with the rapid increase in parasitic and other infectious diseases related to sedentarism, Inuit mortality and disease rates rose dramatically. Tuberculosis in particular ran rampant through Arctic communities during the 1950’s and 60’s, with some areas having infection rates up to seventy

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<sup>100</sup> Quoted in Kral, *The Return of the Sun*, 27.

<sup>101</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Survivors Speak*, 51.

<sup>102</sup> Anderson, *After the Ice*, 27.

<sup>103</sup> Bruce Alden Cox, ed, *Native People Native Lands: Canadian Indians, Inuit, and Metis* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1987), 244.

percent.<sup>104</sup> Inuit who were discovered with the disease would be shipped or flown to hospitals in the south, usually without their consent. With one out of seven Inuit sent south to sanatoriums, they were split between eighty-five different hospitals in the south, and family units would be separated between hospitals or even within the same hospital.<sup>105</sup> Children and parents might spend years never seeing one another, separated by a floor, and surrounded by strangers and *qallunaat* nurses that did not speak their language. For those that did not speak English, they may not even know what was happening to them, or what the treatments were doing, forced to endure traumatizing experiences without having the words to explain what they had gone through.

Hunters crucial to the survival of their families and camps and mothers still caring for young children would be removed for several years. No additional aid would be given to those families from the government, even if it was the government that forced the removal. Instead, the families would be encouraged to move into the government settlements and to send the children away to residential schools. The teachers could replace the mothers and ensure “proper” resocialization in the *qallunaat* way, and southern food could replace the traditional diet the hunters would have provided. The government claimed the authority to disrupt and replace the traditional family unit, in the name of care for a disease they themselves had brought north.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Kral, *Return of the Sun*, 9.

<sup>105</sup> Billson, *Inuit Women*, 106.

<sup>106</sup> John O’Neil and Patricia A. Kaufert, “The Politics of Obstetric Care: The Inuit Experience” In *Births and Power: Social Change and the Politics of Reproduction* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), 56.

Many never even got the chance to return home. Twenty-five to thirty percent of the Inuit population during the period was lost to Tuberculosis.<sup>107</sup> Those that died in sanatoriums would be buried in southern Canada under their disc numbers or in unmarked municipal graves, rather than their actual names.<sup>108</sup> Their families may never learn of their deaths or their resting places, as there was no actual system in place to initiate that contact.<sup>109</sup> For those that survived, the disc numbers made returning treated patients home exceptionally difficult. The numbers were in order of birth for the entire Eastern Arctic, not by family. Children and adults would be sent south, but they might never actually go home to their families; they would instead be returned to wherever they had been picked up.<sup>110</sup> Martha Flaherty lost her younger sister for almost five years, when she was taken south for treatment while Martha and the rest of the family was moved to Grise Fiord through the High Arctic Relocation. When the family could not be reached at the place where she had been dropped off, the girl bounced around in foster care, and likely would have been adopted out to a white family if Martha's parents hadn't been located.<sup>111</sup> While this policy of removal for care may have saved lives, many died in the sanatoriums thousands of miles away from their communities and others remained permanently lost to their families. To deal with the epidemics, the government constructed nursing stations in

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<sup>107</sup> Billson, *Inuit Women*, 106.

<sup>108</sup> Karetak, *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*, 33.

<sup>109</sup> Terry Pedwall, "TB Policy Failed Inuit, PM Says in Apology," *The Toronto Star*, March 9, 2019, A11.

<sup>110</sup> Valerie Alia, "'The People Who Love You': Contemporary Perspectives on Naming in Nunavut," In *Names and Nunavut: Culture and Identity in the Inuit Homeland* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2009), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt9qd8xk>, 108.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid*, 107.



settlements during the 1960's and 70's.<sup>112</sup> This act of “benevolence” came with a steep price for the sick. If an Inuit arrived at a settlement and was discovered to have any sort of odd health, they would be forced to stay. One elder recalled, “we came here to get some food from a boat, but a nurse told us to stay here because of red spots on our bodies. Ever since, I’ve been here.”<sup>113</sup>

Apparently not content with controlling the bodies of just the ill and dying through removing them from their communities, the government soon turned to forcing pregnant women through the same pain of isolation. During the settlement period, traditional midwifery was increasingly restricted so that births had to occur at nursing stations, though midwives were permitted to attend and aid in those births. As stated at a meeting at Rankin Inlet, “back then, the women had the knowledge to take care of a woman in labor... we were informed by our elders on what to do and what not to do.”<sup>114</sup> This cultural transmission was being eliminated, however, by the residential school system. In the 1970's, while local pressure for an expanded Inuit role in health policy was increasing, the official government policy on childbirth changed. Rather than forcing women to give birth at nursing stations, it was decided that all pregnant women would be evacuated for childbirth to hospitals in the south.<sup>115</sup> During the 1970's, only seven percent of all births occurred in Arctic Quebec, those being either premature births or

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<sup>112</sup> Kral, *Return of the Sun*, 14.

<sup>113</sup> Billson, *Inuit Women*, 100.

<sup>114</sup> Patricia A. Kaufert and John O'Neil, “Analysis of a Dialogue on Risks in Childbirth: Clinicians, Epidemiologists, and Inuit Women,” In *Knowledge, Power, and Practice: The Anthropology of Medicine and Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 49.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid*, 35.

women lying about how far along they were to purposefully remain in the north, claiming what little agency they could.<sup>116</sup>

Women would be sent to give birth in an unfamiliar environment two to three weeks before their due date, and they may not return home for months.<sup>117</sup> This practice was especially enforced with women who had had multiple pregnancies, despite this meaning they would be leaving several children without a mother. An Inuk woman named Apphia left four small children behind when she was taken to give birth to her fifth, leaving in August and not returning until January of the next year.<sup>118</sup> The official explanation was that this removal was necessary due to high infant mortality rates in the 1950's and 1960's, yet there was little acknowledgement of the role government policy and *qallunaat* interference had had in those rates. The rapid switch to poor housing, poor nutrition, and living in areas of high stress and infectious disease likely killed more infants than traditional risk factors; especially when the pollution in the traditional resources and the subsequent weakening of Inuit immune systems is taken into consideration.

To make matters worse, there were reports of women who were sent south, to give birth or to have a minor operation, that would return sterilized. Official accusations go back to 1976, with Reverend Robert Lechat of Igloodik accusing the federal government of forcing Inuit women to go through

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<sup>116</sup> Christopher Fletcher, *The Innuulisivik Maternity Centre: Issues Around the Return of Inuit Midwifery and Birth to Povungnituk, Quebec*, Paper prepared for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People, September 1994, 18.

<sup>117</sup> O'Neil, "The Politics of Obstetric Care," 54.

<sup>118</sup> Wachowich, *Saqiyug*, 103.

sterilization operations.<sup>119</sup> Though not enough evidence was presented at the time to make a full case, as of 2021, the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador is officially collecting data on this forced sterilization. Through interviewing women and their loved ones, the Assembly has discovered a long pattern of operations, just as Reverend Lechat reported, occurring without full and informed consent as recently as 2017.<sup>120</sup> Whether it was the federal government's doing or not remains to be seen, but some form of officials decided to practice the logics of elimination through destroying the chances at future generations of Inuit.

Even the few who could avoid the residential school system's reeducation and the control over health, wealth, and family that occurred by moving to settlements were not untouched by settler colonialism and its logics of elimination. Traditionally, Inuit names reflect a religious belief of reincarnation and a theory of a double-soul. The name-soul of a deceased Inuk, or *atiq*, would be passed on to a newborn child within the family, while the double soul goes on to the afterlife. The deceased members of the community are thus allowed to continue to live on and family ties are preserved through names rather than solely through genetics. As Saladin D'Anglure reports from his time spent living with an Inuit camp, an Inuk woman named after her father's sister that then gives her child the name of her father might refer to her child, no matter the gender, as

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<sup>119</sup> *The Canadian Press*, "Inuit Women Induced to Become Sterilized," *The Citizen*, October 9, 1976, 1.

<sup>120</sup> Melanie Ritchot, "Stories of Forced Sterilization of Inuit Women in Quebec Being Gathered," *Nunatsiaq News*, May 17, 2021, <https://nunatsiaq.com/stories/article/stories-of-forced-sterilization-of-inuit-women-in-quebec-being-gathered/>.

“brother” rather than son or daughter. The child, in return would refer to her as “sister.” The practice would therefore act almost as an oral history of the community.<sup>121</sup>

Starting in 1935, however, the government put into place a system of serialized numbers in which a leather disc was distributed to each Inuit; this number, this disc, would be their new legal identity. That number would be what children in school were referred to as, how adults would be addressed by government officials, and what would mark the tombstones of those that died in the south.<sup>122</sup> An employee of the Territorial Government told researcher Valeria Alia in the mid-1980s that the disc numbers were essential because, “All Inuit had the same name or so close that you couldn’t tell the difference. You needed something logical. You had to have an order. There weren’t any names... Inuit were impossible to identify.”<sup>123</sup> While the Inuit could still use their traditional naming practices amongst themselves, to *qallunaat* they were nothing but a number; a number was easier for the *qallunaat* to use for their own purposes without “forcing” them to learn a new system of identification. Their identity, and the cultural and religious history contained within it, lost all legal power.

After a nearly identical system of serial numbers was used to label victims in concentration camps during World War II, the discs finally came under public scrutiny as being dehumanizing. It took until 1969 for the government to get rid of the discs, only to replace them with a new system of cultural elimination: Project

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<sup>121</sup> D’Anglure, *Inuit Stories of Rebirth*, 26.

