CHAPTER EIGHT

"This Is the Life"

Women's Role in Food Provisioning in Paulatuuq, Northwest Territories

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Given the high cost of store-bought foods, hunting and fishing are vital to household food security in Paulatuuq[1], a small Arctic community in the Northwest Territories. Traditional harvesting activities do more, however, than address nutritional needs, sometimes generating a surplus that can be shared with extended family and friends. These activities are crucial to a sense of continuity, providing opportunities for Paulatuuqmiut to connect with memories of the past, to create and sustain relationships with other people and with the environment, and to pass knowledge along to children and grandchildren. Contrary to long-standing ethnographic assumptions to the effect that men hunt, while women gather and process, women in fact take an active part in household food provisioning. All the same, women's knowledge of the environment and their role in household economies

1 The standardized English spelling of Paulatuk is employed by federal, territorial, regional, and municipal government bodies to describe the hamlet. However, locally, Paulatuuqmiut prefer the use of the Siglitun spelling, Paulatuuq, in describing the community. Throughout this chapter I employ Paulatuuq when referring to the community, but where I refer to governance bodies that employ the English spelling of the hamlet's name, I employ the –uk suffix.

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remain understudied, and their voices are typically muted in the scientific and bureaucratic discourses that undergird wildlife management in the Canadian Arctic.

In what follows, I examine women's participation in food harvesting generally and fishing in particular, focusing especially on the impact of shifts in patterns of employment. In so doing, I hope to document the multifaceted role that women play not merely in household food security but in the ongoing transmission of knowledge. Exploring women's place in food provisioning can provide much-needed insights into how households and, by extension, entire communities respond to the declining availability of country foods—a result of the combined forces of climate change and resource development, as well as the growth in waged employment. In turn, this more nuanced understanding may allow us to reorient research efforts in the North so as to capture more accurately the gendered aspects of traditional livelihoods and the complexity of interactions among human beings, bodies of knowledge, and the natural environment.

Community Livelihoods

Paulatuuq is an Inuvialuit community situated at the eastern base of the Parry Peninsula, on the coast of the Amundsen Gulf of the Beaufort Sea, roughly 400 kilometres northeast of Inuvik (see map 8.1). The population of Paulatuuq, which hovers around three hundred, stood at 304 in 2014, with men slightly outnumbering women and all but about 5 percent of the community identifying as Aboriginal. As in virtually all such Arctic communities, the local economy is mixed, with people variously engaging in waged and non-waged work. In 2014, roughly two-thirds (64.9 percent) of Paulatuuq's residents participated in some form of waged employment, whether full or part time, for at least a portion of the year. In 2008 (the most recent year for which statistics are available), over three-quarters—77.2 percent—of Paulatuuqmiut fished, hunted, or trapped, and 74.5 percent of Paulatuuq households consumed half or more of their food in the form of country foods. These figures, which clearly illustrate the importance of traditional subsistence activities, are similar to those for other Inuvialuit communities in the region but considerably higher than the corresponding figures of 50.8 percent and 26.3 percent, respectively, for the Northwest Territories as whole (NWT Bureau of Statistics 2014, 1, 3).

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Although Paulatuuq was incorporated as a community only in 1987, the Inuvialuit have lived in the region for thousands of years. The area around Paulatuuq was originally inhabited by people known as the Igluyuaryungmiut, one of the groups of ancestors that today Inuvialuit identify as having lived in the region. Like most of these groups, the Igluyuaryungmiut were named for their main village, Iglulualuit, which was situated near the mouth of the Horton River, on Franklin Bay. Evidently, sometime around 1840, the village was abandoned, reportedly to pursue trade relationships influenced by British and Russian trade to the west (Usher 1971, 171). In 1840, the Hudson's Bay Company built a post on the Peel River, near the present-day community of Fort McPherson, and a fur trade emerged in the Mackenzie region (McDonnell 1983, 35).

Map 8.1 A map of the fishing and harvesting sites visited during fieldwork, conducted in 2012. The Atlas of Canada - Toporama, Government of Canada.

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From about 1890 to 1910, Arctic whaling brought American whalers into the Mackenzie Delta and along the coast of the Beaufort Sea, although by 1910 the value of whale oil and baleen had fallen to the point that the whaling era was essentially over. The fur trade, however, flourished in the lands around Paulatuuq. In 1916, the Hudson's Bay Company established a post at Baillie Island, off the tip of Cape Bathurst, marking the start of a local boom in furs. The Baillie Island post was followed by posts located in the more immediate vicinity of Paulatuuq, at Cape Parry, Pearce Point, and Letty Harbour. During the fox-fur trapping boom—which lasted until about 1930, when the Depression led to an abrupt decline in the demand for furs—Inuvialuit and non-Inuvialuit people alike moved outwards from the Mackenzie Delta toward the coast to capitalize on the abundant wildlife (see McDonnell 1983, 46–48; Usher 1971, 180).

