Land Time and Town Time in the Canadian Arctic

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THE PROBLEM

In a ten-year retrospective of psychiatric treatment in Canadian Arctic Inuit communities, Rogers noted that the most significant trend in psychiatric epidemiology was the increase in "personality disorders." He suggests that "these seem referable to a group who have lost respect for and control from their elders and traditional values, and have not yet developed any similar relationship within the 'new north' society." Rogers identifies as individuals at particular risk young persons among whom increasing incidence of alcohol abuse and suicide have been noted (Rogers 1981).

The purpose of this paper is to consider problems of Inuit mental health in a broadly societal and cultural perspective. Specifically, the paper examines the relationship between temporal disjunctures and personal and community integration. We suggest that an important but largely unconsidered aspect of radical sociocultural change for Inuit peoples has involved the imposition of temporal constructs associated with settlements and based upon Eurocanadian "technical" time.

The establishment of settlements built around Eurocanadian institutions has created temporal environments which not only structure life in the communities themselves-in schools, stores and work places--but regulates life on the land by eliminating the seasonality of Inuit migratory and exploitive patterns. Moreover, for settlement Inuit, linear time--their sense of the past--has increasingly become "settlement history," the record of events since "the government came," or "the school opened."

Using historical and ethnographic data the paper considers the impact of temporal restructuring on Inuit life and suggests possible linkages between this aspect of directed change and Inuit mental health.

The paper represents an elaboration and expansion of earlier work by Halpern (1967) and Halpern and Wagner (1984) and is based in part on research in Arctic communities carried out between 1981 and 1983.
SOCIAL CHANGE AND INUIT HEALTH: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

In contrast to the experience of native Indian peoples, whose intensive contacts with Europeans stretch back some several hundred years, the Inuit of the Canadian Arctic largely escaped continuous interaction, dependency and domination until this present century. In fact, for the greater part of the past 80 years, most Inuit continued to live in migratory kinship and local groups on the land, linked to the Eurocanadian world through trading posts and mission stations. Movement into permanent settlements has been a phenomenon of the past 30 years; most Inuit of early middle age or older grew up in camps on the land. Radical sociocultural change for the Inuit has thus been recent, precipitate and stressful.

The epidemiological history of the Inuit parallels that of Canadian Indians (Christie 1987). Initial contacts brought widespread epidemics of infectious diseases, diseases which had largely ceased to threaten Europeans but which decimated Inuit populations, in some instances obliterating entire groups—as occurred with the Sadlermiut of the northwest Hudson Bay coast area in 1902-1903. Early Eurocanadian medical aid was supplied through mission "clinics" and cottage hospitals but following World War II and accelerating during the 1950s the Canadian federal government developed a program of northern health care of Indian and Inuit peoples. With the establishment of the Northern Health Service (1955), annual ship-based diagnostic and treatment visits were made to Arctic settlements (Young 1984). Evacuation of the infectiously ill—particularly those suffering from tuberculosis (certainly the most widespread and critical of infectious conditions)—to southern sanatoria, the establishment of nursing stations, clinics and regional hospitals, periodic visits by physicians and the inception of medevac services all contributed to improved health and health care. Over the years Inuit mortality (including infant mortality), morbidity and life expectancy statistics have increasingly shifted towards Canadian national averages (O'Neil 1986).

However, correlative with the improvement of Inuit general health has been the rise in mortality from other causes: accidents, violence, suicide and alcohol-related pathologies. As O'Neil has observed:

As their ecology changed so did their epidemiology...As the primary care system brought morbidity from communicable diseases under control, problems associated with the stress of social change began to appear in Medical Services annual reports. ...As the leading causes of morbidity and mortality, alcohol-related accidents and suicides are considered the primary medical problems [O'Neil 1986].

The continuing high incidence of medico-social pathologies of this sort has been documented throughout the Arctic (O'Neil 1986; Rogers 1981) as well as for North American Indian communities (Ouklfs and Katz 1973; Manuel and Posluns 1974; Price 1982). They may be treated as consequences of socioeconomic factors (James 1970), loss of indigenous social power (Bennett 1985), government administration (Carstens 1971) or features of the sociopolitical complexity of native societies themselves (Price 1982). We see contemporary Inuit social conditions as the product of "administrative determinism" (Brod 1975; Carstens 1971). The settlement—the community for contemporary Inuit—is structured around a spatial order, an economic order and a politico-administrative order. But all of these are coordinated through the temporal order—the regulation of life through technical time. It is this "chronopolitical" (Fabian 1983) aspect of settlement life that we wish to consider in this paper.

LINEAR AND CYCLICAL TEMPORAL CONSTRUCTS

In one of the earliest and most enduring ethnographic treatments of time reckoning and temporal constructs, Evans-Pritchard anticipated not only the fundamental issues, but many of the conceptual problems that were to arise in subsequent studies. Perhaps most significant in Evans-Pritchard's analysis was his cogent apprehension of the differences among (1) time reckoning systems, (2) abstract conceptions of temporal process, (3) "operational time"—temporally oriented behaviour, and (4) "history"—those linear colligatory links between present and past.