<sup>122</sup> Wachowich, *Saqiyug*, 129.

<sup>123</sup> Alia, “The People Who Love You,” 100.

Surname. Government and religious officials went through settlements and camps, forcing the Inuit to record family names, which did not exist in their culture. The official, sometimes an Inuk hired by the government, would often just choose a surname to write down, usually coming from the names of grandparents or husbands, though siblings were occasionally given completely different last names. This system would replicate *qallunaat* naming systems, in theory making it easier to record census data and get the Inuit into government systems in the same manner as white Canadians. Though officials claimed it was intended to be more “humane” and act as a cure for administrative difficulties related to the ordering of the disc numbers, Project Surname was neither. It created entirely new identities, sometimes overnight, with no concern for Inuit or their consent. It was just about bureaucracy and assimilation. Elsie Attagutluk recalls returning to her family during her school’s summer break, only to discover her name had completely changed, “When they did Project Surname, kids came back from school with new names. You go away and you come home and suddenly, you’re somebody else.”<sup>124</sup> The bureaucracy aspect was not even very effective, as names were spelled wrong in the initial record, or even spelled differently depending on the record, and ages were often messed up. Etoangat Aksaiyuk’s birth certificate, for example, was five years off, and resulted in the late arrival of old age pensions.<sup>125</sup> In order to fix misspellings or restore traditional names, Inuit had to wait until they turned nineteen, and then had to go through an official legal process and pay a fee. A fee to fix a name, when many Inuit were

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid, 99.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid, 103.

surviving on government money and could barely afford to live, suggests little care or concern on the part of officials to have Project Surname be anything but purposeful cultural elimination.<sup>126</sup> Even in 2002, thirty-three years after the beginning of Project Surname, hundreds of Inuit still had to use the courts of the new territory of Nunavut to correct the misspellings or officially get rid of their disc numbers.<sup>127</sup> Changing names, and thereby changing the language of social identification, acts as a tool of resocialization and assimilation without needing to rely on physical institutions and the financial “burden” of care.<sup>128</sup>

Despite occurring over a few short decades rather than during an extended period like other instances of settler colonialism, the Canadian invasion of the Arctic territories was marked by logics of elimination intended to make the Inuit Canadian and get their lands and resources in the process. Once the assimilation process had been completed, the colonization could be finished, as settler colonialism is “characterized by a persistent drive to ultimately supersede the conditions of its operation.”<sup>129</sup> The settler colonizer state could also accept equality and recognition as long as the “indigenous disappearance could be exacted otherwise.”<sup>130</sup> Increasing native pushback against their actions, both with the Inuit and the First Nations, led Canada to attempt this route in 1969. The government under Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau attempted to grant the natives “citizenship” as Canadians and literally erase their legal status as indigenous

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid, 99.

<sup>127</sup> DeNeen L. Brown, “Inuit Reclaim their Names,” *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, June 7, 2002, A3.

<sup>128</sup> Kral, *Return of the Sun*, 17.

<sup>129</sup> Veracini, “Introducing,” 3.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid, 8.

groups, following both the logics of elimination and the desire to supersede the settler colonial conditions. “We can no longer perpetuate the separation of Canadians... the new laws would be in effect and existing programs would be devolved.” Under this “equality” they would cease to be considered natives; its path would finalize legal assimilation and the destruction of indigenous cultures while covering the tracks of the settler colonialism that got them to that point.<sup>131</sup> Indigenous pushback led to its withdraw in 1970 and a subsequent period of activism and decolonization, though it took until 1999 for the Inuit to regain legal control over the Canadian Arctic, a large section of which became the territory of Nunavut. Survival, both physical and cultural, is described by Wolfe and Veracini as the best method to resist settler colonialism. Rather than going away, they remain, as the Inuit are doing now through language and cultural reclamation projects. Though the structures of Canadian settler colonialism still need to be dismantled, indigenous permanence will ensure its ultimate failure.

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<sup>131</sup> Canada, *Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy*, Presented to the first session of the 28th Parliament by the Honorable Jean Chrétien, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Ottawa: Queen’s Printer, 1969), 6.

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Arctic Dislocation: Racialization and Assimilation of Inupiat and Yup'ik  
Students at Carlisle Indian Industrial School

Rows of identical white headstones stand inside the gates of the U.S Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. At first glance, this cemetery is identical to every other federal cemetery in appearance. Yet, signs posted on the fence and at the entrance indicate that it contains the remains of one hundred and ninety-four Native Americans. These individuals were taken away from their tribes and families to take part in the American assimilation project by attending Carlisle Indian Industrial School. The goal of the school was to force these students to



abandon their tribal affiliations, change their names, their appearance, and their culture, in order to fit in with white society. And between 150-200 of those students died during their years at the school, never to return to their families.

Despite the assimilation project at Carlisle, most of the headstones for these students still record their tribe.

Most, but not all: one headstone reads “Cooking Look, Alaskan,” and in doing

Figure 1: Grave of Cooki Glook<sup>132</sup>

so fails to record any of the names the

student went by in life, and records the territory they were from rather than any tribal ties. The student buried here is Cookiglook, also spelled Kokiglook and

<sup>132</sup> Sam Kramer, “Grave of Cooki Glook,” March 17, 2022, Photograph, Carlisle Barracks, Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

Kolilook, who was ten years old when she was brought from her home in Point Barrow, Alaska to attend Carlisle – several thousand miles away. She and the other students that came from Point Barrow were Inupiaq. That information is nowhere in her student file, in the records of the Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center, or on her tombstone. Instead, she is buried in a way that fits the racialization and assimilation tactics used at Carlisle: a white name, or English words in this case, and an assigned racial identity.

Out of over three hundred and fifty residential schools in the United States, perhaps none has been more extensively researched than the Carlisle Indian Industrial School. Opened in November 1879 by Richard Henry Pratt, the school provided the blueprint for the system of government-run Indigenous education in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Carlisle and the schools built in its image were part of a campaign to eradicate Native cultures through assimilating Indigenous children into white America. The idea of educating and “civilizing” Native Americans was nothing new, but the years following the Civil War created the perfect environment for Pratt to formalize a policy of indoctrination. The government under President Ulysses S. Grant in 1869 had set forth a plan to, “facilitate the Indian’s civilization.”<sup>133</sup> At the same time, industrialization, Reconstruction, and rising immigration resulted in a cultural shift in racialization and the standing of minorities within “white” American society. Many Americans at the time believed that Native Americans were

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<sup>133</sup> Mark O. Hagenbuch, “Richard Henry Pratt, the Carlisle Indian Industrial School and U.S. Policies Related to American Indian Education, 1879-1904,” PhD Diss (Pennsylvania State University, 1998), 39.

inherently inferior based on their race or based on the “requirements” for civilization as laid out by Lewis H. Morgan. His scale of civilized societies had many Native American tribes on the bottom, ranked according to technological and material development, subsistence patterns, and complexity of institutional arrangements and ideas and aspirations.<sup>134</sup> Pratt, on the other hand, did not agree with Morgan’s scale, or the idea of a racial hierarchy. Pratt believed that Native Americans were equal to whites and that it was their culture holding them back rather than any racial differences or pseudoscientific ideas of brain capacity.<sup>135</sup> Carlisle was built on this idea: that the process of Americanization, and therefore civilization and success, could be realized through the education of indigenous children when they were removed and separated from their home reservations.

It is little surprise that these residential schools and their assimilationist policies have generated an extensive historiography. Historians like David Wallace Adams emphasize how the residential school system was used by government policy makers to acculturate Indigenous youths into being “American.” This Americanization process followed Pratt’s Universalist belief that the Native population would become “civilized” through reeducation and could make them productive members of mainstream white society.<sup>136</sup> Other works, such as Margaret D. Jacob’s *White Mother to a Dark Race*, focus on the

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<sup>134</sup> Lewis H. Morgan, *Ancient Society, or Researches in the Lines of Human Progress from Savagery through Barbarism to Civilization* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1877), 22.

<sup>135</sup> Richard Henry Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom: Four Decades with the American Indian, 1867-1904*, edited by Robert M. Utley (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003), Originally published by Yale University Press, 1964.

<sup>136</sup> David Wallace Adams, *Education for Extinction: American Indians and the Boarding School Experience, 1875-1928* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1995), ix.

separation of the children from their homes and communities, and how the breaking of this bond between the land and its next generation was intended as the final step in the colonization process.<sup>137</sup> Carlisle in particular has been the primary subject of a wealth of dissertations and books; writings exist on nearly every aspect of the school from its newspapers and its athletic programs to even its spatial layout. Studies have even focused solely on calculating how many deaths should be attributed to the campus, such as Frank Vitale's "Counting Carlisle's Casualties."<sup>138</sup> But it is the cultural and socio-political aspects of the school that receive the most attention. Genevieve Bell's "Telling Stories Out of School," for instance, focuses on Carlisle's intensive English-only instructional method as a major aspect of the assimilation process, one that would be repeated in residential schools both in the United States and in Canada into the 1990s.<sup>139</sup> Dominating more recent historiography on Carlisle is the work of Jacqueline Fear-Segal, whose *White Man's Club* has led to new methodologies for analyzing both Carlisle and the residential school system as a whole. In focusing on how Indigenous students were racialized as "Indians" in ways that erased or ignored their tribal affiliations, and through her efforts at repatriating two children who had been lost to their tribe's historical narrative, Fear-Segal has created new links between race, culture, and memory.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Margaret D. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), xxxi.