In 1936, a Catholic mission that had been established at Pearce Point in 1928 moved to the current location of the Paulatuuq community, where it operated a trading post until 1954. Local families continued to move around between Cape Parry, Letty Harbour, and the coast of Darnley Bay, however, to pursue trapping and hunting opportunities (Alunik, Kolausok, and Morrison 2003, 127–28). In the 1950s, many families moved to Cape Parry to access wage opportunities at the DEW Line site, but the area was not well suited to hunting and trapping as there was far more abundant hunting and fishing in other locales in the region (McDonnell 1983, 70–71). Many community members thus advocated a return to Paulatuuq in the mid-1960s. After a trading post reopened there in 1967, more families began moving back, despite the fact that, at the time, the government was pressuring Inuvialuit families to settle in Inuvik or Tuktoyaktuk in order to consolidate delivery of services such as education (see McDonnell 1983, 56–63).

For roughly two decades after the present-day settlement at Paulatuuq took shape, fishing was a significant economic pursuit. From 1968 to 1987, Arctic char from the Hornaday River were fished commercially (Lemieux 1990, 1), and, in the mid-1980s, the feasibility of expanding this fishery was investigated (Staples 1986, 64). In the end, however, the commercial fishery was discontinued, after Paulatuuqmiut advocated for an end to the fishery, for reasons of conservation. Efforts were also made during the 1970s to support a sport-fishing industry in the community, although these proved unsuccessful (McDonnell 1983, 190). All the same, subsistence fishing remained an important activity. According to data collected by the Inuvial-

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uit Harvest Study, in the decade from 1988 to 1997, Paulatuuqmiut harvested an annual mean catch of 2,446 Arctic char, along with 1,294 broad whitefish, 343 lake trout, 223 lake whitefish, and 100 grayling, as well as smaller quantities of other fish (Inuvialuit Joint Secretariat 2003, 118). Today, only subsistence fishing is permitted in Paulatuuq, and a strict community quota of 1,700 Arctic char per year is in place for the Hornaday River (Department of Fisheries and Oceans 1999, 2; Lemieux 1990). Traces of the sport fishery linger in the name of a fishing site along the river, Tourist Camp, at which Paulatuuqmiut continue to fish. In addition, one family in town currently runs the Bekere Lake Lodge, which offers guided tours for visiting sport hunters and sport fishers. Other guides in Paulatuuq take tourists out for occasional wildlife photography trips, as well as on hunting expeditions for polar bear and other large game.

In addition to fishing, Paulatuuqmiut hunt for a variety of animals, including caribou, polar bear, muskox, beluga whales, and seals. These large mammals are, however, subject to many hunting restrictions. For example, caribou, a staple of the local diet, is strictly regulated in Paulatuuq. All sport hunting of caribou from the regional Bluenose West herd was suspended in 2006, and an annual quota of 345 caribou is in place for Inuvialuit communities overall (Northwest Territories, Environment and Natural Resources n.d.). Such restrictions have obvious implications for local food security. By contrast, despite the quotas on Arctic char from the Hornaday and Brock rivers, community members indicated to me during research conducted in 2012 that lake trout, land-locked char, whitefish, grayling, and other varieties remain plentiful in the lakes, rivers, and coastal areas that surround the settlement, with Arctic char and lake trout regarded as especially desirable (Todd, unpublished research notes). At present, changes in natural habitats resulting both from climate change and from resource exploration and extraction in the region are taking a toll on many traditional food sources (see Keeping 1998; Mackenzie Gas Project 2004; Pearce et al. 2010). Although fish are not exempt from the effects of environmental change, access to fish is less circumscribed by conservation efforts in the form of wildlife regulations. Fish are thus an important staple in local household diets.