Nuer time reckoning, Evans-Pritchard observed, identifies a two-part year (nuon) which divises into a rainy and a dry season. Words for "year", "rainy" and "dry season" and the twelve lunar months are used, but this "ecological time" pattern is not anchored in the lunar or solar cycles but in the social and exploitative patterns associated with the horticultural village life of the wet season and the fishing/pastoral life of dry season camps:
Oecological ["ecological"] time reckoning is ultimately, of course, entirely determined by the movement of the heavenly bodies, but only some of its units and notations are directly based on these movements, e.g., month, day, night, and some parts of the day and night.

... It is the activities themselves, chiefly of an economic kind, which are basic to the system and furnish most of its units and notations, and the passage of time is perceived in the relation of activities to one another.

Since activities are dependent on the movement of the heavenly bodies and since the movement of the heavenly bodies is significant only in relation to the activities, one may often refer to either in indication of the time of an event. Thus one may say "In the jiom season" or "At early camps," "The month of Swat" or "The return to the villages" [Evans-Pritchard 1940].

Thus ecological time is cyclical. Its unit is the year, not in the sense of a mathematically divided time span between two fixed benchmarks (i.e., January and December) but the full cycle of time between any two qualitatively similar patterns of human life and activity. In the earlier terminology of Nilsson (1920) it is "discontinuous" time: "The moons or harvests are not units and are not interconnected by other units with which they are considered to be equal. What is counted is the event" (Pococke 1967). In similar fashion, Bohannan reports that the Tiv link seasons with activities in the round of the year:

Tiv seasons are determined as much by agricultural activities as by climatological changes. Instead of saying "We cut the guinea corn when the first harmattan comes"...Tiv just as often say, "the first harmattan comes when we cut the guinea corn." This reversibility is indicative of the fact that neither activity is considered primary or basic to the other. Instead of an implied causal relationship, there is mere association of two events" [Bohannan 1967].

Hallowell notes a similar pattern with respect to Saulteaux lunar months. Gisits is the moon or the span of one lunation, but lunar periods correspond only approximately to the sequence of climatological periods or exploitively important activities ("moon of great cold," "return of birds") with which they are associated (Hallowell 1937). For the Inuit, uguq is both "winter" and "year." Its opposite is ajuq and the brief intermediate seasons are "almost summer" and "almost winter." The lunar periods are similarly identified with events of ecological importance—"when seal pups are born, "when the leads form."

For the Nuer the year is the unit of ecological time. However, cyclicity inheres in human societal patterns as well. Unquestionably, Evans-Pritchard was influenced in his observations of Nuer ecological patterns by Mauss and Beuchat's seminal study of Eskimo seasonal life. In a work that, paradoxically, has been embraced by Marxists for its clear conception of the material conditions of social life, and by structural-functionalist for its perception of the significance of social integration, Mauss argues that the Eskimo year is a cycle of human integration and dispersal, of high and low moral intensity, of community and family life (Mauss 1979).

But social cycles can span a longer period as well. In his discussion of the cycle of domestic groups, Fortes pointed out that the succession of existential phases of birth, maturation and death have their analogs in the structural patterns of households as the group comes into existence with marriage, procreation and child rearing, passes into the phase of dispersion or fission with the maturation and marriage of the children, then cyclically repeats with the replacement of the household head by the oldest (or youngest) child (Fortes 1969). This structural replication in the subsequent generation ensures the perpetuation of the group. Halpern has utilized this notion of social cyclicity in his study of the Slav zadruga. In this case, long-term demographic data point to significant changes in community and familial composition through time. But the ideology of the persistent, cyclically returning stem family contradicts the perceived linear flow of unpredictable events and irreversible change (Halpern and Wagner 1984).

The Inuit belief in "name souls" reflects a similar sense of temporal cyclicity on the social level as well. When a child is given the name of a deceased relative he/she reincarnates the spiritual essence of that person. In a sense society socially replicates itself not merely in the replacement of the dead by the living but in the rebirth of personal qualities as well. Williamson reports an incident from Rankin Inlet, Northwest Territories, which
attests to the continuing importance of the beliefs surrounding name souls:

In the mid 1960s...a child had to be adopted into a family not related to her by kinship (which is unusual), because while away in hospital in the south and beyond access to the normal traditional sources of advice, the natural mother had named the child after someone who had very deeply offended the natural father. His negative reaction to the reintroduction of this baleful essence into his nuclear family was what made the move necessary [Williamson 1974].

In much of the philosophical, psychological and anthropological literature on time, the fundamental "innate" temporal perception is linear (Hallpike 1980). Bergson saw durée vécu (experienced time or duration) as a primal human intuition. Piaget distinguished between "intuitive" or "pre-operational" time and "operational" time. The latter is learned, the former "limited to successions and durations given by direct perceptions" (Whitrow 1980). Hallpike, closely following Piaget, argues that "the primitive grasp of time...is confined to the awareness of duration and succession as these are embodied in natural and social processes" (1980). Issues surrounding the development of temporal perceptions or cross-cultural comparisons of either time sense or chronological systems are beyond the interests of this paper. It is sufficient to note here that succession and duration are widely regarded as in some sense "primes" with respect to the perception of temporal flow and lie at the root of what is frequently referred to as linear time.