<sup>138</sup> Frank Vitale, "Counting Carlisle's Casualties: Defining Student Death at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, 1879-1918," *American Indian Quarterly* 44, no. 4 (Fall, 2020).

<sup>139</sup> Genevieve Bell, "Telling Stories Out of School: Remembering the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, 1879-1918," PhD Diss (Stanford University, 1998), 63.

<sup>140</sup> Jacqueline Fear-Segal, *White Man's Club: Schools, Race, and the Struggle of Indian Acculturation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), xiv.



Even though Carlisle has been studied extensively, little has been said about its students from Alaska. And yet, traces of these students in the Carlisle archive are striking in several ways. Most noteworthy is that records for students from the northern-most territory, in contrast to those from every other state and region, do not note proper individual tribal affiliations, but rather mark these students as “Alaskan.” The use of this terminology by Carlisle suggested that all these students came from the same tribal affiliation, with the same culture, and the same language. They were thus racialized as a collective.

Some students from Alaska, such as most of the Tsimshian and Aleut students, had their actual tribal associations recorded alongside the term that marked them as belonging to a collective “Alaskan” nation.<sup>141</sup> But one group did not. Instead, their tribal affiliations were erased, and they were merged under the word “Eskimo.” Though linguists are still debating the origins of this term, one translation of “Eskimo” is “eaters of raw meat,” and has for centuries been used to generalize Arctic Indigenous groups, ignoring the wide variety of cultures and languages that exist in the region. The term has also been used as a slur to refer to these peoples as “barbaric” and backwards. Most Arctic Indigenous groups that have had the word used against them consider “Eskimo” an extremely offensive slur. Some groups in Alaska have reclaimed it and adopted it as a general term, following its use in the Arctic Native Settlements Claims Act. But the term still erases individual tribal identities and has never been the proper term to refer to an individual. While the intention of Carlisle was to assimilate all

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<sup>141</sup> David Gutherie Student File, 1903, RG 75, Series 1327, box 150, folder 5847, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

its students into white culture, in the process it racialized them instead as “Indians,” clearly separating them as their own category, not white and not black. These seventeen students from Alaska then went through two additional steps along the process. Inupiat and Yup’ik<sup>142</sup> became racialized as “Eskimo,” which was then merged with the other students being brought from the North to simply “Alaskan.” These additional steps suggest that these students likely experienced a unique form of racialization and assimilation worthy of our attention. These students are encapsulated in several of the other historiographical trends surrounding the school: the cemetery, renaming, and photography, all three of which will be explored below. However, these students have yet to be analyzed as exemplifying Pratt’s tactics and the lengths the government went to Americanize as many tribes as possible. Focusing on these students opens a new line of inquiry into the extensive nature of assimilation and racialization at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School.

Using student’s files, newspapers, publications, photographs, laws and correspondence, this essay explores how students from Alaska, specifically those referred to as “Eskimo,” fit within the assimilation and racialization processes of Carlisle. Most importantly, it is a call for historians discussing Carlisle to attend to these students and their particular experiences, and a call for the various archives and historical societies recording their history to use proper terminology in their indexes and catalogs rather than continuing to perpetuate the racialization apparent in their sources. Among the larger repatriation and

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<sup>142</sup> A note on terminology: Inupiat refers to the people collectively, while Inupiaq refers to a person, the language, or as an adjective. Yup’ik refers to the language and the people.

reconciliation efforts that have been occurring in recent years, these children deserve to be treated with dignity and respect and allowed to have their indigeneity no longer erased under terms their people do not use. The Arctic story at Carlisle needs to be told, with proper acknowledgement of the improper uses of terminology in the process of residential school racialization. Including these students in the historiography of assimilation, not just as part of the rest of the student body but as a group with their own histories, is vital to understanding the extent to which Pratt was willing to go for his goal of “kill the Indian, save the man.”<sup>143</sup>

It is important to note that the archives related to Carlisle are incomplete, as not everything was saved. Identifying these students required reading between the lines and corroborating the information in their files with information published elsewhere, both in the newspapers of Carlisle and in the histories of the communities they came from. The files of deceased students were often destroyed, so what information we have is piecemeal. When it comes to private student correspondence, the archive is biased towards those that paint the school in a positive light. We do not know what these students were writing or thinking on their own. Where their voices exist, their words may have been carefully selected. I make no claim to speak for them. All I can do is reproduce their words and analyze them with the care of knowing what I do not know.

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<sup>143</sup> Richard Henry Pratt “The Advantages of Mingling Indians with Whites” 260-271 from an extract of the Official Report of the Nineteenth Annual Conference of Charities and Correction (1892), Francis Paul Prucha, *Americanizing the American Indians: Writings by the “Friends of the Indian” 1880-1900* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973), 261.

## Racialization

Racialization, for the purposes of this paper, is the process of imparting social and symbolic meaning to perceived differences as an extension of racial meaning to a specific group.<sup>144</sup> For these students, Carlisle attached social and symbolic meanings to specific terms, “Alaskan” and “Eskimo,” which conveyed stereotypes and derogatory assumptions. These meanings are then attached to the experiences of said group, with their socially constructed race acting as a marker of difference.<sup>145</sup> The terms also emphasized them as the “other,” even amongst their fellow students.<sup>146</sup> “Alaskan” and “Eskimo” were used as a collective identity imposed from outsiders and a racial trope, rather than actual tribal affiliation. The use of these terms became an issue of race because the government, Pratt, and the various other sponsors of the Assimilation Project saw it as such. All the students at Carlisle were racialized as “Indians” through the process of bringing them together as a racial “other.” Pratt reported that the goals of Carlisle were explicitly tied to the racialization process, “Just as they have become one with each other through association in the School, so by going out to live among them they have become one with the white race”<sup>147</sup> However, many of the white men and women in charge of Indian Policy, such as those that

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<sup>144</sup> Michael Omi & Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*, 3<sup>rd</sup>, ed. (New York: Routledge: 2015), 111.

<sup>145</sup> Bianca Gonzalez-Sobrinio & Devon R. Goss, “Exploring the Mechanisms of Racialization beyond the Black-White Binary,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 42, no. 4 (2019): 507. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2018.1444781>

<sup>146</sup> Michael Omi & Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*, 3<sup>rd</sup>, ed. (New York: Routledge: 2015), 105.

<sup>147</sup> Lonna M. Malmshemer, “Imitation White Man: Images of Transformation at the Carlisle Indian School.” *Studies in Visual Communication* 11, no. 4. (Fall, 1985), 69, <https://repository.upenn.edu/svc/vol11/iss4/5>.

attended the Lake Mohonk Conference in 1909, viewed the “native races of Alaska” as separate from the “North American Indian.”<sup>148</sup> Hence, these students were further racialized as “Alaskans.” The seventeen students that are the focus of this work were further racialized as a specific “native race of Alaska,” or as “Eskimo.”

“Eskimo” is not a tribe, but rather a purposeful racialization of these students that erased the distinction between their languages, communities, and cultures, securing Carlisle’s larger goal of erasing cultural heritage. It was not as though their communities or tribal affiliations were not known at the time, as they were brought to the school by missionaries who worked in their specific communities. Sheldon Jackson created the mission in Point Barrow in 1890, and according to research done by Louellyn White and Courtenay Carty, at least Ephriam Alexander and Henry Rose were recruited by Samuel Rock, a Moravian missionary at Carmel Mission, Alaska. Their tribal affiliations were not, however, included in Carlisle’s records, and sometimes their home locations were even changed. The students from Point Barrow<sup>149</sup> were often labeled as being from “Port Clarence” in their official student files and in the *Register of Pupils*, but Port Clarence was their port of departure from Alaska, not their home community. However, various newspaper articles did report their actual home location, and

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<sup>148</sup> “The Lake Mohonk Platform,” *The Indian Craftsman*, November 1909, 36.

<sup>149</sup> As of 2016, Barrow and the surrounding communities have had their traditional name, Utqiaġvik, restored. For the ease of confusion with the sources, it will continue to be referred to as Point Barrow in this paper.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Alternate Names</b>	<b>Location of Origin</b>	<b>Language Group</b>	<b>Date of Arrival</b>	<b>Date of Discharge</b>	<b>After Discharge</b>
<b>Annebuck</b>	Anna Buck, Aneva Buck, Anneebuck	Point Barrow	Inupiaq	11/14/1897	08/11/1906	Indian Service, Assistant Matron at Sherman Institute
<b>Annie Coodalook</b>	Coogidlac	Point Barrow	Inupiaq	11/14/1897	04/17/1907	Indian Service, Missionary Training in California
<b>Cookiglook</b>	Cooki Glook, Kokiglook, Kolilook	Point Barrow	Inupiaq	11/14/1897	1/4/1904	Buried at Carlisle
<b>Edward Angalook</b>		Golovin Bay	Inupiaq	11/23/1903	09/24/1905	Buried at Carlisle
<b>Ephriam Alexander</b>	Ephraim Alexander	Carmel, Nushagak River	Yup'ik	08/28/1902	08/11/1905	Buried at the Lititz Moravian Cemetery
<b>Esenetuck</b>	Emma Esanetuck	Point Barrow	Inupiaq	11/14/1897	06/21/1909	At home
<b>Fay Koborivak</b>		Kobuk	Inupiaq	1/13/1906	1/22/1906	Unknown
<b>Garfield Sitarangok</b>		Golovin Bay	Inupiaq	11/23/1903	05/25/1908	Store Clerk in Council City, Alaska
<b>Healy Wolfe</b>	Healy Wolf	Point Barrow	Inupiaq	10/10/1896	06/23/1903	Printer in Missouri
<b>Henry Rose</b>		Nushagak River	Yup'ik	10/05/1903	08/04/1907	Buried at Carlisle
<b>Laublock</b>		Point Barrow	Inupiaq	11/14/1897	09/15/1899	Buried at Carlisle
<b>Mollie Dalilak</b>	Mollie Delilak	Golovin Bay	Inupiaq	11/23/1903	08/11/1906	Teacher in Council City, Alaska
<b>Oonaleana</b>	Charles Onaleana	Point Barrow	Inupiaq	10/26/1897	07/1/1902	Cook in Candle, Alaska
<b>Oscar Nateroak</b>		Golovin Bay	Inupiaq	11/23/1903	06/26/1908	Indian Service at home and Carmel
<b>Samuel Anaruk</b>		Unalakleet	Inupiaq OR Yup'ik	09/10/1903	06/26/1908	At home
<b>Tomiclock</b>	Tomicook, Tomicock, Tomeceock	Point Barrow	Inupiaq	11/14/1897	04/8/1900	Buried at Carlisle
<b>Walter Snyder</b>		Nushagak	Yup'ik	10/05/1903	08/27/1906	Carpenter and hunter in Bethel, Alaska