The cost of living in Paulatuuq constitutes a serious burden for many families. The *Inuit Health Survey, 2007–2008*, revealed that households in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region spent, on average, $1,317 per month on food—over twice the average of $609 for Canada overall—and another $1,471

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on housing (Egeland 2010, 13). In the light of available household income data, these figures put many Paulatuuq households at risk of food insecurity (see Todd 2010a, 111–13; see also Todd 2010b). This risk was reaffirmed by a socio-economic survey conducted in Paulatuuq in 2012 which demonstrated a positive correlation between household income in Paulatuuq and ability to access both store-bought food and meat in the form of caribou, fish, and other game (Inuvialuit Regional Corporation 2012, 17). Data from a dietary intake study (Sharma et al. 2009), which identified nutritional deficits in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, were used to develop Healthy Foods North, a multipronged program designed to reduce risk factors for chronic disease through dietary interventions and nutrition education. The prevalence of chronic conditions such as diabetes reflects one aspect of food insecurity—the lack of affordable access to healthy sources of nutrition.

Women's involvement in hunting and fishing, together with the knowledge that women shape, mobilize, and share through these and related activities, is an integral part of the food security equation. And yet their wisdom is seldom sought. As Joanna Kafarowski (2009) discovered in her work on women's roles in fisheries management, however, a paucity of women exists on Hunters and Trappers Organizations in Nunavut, and, in the preceding chapter (this volume), Brenda Parlee and Kristine Wray demonstrate that women are similarly underrepresented on co-management boards and wildlife agencies in the Northwest Territories. As both they and Kafarowski (2005) argue, women need to be given a greater official role in wildlife management, as the perspectives that women bring to bear shed essential light on harvesting patterns and priorities within Inuit communities. More broadly, probing the interconnections among women's harvesting activities, the knowledge generated and applied through these activities, and the need for household food security can deepen our understanding how Arctic peoples relate to one another and the environment. If we recognize that hunting and fishing serve a range of purposes beyond the purely utilitarian, we will be able to respond more appropriately to the issues—such as ecological disturbances, variations in the food supply, and the erosion of traditional customs and livelihoods—that community members identify as important to them.

Woman the Hunter (and Fisher)

As Parlee and Wray (this volume) point out, the archetype of "man the hunter" has tended to dominate ethnographic research in the circumpolar

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north. For many years, the assumption that men hunted either individually or with other men—in other words, the assumption that women were not involved in hunting practices—persisted not only in the literature but in the popular imagination, despite mounting evidence to the contrary. For example, in a study of hunters and trappers in the context of the modern nation-state, Harvey Feit (1982) found that the family unit was fundamental to hunting practices among the James Bay Cree. Men "did not pursue intensive hunting individually and without their families," he noted; rather, they "typically established winter hunting camps with their wives, their non-school-age children, and often some of their school-age children" (385). Along somewhat similar lines, John Kruse (1991) investigated the persistence of subsistence activities among the Alaskan Iñupiat despite the shift toward waged employment. As he discovered, in addition to participating in the wage economy, women continued to engage actively in numerous subsistence pursuits, notably fishing, gathering eggs, and assisting whaling crews (320), demonstrating a commitment by women in the study to negotiate land- and water-based subsistence activities alongside waged employment.

Although studies such as these focus overdue attention on women's roles in subsistence activities, they also tend to view these roles within a framework that arbitrarily opposes the modern world (as represented by the cash economy) to an authentic and untouchable Indigenous past (as represented by the subsistence economy). More recently, scholars have begun to emphasize the interpenetration of so-called traditional subsistence activities and contemporary realities. A study conducted by Brenda Parlee, Fikret Berkes, and the Teetl'it Gwich'in Renewable Resource Council (2005), which focused on berry harvesting among Gwich'in women in the area of Fort McPherson, explored the relationship between human and environmental well-being by identifying the values that women associate with the land, while also illustrating the role played by women's harvesting in environmental monitoring. As Robin Ridington (2001, 119) points out, subsistence technologies are "embedded in social relations that are enacted through discourse and empowered by narrative." In other words, hunting and gathering technologies presuppose certain ways in which human beings have learned to relate to each other and to the environment, and these ways are "particularly dependent on knowledge held by individuals and communicated through discourse and oral tradition" (118). These ways of understanding and relating carry forward into the present, such that the

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"traditional" economy includes the flexible and adaptive livelihoods that Indigenous peoples practice today.