Linear time-succession and duration is Evans-Pritchard's "structural time:"

There is a point at which we can say that time concepts cease to be determined by oecological factors and become more determined by structural interrelations, being no longer a reflection of man's dependence on nature, but a reflection of the interaction of social groups.

Events which took place in the last few years are then points of reference in time reckoning, and these are different according to the group of persons who make use of them: joint family, village, tribal section, tribe, etc. [Evans-Pritchard 1940] Nuer linear or historical time is not based on some abstract external benchmark but links significant persons and events of the past with those of the present.

One of the commonest ways of stating the year of an event is to mention where the people made their dry season camps or to refer to some evil that befell their cattle. ...Weddings and other ceremonies, fights and raids, may likewise give points of time though in the absence of numerical dating without lengthy calculations how many years ago an event took place [Evans-Pritchard 1940].

In similar fashion the Berens River Ojibwa tied their oral history to the life events of individuals and like that of the Nuer, it was a shifting rather than a fixed record: "So long as the names, personal characteristics and activities of deceased individuals are carried in the memories of living persons, a useful, although non-quantitative and uniformized, frame of reference for past events is maintained" (Hallowell 1937). Oral history of this sort is short. Evans-Pritchard (1940) suggests that fifty years might be the extent of Nuer historical recollections; Hallowell (1937) makes Salteaux time depth about 150 years.

Beyond this point history merges into the mythic past. A tree growing in Nuerland a few years before Evans-Pritchard's arrival was the tree under which humankind was created (1940). The Aivilingmiut term eetchuk, Carpenter tells us, signalled that the temporal setting of a story was in "time before time." The tale might concern the Sadlermiut, recent but extinct residents of the area; or unik, fearsome giants of the mythic past (Carpenter 1968).

Linearity is then the vertical dimension of temporal construction. It is seen on the individual level in the personal autobiography. It is tied to the immediate past by the individual's pedigree, the "charter" as Fortes noted "by which any particular person presents himself as the descendent of a specific ancestor" (Barnes 1971). Pedigrees merge into the wider and deeper ties of oral history that link the group with its past. Like autobiographies, linear temporal constructions--histories--are subject to constant redaction. Like all histories, they are "history for" (Barnes 1971).

**TECHNICAL TIME**

Technical time--mathematically based, mechanically, electronically or geophysically
regulated—is the clock and calendar time of Western society. Unlike the time reckoning systems of non-chronometric, non-calendrical peoples, technical time is abstract, quantitative, integrated and homogeneous. It is external to human activity, unlike the "process marking" (Hallpike 1980) that characterizes Nuer, Tiv or Saulteaux seasonal reckoning. It provides a uniform framework within which human activities take place and are coordinated. It is a powerful and pervasive piece of cognitive technology in industrial society. The clock, Mumford observed "is not merely a means of keeping track of the hours, but of synchronizing the actions of men" (Mumford 1936).

Technical time has both cyclical and linear dimensions. The clock face is a circle. Even the digital clock returns to 1 after its 12 or 24 hour progression. The named days return week by week, the named months year by year. But the quantitative precision of cyclical time ensures that its units are by some objective measure the same. Hence, of course, our reification of minutes or seconds of time into tagmemic slots into which we "drop activities" or into commodities which we can "save," "spend" or "waste."

Linear technical time is the calendar time of the years and centuries. It is quantitatively precise, anchored in historical benchmarks and divided into quantitatively exact segments. Even the "typological time" (Fabian 1983) of historical, archaeological, and geological studies in which "eras" or "epochs" or "cultural horizons" are identified, is ultimately linked for us to some approximation to years as we reckon them. Like Hutton’s geological "uniformitarianism," the past is distant from but temporally equivalent to the present.

Linear time is the framework of history and prehistory for Western society—"myth with dates" (Barnes 1971). By means of linear temporal reckoning we coordinate the pasts of other peoples with our own, we chronologically absorb them as we spatially absorb them through territorial conquest.

Time constructs, whether of pre-chronometric or chronometric societies can be paradigmatically conceived of as a pair of intersecting axes. The horizontal axis represents the cyclical dimension. In the external world, days, months, moons, seasons recurrently cycle. Social cyclicities incorporate the renewal of the corporate social group, the household or even the individual personality as it may be reborn in another.

The vertical axis reflects perceptions of the past—whence the individual has come, autobiographically or genealogically, and the deeper social roots of kin groups, communities and societies—whether preserved in the quantitative, literary historical text, or in the oral and mythic history of pre-literate peoples.

Edlund has observed that:

Humans do not merely live in different environments, they create them, feeling and molding the earth simultaneously. They use time itself as an ecological niche [1987].