Table 1: List of Inupiat and Yup'ik Students at Carlisle. I have pieced together most of the information in this table from their student files, newspapers, and letters in the Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center. None of the language groups/local tribal identities were anywhere in Carlisle's records and had to be corroborated by maps and data of Indigenous tribal claims and languages for Alaska.

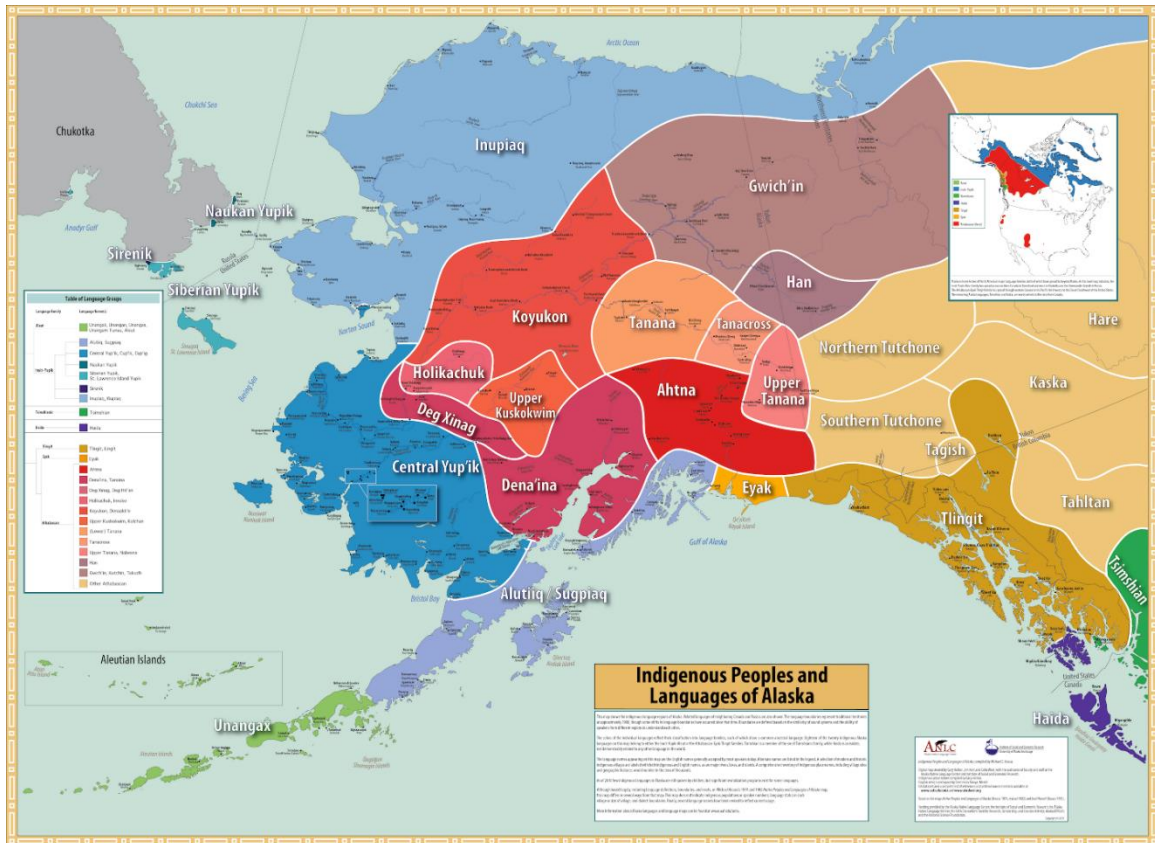


Figure 2: Map of Indigenous Peoples and Languages of Alaska<sup>150</sup>

they are repeatedly referred to as the group from Point Barrow.<sup>151</sup> Based on newspaper articles like these, and maps of Indigenous tribal land claims and language groups, such as Figure 2, each student's likely tribal identities can be guessed, though there is always room for error. Confirmation of many of the student's home communities, recorded above in Table 1, comes from the "Schedule of Alaskan Students," created in 1903.<sup>152</sup> Out of all seventeen, the only home community that gets complicated is Samuel Anaruk, as Unalakleet

<sup>150</sup> Krauss, Michael, Gary Holton, Jim Kerr, and Colin T. West, *Indigenous Peoples and Languages of Alaska*, 2011, Alaska Native Language Center and UAA Institute of Social and Economic Research, Fairbanks and Anchorage, <https://www.uaf.edu/anla/collections/map/>.

<sup>151</sup> "Man-on-the-band-stand," *The Red Man and Helper*, January 8, 1904, 3.

<sup>152</sup> Schedule of Alaskan Students at the Carlisle Indian Schools, 1906, RG 75, Entry 91, box 3134, 1906-#41485, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington D.C.

had both Inupiat and Yup'ik communities.<sup>153</sup> By keeping their home locations vague or even incorrect, and labelling them instead as “Eskimo,” Carlisle tried to prevent those connecting with the students from connecting the dots of indigeneity, which would not suit the mission of “killing the Indian” within him.

In their racialization of the students as “Eskimo,” Carlisle both taught and repeated existing stereotypes. School officials acted as though this set of Alaskan students were the same tribal identity, with the same culture; much of the racial imagery in the various school publications came from anthropological studies of other Arctic Indigenous groups, such as the Canadian Inuit. An essay on two “Indian” girls that ran in *The Red Man and Helper*, one of the newspapers published by Carlisle, shows these stereotypes in action, attached to the experiences of the girl’s homelife, and showing how by attending Carlisle, they would supposedly lose negative traits associated with being “Eskimo”:

They live in ice-block houses and the snow covers all the ground, and they don’t have any use for grass and lawn-mowers, and can throw walnut shells anywhere... The Moral of this illustration is, that tidy girls with a Carlisle training won’t scatter nut shells or any other trash.<sup>154</sup>

There are several racial stereotypes included within this quotation: all these students allegedly live in igloos, where there were only snow, and they were messy and showed no concern for their living environment. In fact, though, neither the Inupiat nor Yup'ik students lived in igloos, or any houses made from ice. Their traditional housing were subterranean structures of heavy logs with sod

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<sup>153</sup> Burch, *The Iñupiaq Eskimo Nations*, 3.

<sup>154</sup> “Telling Where Two Indian Girls Came From,” *Red Man and Helper*, May 29, 1903, 2.



for the Yup'ik students, and sod houses made of stone, driftwood, and whalebone for the Inupiat students.<sup>155</sup> Second, there is an over eight-hundred-mile difference between the homes of the Inupiat students and the Yup'ik students. The coastline of Alaska has grass, in fact, the Canadian Inuit whom these stereotypes seem to be echoing *also* have grass, and none of the regions are permanently covered in snow. This extremely specific racist imagery of the stereotypical "Eskimo" did not apply to any of the Inupiat or Yup'ik students, or any of the students from Alaska at all.

Later articles in *The Carlisle Arrow* continued the use of stereotypes, stating that, "the Eskimo... have no totem poles, no clans like those of Southern Alaska; they are simply one great family, living together quite a communal life."<sup>156</sup> This shows a popular stereotype of the "Eskimo" as harmless and childish, one that was often used to excuse paternalistic mindsets towards colonizing indigenous groups in the Arctic. They were also all assumed to be identical "Eskimos" within Alaska, therefore all one tribe, one community. In one instance, *The Red Man and Helper* reports that a story of "Life at St. Lawrence Island" will be of special interest since Carlisle has "several Eskimo children with us."<sup>157</sup> None of the students at Carlisle were from St. Lawrence, and none of them were Siberian Yup'ik. The Yup'ik students at Carlisle were Central Yup'ik. There were also different nations within both Yup'ik and Inupiat tribes, with hostile relations between them. They might live as family units, but it was separate and not "one

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<sup>155</sup> Hensel, *Telling Our Selves*, 36.

<sup>156</sup> "The Point Barrow Eskimos," *The Carlisle Arrow*, June 18, 1909, 2.