Paulatuuqmiut well illustrate this interpenetration of past and present in the diverse livelihood strategies they have developed to meet individual and household needs. Yet little research has documented women's harvesting activities and the associated knowledge. The Inuvialuit Harvest Study compiled detailed quantitative data regarding Inuvialuit hunting, but the study mainly targeted male heads of households.[2] With regard to fishing, in particular, the situation is no better. As Usher and George Wenzel (1997, 146) point out, the recording of statistics has for the most occurred in the context of sport hunting (especially of large game animals) or commercial activities (such as the trade in furs and seal pelts). In particular, "no systemic recording of domestic fish catches" exists in the North, largely because "fisheries managers have considered it unnecessary or infeasible" to gather such data (148).[3]

Along parallel lines, Henry Stewart (2005) argues, historically, fishing has received far less detailed attention than hunting in ethnographic work conducted in the Canadian Artic. This is not to say, of course, that fishing has been entirely neglected. Reporting on the Anglo-American Polar Expedition

2 See Inuvialuit Joint Secretariat (2003). This report, which collects the results of annual harvest studies over a period of ten years, includes a detailed discussion of methods in section 3 of its introduction. According to section 3.3, "Harvesters (hunters) were initially defined as Inuvialuit male persons sixteen years of age and over, residing in the IRS [Inuvialuit Settlement Region]. Exceptions were made for female heads of households who hunted, or women or younger children who specifically requested to report to the survey individually" (2003, 7). This is, however, the sole mention of women in the report.

3 More broadly, Usher and Wenzel (1997, 146–47) note that statistical tracking has traditionally relied heavily on information generated by various reporting requirements and from records pertaining to the issuance of hunting and fishing permits. As they point out, however, whereas Aboriginal peoples engage in hunting and fishing primarily for purposes of subsistence, "rarely are there any systems in place to track subsistence harvests" (146). Similarly, because the right of Aboriginal peoples to hunt and fish rests on their original title to land (as recognized by treaty or through comprehensive land claims), licensing records do not capture their participation in these activities. Although the Inuvialuit Harvest Study was clearly designed to provide statistics about subsistence harvesting, its methods suggest that women's participation in these activities still largely remains under the radar.

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of 1906–8, for example, Rudolph Anderson noted the pivotal role of fishing in the western Arctic:

> Fish play probably a more important part than anything else in the domestic economy of the Eskimo of the western Arctic coast. The list of food fishes is not large, but the number of individuals is so great that a family supplied with a gill-net or two can travel in summer along practically the whole Arctic coast, and be reasonably sure of catching fish for themselves and dogs at nearly every camping-place. When all the food required for a family can be obtained by merely putting out a fish-net every night and clearing it every morning, making a living is not a difficult matter. The Mackenzie delta is preëminently a fish country, fish being the staple food throughout the year—fresh in summer, and usually in a tainted or semi-putrid state in winter. (Anderson 1913, 450)

All the same, as Stewart (2005, 345–46) documents, fishing traditionally took a back seat to hunting in Arctic ethnographies—and, not surprisingly, women's role in fishing has remained largely unexplored.

One notable exception has been the work of Barbara Bodenhorn (1990) on Iñupiat whale hunting. Bodenhorn argues that the Western definition of hunting, with its emphasis on the pursuit and slaughter of an animal, is too narrow to encompass the range of activities that Iñupiat regard as hunting. An Iñupiat whaling captain's wife performs rituals that invite the whale to be hunted, she makes whaling boots and sews special mittens to be worn by her husband, and she butchers the whale in accordance with Iñupiat protocol surrounding the proper treatment of the animal's body and soul. These activities "are needed to maintain amicable animal/human relations" (64), on which the success of the whaling expedition depends. Bodenhorn cautions against the tendency of researchers to privilege gender in analyses of Inupiat culture, suggesting that, to Iñupiat people, human-animal relationships are more important than divisions between men's work and women's work (57). Whereas Western conceptions of gender turn on a binary opposition of male to female, Iñupiat whale hunting emphasizes the interdependence of men and women, each of whom possess certain knowledge and skills that, while complementary, are inseparable from the whole.[4]

4 In this connection, one also thinks of Bernard Saladin d'Anglure's work on Inuit cosmologies, according to which gender is conceived not in terms of a duality but as tripartite. Saladin d'Anglure (2005) identifies a "third gender," which "straddled the boundary between two others and fulfilled a mediatory function between them"

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Similarly, Kerrie Ann Shannon's (2006) research in the Inuit community of Coral Harbour, on the southern coast of Southampton Island, examines contexts in which the division of labour into men's and women's tasks begins to blur. As she notes, "Although there were aspects of daily life in Coral Harbour that readily matched the model of a gendered and complementary division of labour, there were other procurement activities that were not divided along gender lines" (13). Taking the annual fishing derby as an example of a procurement activity in which everyone participates, Shannon challenges the imposition of gender binaries:

> For a range of procurement activities, gender may influence an individual's task, but may not necessarily be a determinant of participation in the activity. For instance, in preparation for fishing, men may make the fishing handles and women may bake bannock bread to take as a snack but the activity of fishing is not considered "men's" or "women's" work. (13)

As studies such as these remind us, precisely because gender is socially constructed, it is not universally constructed in the same way. Rather than impose our own frames of references, we must respect other ways of knowing and seek, as far as possible, to understand the relational aspects of Indigenous philosophies, cosmologies, and legal orders.