This existential "ecological niche" exists at the intersect of cyclically returning "nows" and the line of successive "thens" of the past and future. The psychological literature on mental illness indicates that temporal awareness and orientation can be implicated either causally or symptomatically in psychopathologies. Without suggesting simplistic analogies or linkages between personality and society, we would propose that communal temporal constructs function in important culturally integrative fashion and that their re-ordering and allocation have critical consequences for any people.

SOCIOLCULTURAL CHANGE IN THE EASTERN KEEWATIN

Comprising the coastal and inland areas on the west side of Hudson Bay, the Keewatin district of the Northwest Territories extends from approximately 55° to 65° N latitude. With the exception of the northernmost part of the area (from Daly Bay to Repulse Bay) and Southampton Island, the area has been occupied for at least the last millenium by Caribou Inuit groups. "Caribou Inuit," a kabloona (i.e., non-Inuit, Eurocanadian) term, alludes to the generally inland, hunting orientation of most of these peoples. Similar to such terms as "Labrador" or "Central" Inuit, it carries no indigenously recognized cultural connotations. Emic terms such as Aviamniit ("people of the whale"), Aivalignniit ("people of the walrus hunting place"), Padlimiut ("people of the source", i.e. of the Maguse River) do not designate corporate tribal entities, but loose regional groupings sharing common local cultural patterns, recognizable dialect features and a tendency to endogamous marriage. Regional groups in turn comprised illagiit, kindreds which characteristically formed cooperating, co-resident and commensal units.

Keewatin Inuit today occupy seven settlements: Eskimo Point, Whale Cove, Rankin Inlet, Chesterfield Inlet, Baker Lake, Repulse Bay and Coral Harbour. Of these, Eskimo Point, Rankin Inlet and Baker Lake are "townsize," i.e. in excess of
1,000 people; the others range upwards from about 300 people.

The history of European contact and settlement in the Keewatin has been dealt with in great detail (Damas 1968; Schweitzer 1971; Vallee 1967). It is necessary to note here only that some form of European contact was established in the eighteenth century with the building of Fort Prince of Wales at the present site of Churchill, Manitoba. Intermittent trade contacts continued until the twentieth century, when trading posts, mission stations and Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) posts were established throughout the region.

As Brody, Hughes, Jenness and others have pointed out (Brody 1975; Hughes 1965; Jenness 1964), Inuit economic dependency throughout the Canadian Arctic is datable to the beginning of their involvement in Eurocanadian exploitive enterprise. In the eastern Arctic and especially in the Keewatin this meant Arctic fox trapping, although sealing, whaling and the taking of walrus were also significant. Trade meant increased economic dependence on guns, ammunition, and traps; attractive and convenient foods such as flour and tea; and luxuries such as tobacco. More significantly, commercial involvement irreversibly altered cyclical patterns of movement and exploitation on the land. Ugyuk and auja, the dominant seasons in Inuit life, reflect the two-part exploitive cycle characteristic of most Inuit groups: winters spent sea-ice hunting for seals, summers spent on the land hunting geese, ducks and caribou, and fishing.

Fox trapping is a winter activity involving the setting and tending of trap lines when the fur is thick and the pelt at its highest value. In Inuit communities in April and May the garbage dumps and refuse wagons contain the unskinned discarded bodies of foxes. Their mottled brown fur attests to the onset of spring moult and to their low market value. Commercial trapping of foxes tied the Inuit to a seasonally contradictory exploitive activity utilizing techniques and equipment that were foreign to them and focussed upon an animal that traditionally had been virtually ignored. In trapping for trade rather than for local use the Inuit became dependent upon fluctuating external market demands as mediated through the Hudson's Bay Company and other traders. Moreover, fur production ultimately depended on the persistence of animal stocks subject to uncontrolled exploitation beyond sustainable levels. An elderly Inuk recently recalled:

I remember when a man would have a hundred traps. There would be maybe a few thousand out on the land around here in those times.

In the Keewatin the collapse of fur trapping between 1945 and 1955 coincided with a radical decline in caribou herds and led to widespread starvation. The Padlimiut and Ahiamiut, two of the interior groups, were most severely hit. Middle-aged Padlei people recall life in the camps in their childhood:

...we were eating our clothes, skin clothes. We had no dogs, we ate them. There were no caribou. My brother and sister died there at Maguse (River).

The "Padlei Starvation," as dramatic and widely publicized as it became, was only one part of the process of movement off the land in the Keewatin region. Trapping and trade increasingly had led to settlement in more or less sedentary camps within reach of trading posts and mission stations. In fact, the tendency to cluster in settled camps at such sites led the RCMP in some areas to forbid Inuit families to camp nearby unless a family member was employed in the settlement (Schweitzer 1971). Wage work at Distant Early Warning (DEW) line sites, mission stations and, later, at clinics and schools, and scattered opportunities for work in mines and other (sometimes short-lived) industrial or commercial developments were important economic factors in the settlement period as well. More generally, as government installations such as clinics and schools appeared, community life became increasingly attractive.

The glamour and usefulness of commodities available in the settlements made the desire for life on the land fade rapidly....The availability of relief funds was another important economic factor drawing people to the settlements [Damas 1968].