<sup>157</sup> "Teaching the Eskimos, in the Far North Land," *Red Man and Helper*, April 26, 1901, 1.

great family.” Sometimes the stereotypes used had nothing to do with their culture but were simply racist. The Man-on-the-Band-Stand in 1903 referred to one unnamed Point Barrow student as an “emissary of Santa Claus” when she gave a teacher a Christmas present.<sup>158</sup>

The Inupiat and Yup'ik students were not the only ones to be racialized as “Eskimo,” however. Carlisle seems to have used the term to refer to several students with a more public presence, perhaps to emphasize them as a racial “other” compared to the rest of the students, just as the word could be used to emphasize them as separate from the other students from Alaska. One student, Nikifer Shoushick, was referred to as such repeatedly, being called “our young Esquimau,”<sup>159</sup> “our Eskimo boy,”<sup>160</sup> and “the Eskimo,”<sup>161</sup> in various articles of *The Red Man and Helper*. Nikifer even gained a reputation as “the Esquimau football player of the Carlisle team.”<sup>162</sup> This reputation was started in *The Red Man and Helper* after he tried out for the team. “This year, besides having Indians of different tribes from all over the United States represented, we have an interesting candidate for the team from Alaska, a very fine specimen of an Esquimeau.”<sup>163</sup> The use of the word “specimen” is dehumanizing; what mattered was his body, his physical appearance as “different” from the others, like a piece of meat or an animal on display. What is most interesting about this case is that Nikifer was neither Inupiaq nor Yup'ik, and nowhere in his student file is the term

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<sup>158</sup> “Man-on-the-Band-Stand,” *Red Man and Helper*, January 2, 1903, 3.

<sup>159</sup> “Nikefer at a Country Home” *Red Man and Helper*, August 15, 1902, 3.

<sup>160</sup> “Man-on-the-Band-Stand,” *Red Man and Helper*, November 15, 1901, 3.

<sup>161</sup> “Are We Ready for Pennsylvania?” *Red Man and Helper*, November 15, 1901, 4.

<sup>162</sup> “Carlisle Reports Reach Alaska,” *Red Man and Helper*, April 29, 1904, 1.

<sup>163</sup> “Football,” *Red Man and Helper*, September 20, 1901, 4.

“Eskimo” used to refer to his tribal identity. In fact, Nikifer was well recorded, and well known, as Aleut.<sup>164</sup> Aleut are and were, both in the time of Carlisle and in the more recent official Alaskan Native Claims Settlement Act, considered a separate group from “Eskimo.”<sup>165</sup> None of the other Aleut students are ever referred to as Eskimo, just the single student from Alaska to join the football team, and therefore have a more public presence.

Three other students are also referred to as “Eskimo” only upon being put on a public stage. *The Indian Helper* in October 1899 reported that, “The Chambersburg Repository speaks highly of the part taken by several Eskimo Indians of the Carlisle School in a concert in that place... the pupils were Healy Wolfe, Willie Paul, Frank Mt. Pleasant, and Esanetuck.”<sup>166</sup> Esenetuck is recorded as “Eskimo” on her student information card, so the use of this term for her is not unusual. But for the other three, this public display has added a new layer of racialization. Healy Wolf was only ever recorded as “Alaskan” on his official paperwork, despite being Inupiat from Point Barrow like the others.<sup>167</sup> This was the only time in the written record he is ever given the racial moniker of “Eskimo” in the nearly six years he spent at Carlisle. William Paul is also from Alaska, though he is likewise only recorded as “Alaskan.” Information gathered from his student file does give some hints as to what tribal affiliation he might have had. William Paul was from Wrangle, living in Sitka, and was sent from Sitka Industrial

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<sup>164</sup> Nikifer Shoushick Student File, 1901, RG 75, Series 1327, Box 1, Folder 41, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington D.C.

<sup>165</sup> *An Act to Provide for the Settlement of Certain Land Claims of Alaska Natives, and for Other Purposes*. Public Law 92-203, U.S Statutes at Large 85 (1971): 688.  
<https://vilda.alaska.edu/digital/collection/cdmg22/id/243>.

<sup>166</sup> *Indian Helper*, October 27, 1899, 2.

<sup>167</sup> “Population of the School,” *Red Man and Helper*, September 13, 1901, 1.

School. The school primarily instructed Tlingit students, and Wrangle might be a misspelling of “Wrangell,” an area under Tlingit land claim.<sup>168</sup> While perhaps he did belong to an Inupiat or Yup’ik nation (thus fitting into the collective “Eskimo”), it is far more likely that he was Tlingit. Frank Mt. Pleasant was Tuscarora, and from North Carolina.<sup>169</sup> There is not even the slightest reason for him to have been referred to as “Eskimo” if it was not done as a way to group them together in a way that racialized these students to make them seem “exotic” for public consumption.

Beyond the problems related to their racialization as “Eskimo,” there is also no “Alaskan” nation or “Alaskan” race. When discussing all the students from Alaska they could have been referred to as “Alaska Natives,” as this is the proper term for these groups of Indigenous peoples collectively, but it is not the proper term when discussing individuals.<sup>170</sup> Inupiat are not the same as Aleut, Tlingit are not the same as Tsimshian. They are from the same territory as defined by white treaties, but not by their own Indigenous land claims. For comparison, the Hopi and Yuma students were recorded as separate nations within Carlisle’s records. If Carlisle followed the same racialization as they performed with the “Alaskan” students, the Hopi and Yuma students would be recorded as belonging to an “Arizonan” nation, with only some of the students given the proper tribal distinction. The distinction between these Alaska Native

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<sup>168</sup> William Paul Student File, 1899, Record Group 75, Series 1327, box 138, folder 5474, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S National Archives and Records Administration, Washington D.C.

<sup>169</sup> Frank Mt. Pleasant Student Information Card, 1896, Record Group 75, Series 1329, box 1, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S National Archives and Records Administration, Washington D.C.

<sup>170</sup> Andrews and Creed, *Authentic Alaska*, xxvii.

tribes was well known by the time that Carlisle opened. Several anthropologists and missionaries, such as Sheldon Jackson, recorded various tribes in their writings. Major-General Halleck's official report in 1869 after the territory was purchased made four divisions of native groups in Alaska: Koloshians, Kenains, Aleuts, and Eskimo. His descriptions of these groups were incomplete and often incorrect but made it clear that there was at least some distinction between them.<sup>171</sup>

Each tribe might also have numerous subtribes with their own customs, histories, and dialects and elders. Up until the last half of the nineteenth century, there were even several nations within Inupiat and Yup'ik societies that thought of themselves as separate peoples. Late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries dislocations, resulting from colonial settlements and diseases brought north from settlers, intermingled the populations of the Inupiat as one "nation" between 1880 and 1900.<sup>172</sup> Unfortunately, most of the information about the separate nations has been lost from disease, elder death, and the cultural breakage caused by children being sent off to schools like Carlisle. Placing all these students under a collective racial identity of "Alaskan" erases tribal affiliations, which was ultimately part of the goal of Carlisle. They could be shown as an "other," distinct by distance from the rest of the nations in attendance at the school, while still removing their communal ties. If Pratt had his way, there would be no need for

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<sup>171</sup> Jackson, *Alaska and Mission*, 62.

<sup>172</sup> Ernest S. Burch Jr., *The Iñupiaq Eskimo Nations of Northwest Alaska* (Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 1998), 8.

Aleut to be separate from Inupiat, as all the students would enter white society as individuals.

Whether they are referred to and racialized as “Eskimo” or “Alaskan” seems to have been situational, and often changed while they were at Carlisle. It is possible that Pratt, or at least the officials at Carlisle, did formulate some sort of racial hierarchy in relation to these terms. The “Eskimo” could be assimilated as “Alaskan,” which could then be assimilated as “Indian,” then finally join “white” culture. Aside from Healy Wolfe, all seventeen of the Inupiat and Yup’ik students have their tribe recorded in their student files as “Eskimo” and their nation as “Alaskan.”<sup>173</sup> When the students from Point Barrow first arrived, *The Indian Helper* reported that, “six interesting Esquimaux have arrived from Pt. Barrow, Alaska...speak little or no English and wore the native dress, with fur-side inside and skin-side outside. They have come to a land of friends...to help them to the light that is dawning for them”<sup>174</sup> Students like Oscar Nateroak started out being racialized as Eskimo, only to be considered “Alaskan” later on once he had lost most of his ties to his community.<sup>175</sup> Likewise, Esenetuck, after spending eleven years at Carlisle, was referred to as “one of these Alaskan girls,” when *The Red Man*, another of Carlisle’s newspapers, reported her return to Point Barrow.<sup>176</sup> Fay Koborivak was referred to as “a little Eskimo girl” who “is already a great

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<sup>173</sup> Healy Wolf Student Information Card, 1896, RG 75, Series 1328, box 6, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

<sup>174</sup> *Indian Helper*, November 19, 1897, 3.

<sup>175</sup> Oscar Nateroak Student File, 1903, RG 75, Series 1327, box 1, folder 30, Record of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Archives and Records Association, Washington D.C.

<sup>176</sup> “Indians as Money Makers and Students at Carlisle,” *Red Man*, April 1912, 338.

favorite here, especially with the Alaskan girls” when she first arrived.<sup>177</sup> These “Alaskan” girls contained others who were previously racialized as “Eskimo” on their official paperwork. But after being at Carlisle for a while, they appear to have been brought into the larger collective “Alaskan” and the even larger “Indian.” Henry Rose, for instance, was referred to as a “deceased Indian boy” in requests for casket payments.<sup>178</sup> He was only merged with the rest of the student body’s “race” post-mortem. This changing terminology to suit the situation seems to match with the particular othering experienced by those students temporarily labeled “Eskimo” as discussed above.