In short, not only have recent studies begun to offset the historical marginalization of women in ethnographic research, but they have also provided crucial theoretical insights into our understanding of subsistence economies and our assumptions about gender. At the same time, detailed information about the role of Inuvialuit women as harvesters is lacking, and women remain underrepresented on policy-making bodies. In addition, insufficient attention has been given to women's place in the narration of culture—how they contribute to the discursive traditions through which cultural knowledge is both shaped and preserved. There is room, in this setting, to explore women's hunting and fishing in greater depth at the community level.

A Matter of Relationships: Women and Harvesting in Paulatuuq

I conducted research in Paulatuuq in 2008–9 and again in 2012. The earlier research consisted of twenty semi-directed interviews with nine women and

(134). Although figures belonging to this third gender frequently appear in mythological narratives, the category is very much a part of living social relations.

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eleven men whose employment status varied (see table 8.1). At the request of community leaders, in the summer of 2009 I organized a follow-up workshop on the subject of food security concerns. Five men and four women participated in this workshop, which focused on the ability of Paulatuuq residents to procure food from the local store. At this time, I also conducted two in-depth interviews, one with a man and one with a woman, on the subject of food security and traditional harvesting. These two interviews complemented the themes explored in the food security workshop. Both of these final interviews on food security were separate from the initial twenty interviews I conducted in 2008, which focused on harvesting, food security, and wage employment.

Table 8.1 Residents of Paulatuuq who participated in interviews, 2008

Name[a]	Gender	Amount of time spent on the land	Employment status	Age
John	M	A lot of time	Full-time harvester	61
Donald	M	A lot of time	Seasonal	45
Joseph	M	A lot of time	Seasonal (November to April)	51
Max	M	A lot of time	Self-employed (2 to 3 days a week)	55
Dave	M	A lot of time on the land outside of Paulatuuq, very little time in Paulatuuq harvesting	Full-time rotation out of town	34
Samantha	F	Some time	Retired	70
Leonard	M	Some time	Part-time, on the land	66
Rebecca	F	Some time	Part-time, in town	20
Bob	M	Some time	Part-time, in town	57
Christine	F	Some time	Seasonal (10 months of year)	49
Simon	M	Some time	Unemployed	38
Nick	M	Some time	Recently unemployed	43
Hank	M	Some time	Seasonal (10 months of year)	49
Janet	F	Some time	Full-time, in town	53

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Name[a]	Gender	Amount of time spent on the land	Employment status	Age
Dorothy	F	Some time	Retired	83
Melanie	F	Very little time	Full-time, in town	26
Neve	F	Very little time	Full-time, in town	51
Karen	F	Very little time	Part-time, in town	38
Michael	M	Very little time	Full-time, in town	49
Amy	F	No time	Full-time, in town	48

[a] Names are pseudonyms.

Although interviews offer an efficient means of gathering information, they create a hierarchical relationship between questioner and questioned that can skew the results by privileging certain forms of thinking and knowing. In addition, such methods emphasize cognitive processes at the expense of embodied approaches to learning founded on direct participation in the activities through which knowledge is gained and the situations in which it is applied (see Dilley 1999; Pálsson 1994). As an Indigenous (Red River Métis) researcher, I also wanted to incorporate research methodologies that respect embodied and relational approaches to learning and articulating knowledge, drawing guidance from Inuvialuit women I worked with in Paulatuuq. Accordingly, during my fieldwork in 2012, I aimed to incorporate experiential modes of learning, seeking to understand people's relationships to the environment as these relationships are constituted through the practice of fishing itself. Learning *how* to fish, from skilled fishermen, was as critical to my understanding as learning *about* fish. Over the course of the year, three teachers—all women, from three different generations—generously shared their knowledge of fishing and the landscape with me. During these experiential learning sessions, which took place both in community settings and on the land, the hierarchy was reversed: I became the student.