The last years of the 1950s saw the onset of an intense period of government regulation of the lives of Inuit peoples. Although ultimately a federal concern, the development of the Northwest Territories (and Yukon) was in part administered through territorial government structures. The establishment of schools and the enactment of a mandatory school attendance ordinance tied families to the settlements for ten months of the year. Welfare and other transfer payments made life on the margin of a cash economy possible. The gradual installation of government-built houses
heated by free oil, lit by free electricity and serviced with free water, sewage and garbage disposal completed the process of urbanization in the Keewatin.

In his 1960s study of Baker Lake, Vallee noted a significant dichotomy in the Inuit population of the community. Land and tradition-oriented people (the nunamiut—people of the land) contrasted sharply with the kabloonamiut—people of the whites. The latter, usually bilingual, typically employed in schools, clinics, stores, government offices and in public service occupations played a mediating role vis-a-vis the nunamiut, assisting them to adapt to the settlement and to the kabloonas in charge of its various institutions (Vallee 1967). But a generation later one can no longer make the distinction (Brody 1975). All Keewatin Inuit are permanent town dwellers now. Wage work, transfer payments, small business enterprises, trapping and crafts sustain them in the settlement economy.

**TOWN TIME AND LAND TIME**

It is ironic but not accidental that all of the settlements of the Keewatin region (and most other Arctic areas as well) bear English names: Whale Cove, Eskimo Point, Rankin Inlet. The names celebrate the whites who first visited these places or recollect their observations or adventures on their travels through the region. (Inuktitut names for these places exist and Inuit have been seeking official recognition for these indigenous names in recent years.) The names also reflect the fact that Arctic settlements are in essence Eurocanadian installations and that directly or indirectly, Inuit are there solely because of the white presence in the Arctic:

Eskimos view their move to the settlement as a move to the whites even though most of them would be deeply reluctant to call themselves Quallunaarmiut (i.e., Kabloonamiut). And there is no doubt that Eskimos throughout the Canadian Eastern Arctic have become superficially more like whites...[Brody 1975].

The move "to the whites" meant the relinquishment of responsibilities as well, including responsibilities imposed by the cyclical demands of the land, the necessity for seasonal preparation for the next phase of the year's exploitive activity. An older Inuit recalled:

When we were living inland we thought ahead, next year, next winter. During summer we used to get ready for winter, to survive that year....Here (in the settlement) we don't travel anymore, we don't think ahead anymore. I think the change came when the government came in. That's when people started living in one place. We were given welfare and didn't want to leave the place.

The process was especially abrupt in the eastern Keewatin because of threatened and actual starvation resulting from the coincident decline of both caribou (essential for food) and Arctic fox (essential for cash for the purchase of guns, ammunition and food staples). Many of the Hudson Bay coastal communities became, in effect, refugee camps to which people migrated or were transported because they could no longer live inland. Movement, to settlements were often not matters of personal choice, but emergency measures either by government agents (the RCMP for instance) or the people themselves.

The establishment of schools was an important factor in anchoring populations to settlements as well:

We camped in this area, now it's the place we live. We used to trade furs here. People started to stay in this place and our children began to go to school. At first we worried about them going to school but we were told by the government that if they didn't go to school the family allowance would be cut off so we tried to leave them behind. That's another reason why we started to live here, so that we could be close by our children.

Researchers have frequently stressed the apparent ease with which Inuit, as contrasted with Canadian Indians, have adapted to town life. Honigmann and Honigmann, comparing Inuit and Cree at Great Whale River, found that the Inuit adjusted much more readily to life in the community (Honigmann and Honigmann 1965). Barger, using measures of "psychosocial adjustment" for the same populations, found the Cree "adjusted," but not as well "adapted" (1982). Brody (1971) and Vallee (1967) have pointed out, however, that the apparent "adaptation" is often based upon a certain uneasiness in dealing with Eurocanadians, fear of angering them and a more deeply rooted concern for the maintenance of smooth interpersonal relations, all of which can be perceived as friendliness and cooperation.
Williamson comments:

The Eskimo word which almost all white people learn very early in their contact with the Eskimo in Keewatin--because they hear it so frequently--is *ama...* which means "one does not know." This word is used protectively with great frequency by the Keewatin Eskimo in contact with the whites...and is a form of antenna as well as a general barrier. Fear, lack of ease, or lack of cert-tainty as to what the white people have in mind (they are notorious in the minds of the Eskimo for inconsistency)--combined with the influence of the value system--cause the Eskimo to adopt in many instances positions which, at least until they are sure of themselves, do not commit them [1974].

A tendency to passive acceptance--"adaptation" to the Honigmanns and Barger--might be viewed as the response of Inuit to a world engineered for them by the Eurocanadians.

Despite their overwhelmingly preponderant numbers, Inuit constitute a client population in communities established and dominated by whites. The caste-like disjunctures between whites and Inuit in Arctic communities have been the subject of frequent commentary (Brody 1975; Dunning 1959). Early in the history (i.e., 1959) of the Eskimo Point community, Van Stone and Oswalt observed:

There is every indication that village-wide social integration does not exist.