### Photography

While all the students who had been sent from Alaska were used to vindicate Pratt and Jackson’s ideologies of assimilation of the “Indian” to become “white,” the six Inupiaq who arrived on November 14<sup>th</sup>, 1897, became visual advertisements for it. As the first group of Arctic Indigenous students at Carlisle, the striking difference between their traditional clothing and the uniforms of the school was used as part of Carlisle’s photographic propaganda. Within hours of their arrival at school, after travelling thousands of miles to get there and before they could settle into their new living arrangements, the students were taken to the local photography studio of John N. Choate. Arranged stylistically by height and still dressed in their traditional clothing, the six students had their “before” photograph taken. This was done prior to a round of medical examinations,

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<sup>177</sup> *The Arrow*, January 19, 1906, 2.

<sup>178</sup> Mercer to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Request to Pay for Casket of Henry Rose, 1907, RG 75, Entry 91, box 3739, 1907-#69916, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington D.C.



Figure 3: Portrait of the students who arrived in November 1897, taken shortly after their arrival. From left to right: Annie Coodalook, Tomiclock, Laublock (behind), Esenetuck (in front), Annebuck, and Cookiglook<sup>179</sup>

Figure 4: Portrait of the students taken one year after their arrival. Front row: Tomiclock, Esenetuck, Annebuck, Laublock. Back row: Annie Coodalook, Cookiglook<sup>180</sup>

delousing, hair cutting, and documentation that would officially begin the students' assimilation process.<sup>181</sup> Usually, the students would be taken for a second photograph within the first twenty-four hours, but the students from Point Barrow did not have the “after” photograph taken until a year later. It is possible that this timing was to more effectively sell the idea that Carlisle’s education had created the difference, rather than just the process of dolling the students up and using clever tricks of the light. Carlisle officials could show that if one year had completely transformed these students physically, imagine what could be done to the other aspects of their “Eskimo-ness” in five?

<sup>179</sup> Six Alaskan Students Upon Arrival, 1897, NAA\_73313; Photo Lot 81-12 06808801, John N. Choate Photographs of Carlisle Indian School, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington D.C.

<sup>180</sup> Six Alaskan Students After Arrival, c.1898, NAA\_73314; Photo Lot 81-12 06808802, John N. Choate Photographs of Carlisle Indian School, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

<sup>181</sup> Bell, “Telling Stories Out of School,” 122.



These photographs, and the others in the series, were sent to reservations, benefactors, political officials, and federal agencies as “proof” that the “Indian race” could join white society.<sup>182</sup> The body transformed represented the transformation of identity, the “Indian problem” solved by Carlisle’s tactics, and even the “Eskimo” could pass as white.<sup>183</sup> The photographs taken of the Inupiaq students were even available for the public to purchase, as advertised in *The Red Man*, “The Esquimaux have been here just a year and celebrated the anniversary of their coming by having their pictures taken recently; sold for 35 and 30 cents; 65 cents for the contrast. By mail, 70 cents.”<sup>184</sup> Their photographs were even included in souvenir booklets that could be purchased by white visitors to the school, placed one on top of the other, the before above the after, the viewers eye naturally drawing the comparison between the two and “following” the process of assimilation.<sup>185</sup> Their bodies, alternately racialized as “Esquimaux” and then “assimilated Indian” became a method for the school to fund its efforts to reproduce the results on other students from the West.

#### Assimilation of Alaska Natives

Carlisle’s true goal was to enroll tens of thousands of Native American children in white-run schools to eradicate native cultures and communities while assimilating them into white culture. They would be incorporated not as Tuscarora, or Apache, or Inupiaq- but as individual “Indians” into the United

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<sup>182</sup> Malmshemer, “Imitation White Man,” 56.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid, 62.

<sup>184</sup> “News Summary for the Month,” *Red Man*, December 1898, 8.

<sup>185</sup> Souvenir of the Carlisle Indian School by John N. Choate, 1902, CIS-I-0039, Carlisle Indian School Individual Items, Dickinson College Archives and Special Collections, Carlisle, PA, 12.

States “civilization.”<sup>186</sup> By individualizing them and destroying community ties, the federal government believed it could solve two issues: a slowed “Manifest Destiny” and the “vanishing Indian.” Controlling a population’s children and assimilating them would ensure the final transfer of land to the colonizers, undermining Indigenous land claims by breaking the connection to the land itself.<sup>187</sup> Pratt’s aspiration was that the tribal communities would be abandoned by the new generations, and all the students who went through Carlisle would integrate seamlessly into white society. This ideology was shared by many members of the federal government, such as the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, who in 1890 stated: “If the entire rising generation could be taken at once and placed in such institutions, kept there long enough to be educated, and...were encouraged to seek homes among civilized people, there would be no Indian problem.”<sup>188</sup> Without Native American tribes and their land affiliations, all the natural resources could be claimed and bought out by colonizers from the east. Settler colonialist narratives also presented a myth of the inevitable demise of Indigenous peoples, leading groups like the Friends of the Indian to support both the abolition of tribal systems as well as systems of assimilation like Carlisle for “humanitarian” reasons. By recruiting students from every territory that fell under United States control, Pratt could universalize his experiment and facilitate a

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<sup>186</sup> Fear-Segal, *White Man’s Club*, xi.

<sup>187</sup> Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race*, 63.

<sup>188</sup> *Fifty-Ninth Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1890, xi.

simultaneous obliteration of all Native cultures under the banner of the United States.<sup>189</sup>

Every territory, including that of the newly added Alaska. The U.S. government's colonization efforts in Alaska focused primarily on extracting fur, minerals, whales, and seals.<sup>190</sup> Government officials also hoped that purchasing the territory from Russia would facilitate and expand commercial relations with Asia, making new ports and routes available for the Pacific trade.<sup>191</sup> While not explicitly stated as a reason, the 1867 purchase came at the end of larger efforts to form a route from the Atlantic to the Pacific via the North-West Passage; controlling Alaska would give the United States some control of any trade that might occur if the expeditions were successful. Placing *citizens* in Alaska would also show effective occupation and help any sovereignty claims that the United States might make towards the Arctic in general. Technically, the Indigenous population would not count as citizens. But maybe assimilated ones could.<sup>192</sup>

The first assimilation efforts in Alaska were led not by Pratt, but by a Pratt sympathizer and Presbyterian missionary by the name of Dr. Sheldon Jackson. Jackson opened the Sitka Industrial Training School around the same time as Carlisle, and the two school leaders were frequently in contact. Pratt at one point helped to send uniforms from Carlisle to Sitka, and Jackson often wrote to Pratt for advice on running the school. In exchange, his most promising students

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<sup>189</sup> Jacqueline Fear-Segal and Susan D. Rose, ed. *Carlisle Indian Industrial School: Indigenous Histories, Memories & Reclamations* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2016), 5.

<sup>190</sup> Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race*, 12.

<sup>191</sup> Lee A. Farrow, *Seward's Folly: A New Look at the Alaska Purchase* (Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2016), xi.

<sup>192</sup> A similar method was used by the Canadian government in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. See the second chapter of this thesis, "Isolate and Assimilate."

would be sent to Pennsylvania to finish out their education at Carlisle, a group that included Healy Wolf, the only student from Point Barrow that graduated.<sup>193</sup> Pratt recorded Jackson's support of Carlisle's mission in his autobiography, saying that he was "strongly in sympathy with the Carlisle movement, realizing by observation and experience the vast benefits it would be to the Indian peoples if carried out on a sufficiently large scale"<sup>194</sup> Jackson was appointed the General Agent of Education for Alaska in 1885, and by 1890 mission schools had opened across the state; including, interestingly, Unalakleet, Point Barrow, and Nushagak River.<sup>195</sup> Several of the students considered in this essay had some education at these schools prior to their arrival at Carlisle, including Ephriam Alexander and Samuel Anaruk.<sup>196</sup> The six students who arrived from Point Barrow on November 14<sup>th</sup>, 1897, were brought to Carlisle by Jackson himself.<sup>197</sup> The *Red Man* reports, "An interesting addition to the population of the school, was the arrival of a party of seven Esquimaux, five girls and two boys, under the care of Dr. Sheldon Jackson, Commissioner of Education for Alaska"<sup>198</sup> Perhaps some of the officials receiving these students did not know the distinction between Inupiat and Yup'ik, or were not aware of the connotations of the words

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<sup>193</sup> Mitchell, *Sold American*, 203. Healy Wolf Student Information Card, 1896, RG 75, Series 1328, box 6, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

<sup>194</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 276.

<sup>195</sup> Donald Craig Mitchell, *Sold American: The Story of Alaska Natives and their Land, 1867-1959* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1997), 93.

<sup>196</sup> Ephriam Alexander Student Information Card, 1902, RG 75, Series 1328, box 1, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. Samuel Anaruk Student Information Card, 1903, RG 75, Series 1328, box 1, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.

<sup>197</sup> Susan B. Andrews and John Creed, *Authentic Alaska: Voices of its Native Writers* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 85.