Family Excursions

The fishing season in Paulatuuq extends from the early spring through to the late fall (late April through to October). Before the ice breaks up in the spring and after the fall freeze-up, people fish through holes in the ice with a homemade jigging stick, which is locally referred to as "jiggling." Local fishermen also practice net fishing, both under the ice and in open water, as well as

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fishing with a rod and reel. Individuals fish in the numerous small and large lakes that surround the community, along the coast (fishing, for example, for char at Lassard), and along the Hornaday and Brock rivers. Although people of all ages and genders participate in fishing, it is not entirely an inclusive activity: in order to fish, one must have time and access to equipment and supplies.

Fishing is fundamentally a social activity in Paulatuuq, usually practiced with one or more people. Both men and women fish, though in this chapter I focus on women's fishing in order to address the still under-acknowledged role of women's fishing—as a form of harvesting—in arctic ethnographic literature in Canada. Women may fish with male or female friends or family members (both men and women), often making a day trip to a nearby lake or river. Women may also fish in female-only groups when men are out hunting. For example, at Green's Island, a whaling camp to the west of the settlement at Paulatuuq, elder Anny Illasiak taught me that sometimes the women fish while the men are out on the sea in search of beluga whales. As Bob explained, fishing is a "family affair":

> The summer? It's another family affair. You, they go out. It's about ten miles from here, Argo Bay, Green's Island. They do their fishing there. Whenever caribou go passed by you get it. Basically, fishing and enjoying the July month. Also, there's beluga hunts during the month of July. August, you have your char fishing. That's another family affair. You go out, camp at the river.

As his description suggests, fishing is more than simply a utilitarian pursuit: it gives families an opportunity to spend time together on the land, especially during the warmer weather. Bob's comments also illustrate how fishing is embedded within a broader range of harvesting activities, in this case hunting caribou and beluga whales.

As became amply evident in the interviews I conducted, women take an active part in fishing. Fishing is one aspect of living on the land, which is something that women, like men, must be able to do. As Janet pointed out, she learned as a child how to live on the land:

> It's just the way that we were raised up. The first thing that we had to learn was directions, and we needed to learn each and every area in order to learn how to go out on the land. And during the spring I practiced that adamantly, where right after work I would start my skidoo: the tank is full, and it's well maintained. I would go beyond Thrasher Lake immediately up to Salmon Lake and Billy Lake and even as far as

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> Biname Lake by myself. So long as I know where the people are—certain people—are camping to go fish, I would travel up to them, and every minute up there is not wasted. Except to eat and have some tea, but every minute is not wasted [when I'm] on "fishing time."

Although fishing, hunting, and berry picking are a big part of community life, not everyone is able to participate in these activities on a regular basis. Those who are unable to get out on the land themselves nonetheless recognize the importance of doing so and are pleased when other family members can experience what Bob called the "four corners of Paulatuuq." Melanie, a young woman who works full time in town, was grateful that her son was able to get out on the land:

> This land around Paulatuuq is so beautiful, but I don't get to enjoy it as much as I used to. Like, I'll be lucky if I go out for a day trip and stuff like that, and I'm so glad that my son is going out geese hunting and caribou hunting and stuff. He's already getting ready to go out this weekend for geese hunting. They're sighting geese coming, so they're excited.

In this case, Melanie's sister, who did have time to engage in traditional harvesting, was able to take her nephew along with her and to teach him about hunting and fishing. As the individuals that I worked with in Paulatuuq reminded me throughout my research, the transmission of such traditional knowledge and skills to younger Paulatuuqmiut is crucial to enlivening Indigenous philosophies, cosmologies, and legal orders.

Again and again, those to whom I spoke emphasized the importance of family and of bringing children out onto the land. Such occasions reaffirm relationships, while also creating memories that are essential to both personal and collective identity. They also serve as a reminder of those who are no longer able to be present, thereby forging a sense of connection across time. As an activity in which both younger people and elders take part, fishing is a particularly rich site for the forging of such connections and memories. Neve, a woman in her early fifties, recalled one such occasion when relationships and kinship were reasserted by gathering together on the land to fish after the passing of family members:

> One spring hunt, my parents were both gone, both died, and that spring [a] lot of, most of, my family members were out, my brothers and my sisters. The whole family, and husbands and wives, were out fishing. It was a beautiful day, just enjoying ourselves, it was. And one of my brothers said that this is the life, that's what he said. So that made it really special.

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As Neve also pointed out, excursions out onto the land are inexpensive enough that the entire family can join in, unlike holidays to southern locations:

> Because we like going out on the land so much, the free time I have, instead of going down south with the family—for one thing, it costs too much to go down there, and then not all of you go out, but with on the land travel, the whole family can go out. Everything is close by. It doesn't cost that much to go out.