... It is not surprising that in this social milieu Eskimo leadership is poorly developed beyond the family level and no one individual represents a significant segment of the population. The only discernible leaders are the whites who control political, economic and religious activities [1959].

In a similar vein, Brody points out that in general, eastern Arctic Inuit tend to surrender responsibility to whites who are in many senses the proprietors of the communities (Brody 1975).

There have been changes since Oswalt and Van Stone wrote in the 1950s, Vallee in the 1960s and Brody and Williamson in the 1970s. Keewatin communities have grown radically--Eskimo Point and Rankin Inlet at the present time are approaching ten times the size of the original settlements. The tarpaulin and plywood shacks, tents and winter snow houses have been replaced by two and three bedroom bungalows, the primitive water supply and sewage disposal services have been radically improved and the disparities in living arrangements between whites and Inuit are not as obvious. School committees and settlement council members, mayors, housing authorities and wildlife conservation officers are typically Inuit. The co-op store is staffed and managed by Inuit and smaller enterprises such as convenience stores and Bombardier travel services, are owned by Inuit. Inuit sit on the Territorial Council of the Northwest Territories and in the Canadian federal parliament.

Menial jobs are still held by Inuit in the settlements--garbage, sewage disposal, water and oil supply, snow ploughing, janitorial services. However they are typically found in "middle level" positions as well: as clerks in stores, nurses aides, translators for government service officers, and managers of electric power installations and other public services.

But the observations on local level social integration and leadership made in the 1960s and 1970s would still be valid today. The institutional structures of Arctic communities are of southern white design and they are ultimately externally managed. Their economic bases rest upon external subsidization and their socio-political structures upon a framework of kabloona institutions: schools, stores, churches, community services, airports.

The initial impression of the southern visitor to an Arctic settlement is the sense of its being grafted onto the landscape. It stands alone without connecting roads, without visual evidence of its raison d'être. The glaring disjuncture between landscape and community persists as one becomes familiar with it as a social milieu. Schools, businesses, clinics and government offices operate as in the south. Apart from the presence of northern hunting and trapping gear and Arctic clothing, the facilities for fur purchasing, the paternalistic signs telling people to eat vegetables, keep their dogs chained and avoid social diseases, and the high prices, there is nothing to suggest an Inuit clientele in either the Hudson's Bay store or the Inuit owned co-op. At Eskimo Point, Kreterklik school is a large, rakishly modern metal structure designed on the "open concept" plan with class areas separated by baffle screens, and with carpeted floors and acoustic tile to muffle the noise. A circular and sunken amphitheatre opens off the foyer and is used for school assemblies and for occasional Inuit cultural activities including visits by drum dancers, throat singers or elders who come to talk about the
old ways. Inuktitut syllabic cards line the walls in the lower grades and Inuit classroom assistants translate for the English-speaking teachers or conduct sessions in Inuktitut on their own.

The principal says that the school operates on a typical five-hour day, five-day week, 150-day year. It closes at the beginning of June for two months. The choice of June and July as vacation months is to accommodate the move out onto the land which will largely empty the community for the summer months and which has already begun with weekend trips in April and May. The school almost never closes for bad weather. The children all live in the village and will make their way through blinding blizzards to be in class. Attendance is consistently at about 66%. The Northwest Territory school Attendance ordinance is not rigidly enforced, especially if children are out on the land with their parents, but parents may be spoken to if children are simply hanging around the coffee shop-arcade or if they are missing school because they have been out playing all night.

Like the school, the community as a whole replicates any small urban settlement in southern Canada. The southern white visitor experiences a minimum of discomfort in most Inuit homes in the settlement. The living arrangements, furnishings and appliances are similar to those in south: bedrooms, living, dining, kitchen areas, bathrooms, usually refrigerators and stoves. Reminders of the nearness and importance of the land are there: caribou carcasses in a box outside, frozen fish in the porch, perhaps a haunch of caribou or portions of seal thawing in the furnace room or on newspapers on the kitchen floor.

Technical time dominates the environment of the settlement. Children go to school and many adults to an office or store or other work place at 9 a.m. They return home at noon for lunch. Children populate the streets after 3:30 p.m. and adults return home at 4:30 or 5:00 p.m.

There may be conflicts over the temporal ordering of life. A young Inuit, translator for a (kabloona) social service worker commented:

She gets mad at me for being late or leaving early. Sometimes I stay off in the afternoon and go goose hunting. That makes her mad too—even if she is up in Rankin (Inlet) and I have nothing to do, she wants me there.

At Rankin Inlet Williamson found evidence that time schedules caused distress to the Inuit:

Land Time and Town Time

...one significant source of anxiety among the acculturating Eskimos at Rankin Inlet has been the modern preoccupation with time. Every Eskimo home and person is plentifully supplied with time pieces.

An illustration of how important the Eskimo often felt that time is to White people is the tendency . . . of men to stay away from a shift (i.e., at the local mine) if they seem likely to be late, indicating that they believe that the White bosses value punctuality even more than the presence of an individual to undertake a necessary job [Williamson 1974].