<sup>198</sup> *Red Man*, October and November 1898, 4.

they used to describe them instead, but Jackson had no such excuse. Jackson seems to have purposefully allowed these students under his care to be labelled as “Eskimo” upon their arrival at Carlisle, rather than any of the terms used by their own communities. Seventeen years earlier, in his published record of his efforts in Alaska, Jackson specifically noted that “the term Inuit is the native word for ‘people’ and is the name used by themselves, signifying “our people.” The term “Eskimo” is one of reproach given them by their neighbors, meaning ‘raw-fish eaters’.”<sup>199</sup>

The students from Alaska would come to Carlisle as Indigenous groups newly added to the United States to become used as key examples of Carlisle’s mission and the success of the American assimilation project. If the school’s mission of bringing all Native children under the wing of white educators were to succeed, it would need to be able to extend its reach to any tribe that could be accessed, and that included those at the far reaches of the Northern-most territory.<sup>200</sup> In his autobiography, Pratt argued for the inclusion of Alaskan students by emphasizing this need, saying that “educational and industrial training for Indian youth, *for all Indian youth*, will, in a very short period, end Indian wars and, in a not very long period, end appropriations to feed and clothe them. I don’t believe anything else will.”<sup>201</sup> Even if they returned to their communities rather than remaining in white civilization, they would be able to use what they learned to further Dr. Jackson’s assimilation projects. They could also

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<sup>199</sup> Sheldon Jackson, *Alaska and Mission on the North Pacific Coast*. (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1880), 331.

<sup>200</sup> Bell, “Telling Stories Out of School,” 122.

<sup>201</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 252.

help solve what the Bureau of Education referred to as “our problem of the education of the Eskimos.” According to act known as the *Organic Act* of 1884, the Secretary of the Interior had to make “needful and proper provision for the education of the children of school age in the Territory of Alaska,” regardless of race.<sup>202</sup> The hope was that graduates of Carlisle would enter the Indian Service and act as teachers within their own communities.<sup>203</sup>

Under Jackson, the only schools in Alaska were mission-run schools that not only blurred the line between church and state but were also located close to if not in the reservations and agencies. Pratt was heavily against the idea of reservation schools, hence Carlisle’s location, stating that while all education for these students was good, “the system of removing them from their tribes and placing them under continuous training in the midst of civilization is far better than any other method”<sup>204</sup> His combined desire to not only represent as many tribes as possible but also to educate students away from their communities is likely what led to Pratt’s insistence on including students from Alaska in Carlisle’s roster, even if he was technically not supposed to. The *Organic Act*, as mentioned above, made provisions for Alaska’s Indigenous children to be educated *in Alaska*, not outside of Alaska. Pratt was told to stop in 1900, and there were further warnings in 1904 from the Secretary of the Interior, “In view of the foregoing, and the utter lack of authority or law from expenses incurred by Superintendent Pratt, you are instructed to disallow all of such expenses... as

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<sup>202</sup> *An Act Providing a Civil Government for Alaska*, Forty-Eighth Congress, Session One, Chapter 53 (1884) <https://vilda.alaska.edu/digital/collection/cdmg22/id/199>, 28.

<sup>203</sup> “Indian Education,” *The Arrow*, August 30, 1907, 4.

<sup>204</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 259.

were incurred in going to Alaska to procure children and in bringing them to the Carlisle school.”<sup>205</sup> Several students from Alaska were admitted to Carlisle after this letter, including, although only temporarily, Fay Koborivak.

Further proof of the importance of these students to Carlisle’s assimilation mission can be found in letters that record the cost of returning the students home. Pratt repeatedly complained about the poor financial situation of Carlisle yet found the means to send for children from thousands of miles away.<sup>206</sup> Depending on the number of students, with estimations of the costs between Seattle and the specific homes of the students, Pratt’s successor requested funds for returning students home to Alaska that ranged between \$1085.65<sup>207</sup> and \$2465.85 for a small group of students.<sup>208</sup> For comparison, the Governor of Alaska at the time had an annual salary of \$3000.<sup>209</sup> As the methods of transportation and the distance being travelled are the same, these numbers are likely similar to the cost of bringing students from Alaska to Carlisle. Moses Friedman, the Carlisle superintendent after Pratt, argued that these costs were more than worth it, “Every penny which is spent on their education in this way will bring in larger returns in better Indians who will be self-supporting and

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<sup>205</sup> E.A. Hitchcock to The Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Interior Secretary Disallows Expenses in Transporting Alaskan Students, March 09, 1904, RG 75, Entry 91, box 2475, 1904-#16626, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington D.C.

<sup>206</sup> Hagenbuch, “Richard Henry Pratt,” 123.

<sup>207</sup> Estimate of Funds First Quarter 1907 William A Mercer, RG 75, Entry 91, box 3233, 1906-#73552, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington D.C.

<sup>208</sup> Cost of Returning Students to Homes in Alaska. July 14, 1906. Letter from William A Mercer to J.H. Dortch, RG 75, Entry 91, box 3196, 1906-#60246, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington D.C.

<sup>209</sup> Farrow, *Seward’s Folly*, 174.

economically worthwhile to the country, good citizens and true patriots.”<sup>210</sup> They would pay back the price by being used as examples of the success of a Carlisle assimilation.

### The Assimilation Process

While at Carlisle, students would go through an “Americanization” process for their clothes, their values, their language, and even their behavior, all tied to assimilating them into white society. English was enforced as the only language, and sleeping arrangements were made so that no two students of the same ancestry stayed in the same room.<sup>211</sup> Students were separated by gender and given specialized jobs; they would not be given any work “unsuitable to their age, sex, or strength.”<sup>212</sup> While this gendered separation of labor existed in both Inupiat and Yup’ik societies, it was not uncommon for children to learn the subsistence activities of the other gender. There were also no “specialists” in Yup’ik communities.<sup>213</sup> The food at Carlisle would have also been exceptionally foreign to these students, consisting largely of syrups, tea, prunes, breads, and oatmeal.<sup>214</sup> The Inupiat students would have been used to a diet of grasses, berries, seal, whale, and fish, while the Yup’ik students would have been used to

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<sup>210</sup> Moses Friedman, “The Education of Alaskan Indians Pays,” *Red Man*, December 1911, 140.

<sup>211</sup> Richard Henry Pratt, *The Indian Industrial School, Carlisle, Pennsylvania; its Origins, Purposes, Progress, and the Difficulties Surmounted* (Cumberland: Cumberland County Historical Society Publications, 1979), Originally published 1908, 32.

<sup>212</sup> Office of Indian Affairs, *Rules for the Indian School Service* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1898), 27.

<sup>213</sup> Chase Hensel, *Telling Our Selves: Ethnicity and Discourse in Southwestern Alaska* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 37.

<sup>214</sup> *Carlisle Indian School Hearings Before the Joint Commission of the Congress of the United States Sixty Third Congress Second Session to Investigate Indian Affairs: February 6,7,8, and March 25, 1914*, Part II (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1914), 992.



a diet of pike, whitefish, seal, marigold greens, and berries.<sup>215</sup> The fresh fruits and berries of their diets at home were severely lacking, the fish was often too salted to eat when they did have it, and there was rarely any meat. When there was meat, there was not enough to go around, or it was improperly cooked or spoiled.<sup>216</sup> This would have produced not only nutrient and vitamin deficiencies, likely worsening the cases of Tuberculosis and other diseases among the group, but also a degree of cultural pain.<sup>217</sup>

One of the key aspects of this Americanization was the government's emphasis on the need for male students of all tribes to learn agriculture. Pratt related this to the adoption of "our ways of living," which would give them a chance to "learn our American farm life by becoming a real part of it," and strongly supported the effort at Carlisle.<sup>218</sup> The first forty pages of the *Course of Study for the Indian Schools* were about agriculture, including instructions such as, "tell them that agriculture is the natural industry of mankind, and that is particularly the industry of the Indians."<sup>219</sup> Farming is possible in some parts of Alaska, but certainly not in the Arctic Circle or on the coastal communities that most of the Inupiat and Yupik students were coming from. These groups did not farm, and agriculture was in no way their "industry." The students from Alaska were not given special treatment or differentiated from the rest of the students at Carlisle when it came to the skills they were taught, but these students would

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<sup>215</sup> Hensel, *Telling Our Selves*, 31.

<sup>216</sup> *Carlisle Indian School Hearings*, 1185.

<sup>217</sup> Preston McBride, "A Blueprint for Death in U.S. Off-Reservation Boarding Schools: Rethinking Institutional Mortalities at Carlisle Indian Industrial School, 1879-1918" MA Thesis (Dartmouth College, 2013), 56.

<sup>218</sup> Pratt, *Battlefield and Classroom*, 194.

<sup>219</sup> *Course of Study*, 144.

have found their practical education far less useful in their own communities than many from the Western territories.

Another key aspect of the assimilation process, and one that is perhaps the most obvious when student records and even headstones, was the renaming of students, giving each a new name that would be “acceptable” in white society. The preferred government policy was to use the original untranslated name as the surname, necessary for inheritance and property ownership, but Carlisle took it one step forward to give students a new “white” first name as well. The Indian Office at the time argued against this process, “let the Indian keep both his personal and race identity” and saying that their original name would serve just as well as a new one.<sup>220</sup> Despite this, Carlisle had an entire process for new students to gain a totally new identity, emphasizing their break from their race and culture. For most students at Carlisle, these names would be chosen at arrival off of classroom chalkboards, names that some of them could not even read, or they were randomly assigned. The *Indian Helper* reports the process for those that arrived from Point Barrow, “As they came to us with their unpronounceable Esquimaux names, they have now each received English “front names” while their original cognomens will serve as surnames.”<sup>221</sup>

Checking the original Register of Students against their student records for each of the seventeen students shows how this process played out.<sup>222</sup> Several followed this process of adding a front name: Coogidlac became Annie

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<sup>220</sup> Adams, *Education for Extinction*, 109.

<sup>221</sup> *Indian Helper*, December 10, 1897, 2.

<sup>222</sup> “Admitted,” *Registers of Pupils*, 35, 79.