Neve was speaking, of course, of monetary costs. But "free" time can be very precious.

Finding Time: Women, Harvesting, and the Wage Economy

Traditional subsistence pursuits provide more than food: they afford opportunities to share knowledge with children and to revisit places of personal and family significance. In this respect, waged employment, while necessary to survival within a money economy, represents a sacrifice not merely of personal freedom but of traditions constitutive of culture. Janet, a full-time wage earner, eloquently summed up this sense of loss:

> There are times on my side that I look at the load [of] work, and when it is so big I am thinking, "Why am I not enjoying the rest of my life out on the land?" I used to envy one of my uncles, always had the freedom of going out to live on the land for a month, two months or so.

In a study of women and fishing in Arviat, a small coastal community in Nunavut, Martina Tyrell (2009) found that, although women still talk about fishing, they no longer fish on a regular basis—a shift she attributes to women's increasing involvement in full-time forms of employment. Many of the women whom I interviewed were likewise obliged to negotiate the demands of a job in order to find time to spend out on the land.

At the same time, in Arctic households, income from waged employment also serves to support traditional harvesting activities, such that a new division of labour is developing, both within and across households. As Peter Usher, Gérard Duhaime, and Edmund Searles (2003, 178) point out:

> The successful harvesting household is often also the successful wage-earning household, as this cash income is used for purchasing harvesting equipment, and especially fast means of transport. This is the key means of resolving the time allocation problem, mainly for men, between wage work and harvesting. There has also been increasing specialization

among households, so that some harvest far more than their own needs and share or exchange the surplus.

As they go on to note, access to store-bought foods relieves some of the pressure on households to procure food from the land, and such access "is probably also a key means of resolving the time allocation problem, mainly for women, between wage work and such activities as butchering, hide preparation, and making clothing" (178). Their comments suggest how important it is for researchers to interview entire households and members of extended families, as doing so will reveal how men and women employ both household- and kinship-based strategies to balance waged employment with harvesting activities.

Two of the men I interviewed, Nick and John, talked about the role their wives play in their own harvesting activities. Nick was recently unemployed when I interviewed him in 2008, so he answered the interview questions based on his most recent experiences, when he still had a full-time job. When both Nick and his wife had jobs, they would still travel on the land together, fishing throughout the year for a couple of days at a time. He would also do some caribou hunting on the weekends at the end of August and into September. His wife would join him on these trips, and she would butcher the carcasses of the animals he killed. In addition, the two would harvest berries. "In the fall time, when we're doing our caribou hunt, in late August when [my wife] comes out, then we might pick a few berries," he said. "It's mostly the aqpiks," he added, "some cranberry, [and] there's blueberries." Although Nick can hunt without his wife, he values her skills and is glad when she is able to accompany him. For her part, even though she works full-time most of the year, Nick's wife makes a point of finding opportunities to join her husband.

John's wife works ten months of the year, while he is free to hunt and fish full time. Yet, like Nick, John prefers to travel in the company of his wife, and evidently she, too, enjoys spending time on the land. "Travels with me when I travel," he declared. "I never travel alone. Everywhere I go, she goes. I leave her behind, I get an earful." Moreover, some of his hunting activities depend on his wife's ability to join him: "Yeah, caribous goes by. Make dry meat same time, and now we don't hardly do those anymore, 'cause my wife working now, so I only do it in summer now when she get off work." In much the same way, Neve pointed out that her husband prefers that she accompany him on trips onto the land, and her full-time job has complicated

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this arrangement. "My husband can't go out unless I go out," she said. "He has—well, he can go out hunting, but he doesn't spend all the time out there, 'cause I'm not there." As such comments suggest, a tension exists between the need for a household income and the ability to sustain customary ways of life. Yet, despite the time constraints created by waged employment, these couples continue to spend time on the land together.

In addition to participating directly in harvesting activities, whether on their own or in partnership with others, women also contribute indirectly to putting country foods on the table. A number of the women I interviewed indicated that their employment helped to support harvesting efforts in the household. Christine said that although she is able to spend only "some time" on the land herself, her income enables her sons to go hunting:

> In order for my boys to go out, they don't have a job, and I do, and I make the money. The whole family participates. Even if I don't go actually out with them, I'm very involved through my money. Through my money! [She laughs] Well, it's true—for the cost of gas, and shells.

Her situation illustrates a gendered division of labour, in which a woman's waged employment serves to support the harvesting activities of men. Besides providing financial support, however, Christine also contributed her own labour to household hunting, helping to butcher carcasses and prepare the meat.