Indigenous time, the sequencing (Phillips 1974) of activities according to Inuit patterns, can be seen in "Tradition Days" or "Heritage Days" at the school. In one corner of the school yard a man demonstrates how a komatik (sled) is loaded and hitched to a dog team, elsewhere boys are shown how to throw a harpoon, set a fox trap or build a snow house. But there is a leisurely disorder about the activities: the trapper may have decided to go out on the land that day, the snow might not be right for building igloos or the throat singers have decided to stay home or come later; the children, out of the confining order of the classroom, might find more interest in kicking a ball through the snow than attending to the land skills lessons being offered to them.

Trips out to hunt and fish and shoot geese have a similar inner logic. The party of men or family groups may pause to play at sliding on the snowy slope of an esker or to have tea and a leisurely chat; the children may busy themselves piling up stones into miniature inuksuks (stone pillars). The hunt is dictated by the predicted movement of the caribou or the wind direction that indicates that geese are or are not likely to appear that day.

Food (raw caribou or fish or seal meat, or bannock) lies about to be cut up and eaten according to personal want. The day drifts to a close at dark or twilight and gradually resumes with the brightening of morning.

But hunting and fishing trips and "Tradition Days" in the settlement, reflecting as they do the ecological cyclicity and traditional sequencing of land time, are encapsulated and structured into the technical temporal ordering of the settlement. Hunting and other exploitive activities are confined for most Inuit to relatively brief journeys regulated by the requirements of the town schedule. Families
with children may extend their weekends on the
land in the spring and fall and they will spend the
summer vacation months on the land within
commuting distance by "ATC" (all terrain cycle) if
one or both parents work. But if they were to set
out from Eskimo Point for Rankin Inlet (150 miles
north), or Baker Lake (300 miles north) or inland
to Ennadai Lake, as their forebears would regularly
have done, it is likely that land and air search
parties would be sent out after them on the
supposition that their snowmobiles or ATCs had
broken down or run out of gas.

The historical and ethnographic material of this
section of the paper has considered the period of
recent rapid change in one area of the Canadian
Arctic. Its central argument is that the
establishment of settlements on the model of
Eurocanadian communities, institutionally complete
and temporally ordered by the time constructs of
southern urban industrial society has, in scarcely
more than a generation, restructured the patterns
of Inuit life. The seasonal migrations between sea
ice and land, the orientation to the northward
movement of caribou and game birds and the runs
of char in the rivers have been replaced by a
sedentary life in which exploitive activities have
been largely encapsulated within the technical
temporal framework of the settlement. Hunting
and fishing occupy weekends, "long weekends" or
holidays. Camping on the land (hunting, fishing,
gathering birds' eggs) is a vacation activity which
may have to be coordinated with settlement em-
ployment. Land life and the cyclicity of land time
is thus dissociated from town life and town time.

At the same time, the technical temporal
cyclicities of the town create frameworks to which
Inuit may have difficulty adapting. "Wasting time," "idle time," are phenomena of the structured life of
the town. For the young who are out of school or
for the unemployed, town time may be filled with
empty spaces. Brody observes:

Time weighs heavily on the young. Those
who feel unable or disinclined to hunt and
trap must spend many hours trying to
amuse themselves, by meandering here and
there in the villages, visiting, gossiping,
sitting, dreaming [Brody 1975].

The temporal structure of the community dictates
that amusements, meetings, youth activities, weekly
movies, and church services be scheduled for
arbitrary and indeterminate times and the gaps
between them may be difficult to fill.

Lastly, from the perspective of linear time, the
settlement is a Eurocanadian historical artifact with
little connection to the Inuit past. Populations are
mixed groups including persons from diverse
regional groups, migrants from other settlements,
refugees from distant places and their descendants,
and whites. Its history is made and recorded by
Eurocanadians in written documents. Its inception
represents the beginning of time for those born and
educated there. The settlement-born will continue
to use the land, but the oral historical links to its
past will disappear with the present generation of
the land-born.

CONCLUSION

This paper has addressed the problem of Inuit
mental health in Canadian Arctic communities.
While the historical and ethnographic data has
been drawn chiefly from the settlements in the
eastern Keewatin region, we consider that it has
general applicability throughout the Arctic because
of the similarities in contact and settlement history.

The paradox of Inuit health over the past
generation is that while their physical well being
has markedly improved and many of the infectious
conditions that were formerly among them in
epidemic proportions are largely controlled, social
and psychological pathologies are increasing. We
have suggested that temporal disjunctures
associated with the imposition of Eurocanadian
technical time constructs in the organization of
settlement life be regarded as broad societal and
cultural factors contributing to personal and
community disorganization.

We have adopted a theoretical perspective in
which time constructs are viewed metaphorically as
intersecting axes. Cyclical time is that aspect of
temporal construction which takes account of
recurrence in the external world and in human
society. Linear time focuses upon change and
succession and encompasses the sense of the past
both for the individual in autobiography and
genealogy and for the society in terms of oral or
written history. Chronometric time (here,
"technical time") is Western clock time,
mathematically based, external, arbitrary and
uniform. Technical time has both linear and
cyclical dimensions. Non-chronometric cyclical and
linear time is exemplified in the temporal
constructs and systems of time reckoning of many
pre-industrial peoples. It is qualitative and
oriented to sequences either in nature or human
social life.