Coodalook, Onaleana became Charles Onaleana, and Esenetuck became Emma Esanetuck. For Cookiglook/Kolilook/Kokiglook and Annebuck/Anneebuck, their names were just their original names split in two to Cooki Glook and Anna Buck. Annebuck would also alternatively be given the names of Annie and Aneva. Tomiclock and Laublock seem to have been able to avoid this process, or at the very least, no renaming was recorded. The three Yup'ik students, Ephriam Alexander, Henry Rose, and Walter Snyder, likely went through the renaming process prior to coming to Carlisle, and there is no record of their original names.<sup>223</sup> Despite all this effort, sometimes the school itself would ignore its own process, and it's possible that the renaming did not hold for some students in practice. Pratt, for example, uses "Kolilook" in a letter from 1901, despite her using her "English" name of Cooki Glook for nearly three years by that point.<sup>224</sup> This process created a new identity, without consent of the student involved, for the sake of bureaucracy and assimilation.

### The Cemetery

By the time it closed in 1918, Carlisle had had over eight thousand students enter its gates; two hundred and thirty-two of these students never left.<sup>225</sup> Those who died while on campus were buried on the grounds, as they were not permitted to be buried in the local cemetery on account of it being specifically plotted as a "white" cemetery. Despite Carlisle's overarching goal

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<sup>223</sup> "Admitted" *Registers of Pupils (1899-1906)* vol. 2, RG 75, Series 1324, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington D.C, 31.

<sup>224</sup> Pratt Requests Authority to Pay for Treatment of Ethel Bryant and Kokilook, RG 75, Entry 91, Box 1955, 1901-#40162, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Archives and Record Group, Washington D.C.

<sup>225</sup> Vitale, "Counting Carlisle's Casualties," 388.

being that these students were supposed to be assimilated into white culture in life, in death they were excluded based on race, constructed as non-white.<sup>226</sup>

There is no correspondence that remains to suggest that Pratt gave the families the option to reclaim their dead, and for the students from Alaska, the distance might have made such an idea, if it had ever even been considered, impossible.<sup>227</sup> Given that officials balked at the price of sending living students back to the remote areas of Alaska, it seems that there likely would never have even been a chance for them to return deceased students. Out of those two hundred and thirty-two, four were Inupiat, and two were Yup'ik: Cookiglook, Tomiclock, Laublock, Edward Angalook, Henry Rose, and Ephriam Alexander.

The cemetery as it currently stands is a result of relocation in the summer of 1927, with the federal-style markers made during the period of 1949-1952 to replace the deteriorated markers.<sup>228</sup> At some point, whether it was with the original markers or with these replacements, errors appeared in spelling, and the Inupiat and Yup'ik students were alternately labeled as Alaskan and Eskimo, with no apparent pattern as to who was referred to with which term. These mistakes echo and magnify the erasure of their tribal identities that occurred in life. As mentioned at the beginning of this paper, Cookiglook's stone is perhaps the most egregious case of post-mortem racialization and mislabeling out of the six.

Whether the error in referring to her as "Cooking Look" was done in 1904 or 1952

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<sup>226</sup> Jacqueline Fear-Segal, "The History and Reclamation of a Sacred Space: The Indian School Cemetery" in Fear-Segal and Rose, *Carlisle Indian Industrial School*, 159.

<sup>227</sup> Barbara Landis, "Death at Carlisle: Naming the Unknowns in the Cemetery" in Fear-Segal and Rose, *Carlisle Indian Industrial School*, 187.

<sup>228</sup> New South Associates and Environmental Research Group. *Archival Research of the Carlisle Indian School Cemetery*. Report submitted to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 5 July 2017, U.S. Army Garrison, Carlisle Barracks, 49.

is unknown, but while many errors have been fixed in subsequent years, hers has remained. Two English *words* rather than a name. Her Inupiaq name is lost, whether it was spelled Cookiglook, Kokiglook, or Kolilook; and so is Cooki Glook, the Anglicized name that she went by while at school. On top of this, the fact that she is from Point Barrow, that she was Inupiaq, is nowhere to be found. Instead, her tombstone is simply labelled as “Alaskan.”

A similar fate befell Edward Angalook. Labelled “Alaskan” rather than as an Inupiaq from Golovin Bay, his tombstone is the only one of those from the group buried at Carlisle to have the renaming process reflected on it (assuming that “Cooking Look” is not considered a secondary English renaming). He is hardly alone in that among the rest of the cemetery, however, as most of the headstones reflect the renaming process.<sup>229</sup> Tomiclock’s misspelling of “Tomicock” came with the new federal markers. The mistake is closer, at least, to her name than “Tamicoock,” as her original tombstone stated.<sup>230</sup> She is the only student in the cemetery to be labelled as “Eskimo.” For some reason, she is separated in death from the other Point Barrow students. Laublock, the first of the group to pass away, retained his name, but received no indication of any tribal affiliation at all. Henry Rose lost his tombstone in the relocation, and in the shuffle of bodies, became one of the numerous Unknowns to dot the cemetery landscape.<sup>231</sup> It would be possible for forensic anthropologists to go through the

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<sup>229</sup> Sam Kramer, “Grave of Edward Angelook,” March 17, 2022, Photograph, Carlisle Barracks, Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

<sup>230</sup> New South Associates, *Archival Research*, A-50.

<sup>231</sup> Sam Kramer, “Grave of Laublock,” March 17, 2022, Photograph, Carlisle Barracks, Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

Unknowns and look for him, as they plan to do to look for the remains of a student from Ketchikan, Alaska, Mary Kininnook, but it likely will not be done for several years.<sup>232</sup> Until then, his identity is hidden. Their stones, mistakes and all, are the same, no different from the military stones used in other army burial sites, yet the cemetery was inherently constructed as a burial place for the “racial other” in its creation and separation from the local cemetery. The non-native individuals buried in the Carlisle Barracks cemetery came long after the last living Indigenous student left the school.<sup>233</sup>

Only Ephriam Alexander, who passed away while on outing, avoids racial exclusion.<sup>234</sup> Ephriam is buried at the Moravian Cemetery in Lititz, Pennsylvania, with no physical separation from the other eternal residents, almost all of whom are white, and his tombstone matches the rest. The only indication of his indigeneity is a line below his name, “Native of Alaska.” Who made this decision is unclear, as is the intention behind that choice of words. Was it the church, echoing Carlisle’s practices and ignoring that he was Yup’ik? Was it Samuel Rock, the Moravian missionary from Carmel that recruited him for Carlisle and then cared for him in the last month of his life, recording him as a native person from the land of Alaska? Or was it Ephriam himself, ensuring that his indigeneity was at least acknowledged where otherwise he would have been assimilated post-mortem into a white cemetery?

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<sup>232</sup> Lyndsey Brollini, “Anchorage Woman Searches for Family at Former Boarding School: ‘The Rest of Me is Still in Pennsylvania,’” *Alaska Public Media*, March 3, 2022, <https://www.alaskapublic.org/2022/03/03/anchorage-woman-searches-for-family-at-former-boarding-school-the-rest-of-me-is-still-in-pennsylvania/>.

<sup>233</sup> Fear-Segal, *White Man’s Club*, 244.

<sup>234</sup> “An Alaska Native Dies Here” *The Lititz Record*, August 18, 1905, 2.

As of May 2022, all six of these students' graves remain in Pennsylvania, as do most of the other students from Alaska that were buried while at Carlisle. In recent years, efforts have begun among many tribes and state governments to return those who passed away while at residential schools to their original homes. So far, only one student from Alaska has been repatriated from Carlisle, an Aleut student from St. Paul Island.<sup>235</sup> Other students from Alaska have planned repatriations, but only one of the Inupiat and Yup'ik students is included in that small list. The Curyung Tribal Council, based out of the Nushagak River region, is currently trying to bring home Ephraim Alexander, but the COVID-19 pandemic caused severe delays in their efforts.<sup>236</sup> No efforts, however, have been made to repatriate Cookiglook, Tomiclock, Laublock, Henry Rose, or Edward Angalook. No efforts have been made to fix their tombstones, or to have their tribal identities acknowledged in the archival records.

Until now. This thesis cannot fix the tombstones by itself. It cannot do the paperwork to fight through the bureaucratic processes of repatriation, nor can it completely end the archival and historiographical silence about these students. But perhaps it can start that process. Hopefully, I have done enough work to find and record the communities to which these students belong that repatriation can begin if their families so desire. In the process of my research and writing, numerous sources within the Carlisle Digital Resource Center that were mislabeled as belonging to Annie Coodalook have been fixed, and Cookiglook's

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<sup>235</sup> Joaqlin Estus, "Return of Aleut Girl's Remains Eases Painful Memories," *Indian Country Today*, August 4, 2021, <https://indiancountrytoday.com/news/return-of-aleut-girls-remains-eases-painful-memories>.

<sup>236</sup> White, "Search Intensifies for Boarding School Descendants."

file has been expanded. The students do, however, remain recorded as “Eskimo.” While this may not be necessarily as offensive to natives of Alaska as it is elsewhere, it still lacks any indication of their actual tribal identities and echoes the racialization of the students that occurred at Carlisle. They are not just “Eskimo,” they are not just “Alaskan.” They are Inupiat. They are Yup’ik. If we know a student’s tribe, they should be recorded as such, they should be written about as such. If nothing else can be done, then I hope at the very least that the grave of the student who inspired this work can be fixed, and visitors to the cemetery at Carlisle Barracks will have the opportunity to leave flowers for Cookiglook, Inupiaq.



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