"That's How I Grew Up": Women and Traditional Knowledge

Women, as well as men, are concerned about teaching youth what are locally called "on the land skills"—how to hunt, fish, and trap and, more broadly, how to be skilled travellers. During my fieldwork in 2012, elder Anny Illasiak described a fishing experience she shared with her grandson:

> One time my grandchild was staying with me, because I'm watching kids. (He get grown now.) He want to set net, he want to have his own net. "Okay, let's walk around and look for old net." We find one old net, we bring it home, we fix it up, we set it, he get one fish. When we set it, he get one fish. "We'll cook your fish, ah?" He said no, he's going to send it to his dad! First fish he get. He try to make his dad happy!

Anny's comments well illustrate the manner in which traditional knowledge is passed on to younger generations. The fact that, in this case, the knowledge pertained to fishing, and it was a woman who taught these skills, not

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only attests to women's familiarity with fishing but also demonstrates the important role that women play in teaching children how to live on the land.

Melanie's recollections of her childhood again suggest the role of women in sustaining traditional ways of life. Melanie spoke fondly of spending time on the land with her mother and brothers, absorbing knowledge of traditional ways of life. Being on the land, she said, is

> important to me because, well, when I was younger, that's how I grew up. Right up until I was about nine years old, I spent pretty much the whole year in the tree line with my mom and my brothers, at Tsoko Lake and Granite Lake. In the past, that's where they did their fox and marten and whatever other fur they can catch there in Tsoko Lake and Granite Lake. Sometimes we'd stay up pretty much a good ten months and then, after that, when we quit going to the tree line, it was just close camps like Billy's Creek, Kraut's Island, "the river," that's what they call it.

For Melanie, these memories evoked connections, both to family and to the natural worlds. She recalled "climbing trees and being there with my mom and my brothers, when we were close, you know? That was before my mom passed away, so that's a really good memory for me. A lot of scrapes and bruises from climbing trees!"

Melanie's relationship to the environment, nurtured through fishing, hunting, and playing in the woods as a child, carried through into her adult life, and she strove to ensure that her own children would also have an opportunity to live on the land. Thus, as we saw earlier, because Melanie's full-time job required her presence in town, she was glad that her son was able to go hunting with her sister. As she (and others) recognize, much of the knowledge on which culture rests is acquired through the hands-on teaching and learning of skills that can be practiced only on the land. For this reason, it is essential that young people to learn about the natural environment that surrounds Paulatuuq, and it often falls to women to create these connections among family, learning, and the land.

Conclusion: Sustaining Connections

A focus on the predominantly male activity of hunting inevitably obscures the breadth and depth of women's roles in the social, cultural, economic, and environmental relationships that characterize life in Arctic communities such as Paulatuuq. A preoccupation with hunting also has the effect of sidelining fishing—an activity in which women in fact take an active part.

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As harvesters themselves, as well as by performing tasks such as butchering and preparing meat that are integral to successful hunting, women make a direct, and significant contribution to household food security. As we have seen, a woman may also serve as the family breadwinner, whose income enables others (often men) to hunt and fish. Gendered assumptions tend to leave us blind to countervailing evidence. If we wish to arrive at a more than partial understanding of household food provisioning and the environmental knowledge on which it relies, we will need to set aside our expectations and pay greater attention to women.

Despite fairly widespread recognition of the male bias that has characterized research efforts in the past, the situation has been slow to change. Detailed research into women's direct role in fishing and hunting, as well as the part that women play in transmitting the knowledge needed to acquire these skills, will serve to generate a more nuanced portrait of community harvesting and household economies, one that better captures the gendered dimension of food provisioning and responses to food insecurity. In the absence of such understanding, efforts to formulate policy, especially with regard to fish and wildlife, run the risk of creating unforeseen problems—or of compounding the problems the policies aim to address.

The residents of Paulatuuq that I worked with, like those of other Inuvialuit communities, are presently grappling with the ongoing impact of colonization. Quite apart from the introduction of a money economy, Western development—particularly in the form of plans to exploit natural resources—continues to alter ecological habitats, and climate change poses a further threat to species on which Arctic communities depend. In the face of such transformations, the pursuit of land-based activities like fishing becomes increasingly urgent. Families are already finding it difficult to sustain traditional patterns of harvesting and, by extension, cultural practices related to the use of the products of the land. As I hope this chapter has demonstrated, as holders of traditional knowledge, and often as the guardians of family relationships, women are determined to ensure that future generations do not lose their connection to the land.

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