We suggest that an important aspect of
sociocultural change for settlement Inuit has been
the conflict arising out of the dissociation of traditional linear and cyclical temporal constructs from the technical time of the settlement. The consequences, we would argue, are community and personal stress as evinced by the increasing evidence of so-called "life style" diseases.

There may be more specific linkages as well. There is a tendency for the young and settlement-born to be at greatest risk, which suggests that settlement life creates stress for persons without a background on the land. Such persons are marginal with respect to the values of traditional Inuit life. Settlement schooling with its limited opportunities for specific employment training and the restricted economic development of the settlement itself leaves such persons marginal to the larger Canadian social and economic system as well. They are thus caught in the interstices of two cultural systems.

A very considerable literature has accumulated on the relationship between alcohol abuse and such social and psychological pathologies as suicide, interpersonal violence and depression among Canadian Native peoples. For young people, Brody links substance abuse to the experience of "empty time" in the settlement:

In such a monotonous round it is not surprising that they welcome the diversion of drink and the soft drugs that occasionally find their way even into the remotest settlements and that they sometimes experiment with alcohol substitutes such as drinking shaving lotion and sniffing gasoline....There is a growing interest in being intoxicated or high [1975].

Drunkenness has been associated with "time out" patterns in some societies. In such situations the society grants licence for drunken debauchery and general mayhem in specifically structured situation (MacAndrew and Edgerton 1969). But "time out" may also be seen as an unsanctioned escape from unmanageable demands or stressful situations. For the young settlement Inuk it may be "time out of time"--release from the conflicts of irreconcilable temporal orders.

In a moving account of community and personal disintegration, Anastasia Shkylnyk (1985) has reviewed the events which have created a chaos of suicide, homicide, familial disintegration and alcoholism in a northern Ontario Ojibwa community. The assault on the community of Grassy Narrows began (after 110 years as a stable reserve community and millennia as an integrated Ojibwa band) with the discovery of high concentrations of methyl mercury in the fish of the English and Wabigoon Rivers--fish which formed a large portion of the community diet. But it was not methyl mercury poisoning or minamata disease that effected the destruction of the community (indeed, it is not yet clear whether anyone has developed the disease), rather it was the ameliorative steps taken to rescue the band from the poisoned river and to provide them with what were thought to be the essentials for a new and healthy community life: movement to a new site on which orderly rows of new houses had been constructed, access by road to the outside, a new school, electricity, and a social service officer. Decline and disintegration followed in the years after relocation. In her analysis, Shkylnyk points out that major environmental disasters may create states of social chaos and led to disorganization and disintegration, but that much more subtle long-term pressures may have similar consequences.

...we know that the health of any society or collectivity depends upon a series of vital processes that allow individuals to grow, discover their identity and learn the skills and ways of knowing of their people. When these processes have been disrupted or are absent, the young people of the community not only are extremely vulnerable to negative pressures from the outside but can become so demoralized that they also commit themselves to a kind of death.

All incentive to maintain cultural precepts, values and beliefs is lost if these things no longer work to structure reality. Thus a whole world ends when its metaphors die [Shkylnyk 1985].

No comparable disasters have been reported from Inuit communities. However, there are at least two important parallels between the Grassy Narrows situations and that of the Inuit. The new community was created for the Indian people on lines that seemed sensible, practical and convenient to government authorities. Like an Inuit settlement, the community was fundamentally a Eurocanadian artifact. Secondly, the dislocation from the native settlement was a dislocation in time--a truncation of ties with the past. We would argue that the "social amnesia" which disjuncture with the Inuit past which settlement life imposes
will dissociate present and future Inuit generations from their traditional past as well.

There are some positive aspects to the Inuit situation. For over a decade the Inuit Cultural Institute of Eskimo Point, operating along the lines of a southern educational and cultural agency, and almost entirely managed and staffed by Inuit, has prepared teaching materials on Inuit traditional culture. These are used in many eastern Arctic schools. They also act as liaison between the schools and the older, traditional Inuit, arranging for the latter to present demonstrations of land skills, traditional games and story telling to school children. In their efforts to preserve the past in the face of dying oral traditions and history, they have accumulated a large tape library of autobiographical accounts by older, land-born Inuit.

Even more significant are the prospects for political change. Since at least 1973 a proposal to divide the Northwest Territories has been under active consideration. Under the Nunavut plan (which has been publicly approved by plebiscite), the eastern Keewatin and the Arctic islands would become a separate territory. As the population in this area is almost exclusively Inuit, Nunavut would constitute an Inuit-governed region with territorial status. For the future, there is at least the hope that it might at some time be a province. Political power of even this level would provide Inuit with opportunities for making alterations in education, community and work organization which could take account of the land and time and ensure that the links with their past are not completely cut.

NOTE

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