

**RECLAIMING INUIT GOVERNANCE:
PLANNING FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE IN NUNATAKAVUT**

By © Amy Hudson. A dissertation submitted

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Abstract

In a global world, systems of governance remain integral to establishing and ensuring order. In Canada, the nature of our governance systems often reflects the values, perspectives and will of Western European society. Throughout history, colonists have played a dominant role in decision making with respect to law and order and as a result, governance has reflected the values and perspectives of colonists themselves. This has oppressed, marginalized, and negated Indigenous peoples' knowledges and values and, by extension, their very systems of governing themselves. This study affirms the collective desire and will of NunatuKavut Inuit to govern on their lands as they engage in self-determined efforts to ensure the sustainability of their communities and culture by privileging local knowledge and expertise throughout the research. This dissertation explores the multifaceted interconnections between research and Inuit community sustainability planning and governance. Best practices in Inuit research governance guided a community governance and sustainability initiative (CGSI) in three pilot communities in NunatuKavut. The CGSI illustrates relationships between local knowledge holders and their expertise in planning for a self-determined and sustainable future. Further, this research study identifies key Inuit governance priorities and practices that reflect the values, perspectives and interests of NunatuKavut Inuit themselves. As a result, this study offers an alternative discussion to state led governance methods in Canada, while critically analysing the colonial legacy of the Canadian state on Inuit still today. Finally, the role of Inuit in this study illustrates continued adaptation to an ever-changing world, with continued resolve to reclaim and rebuild Inuit pathways to sustainable self-determination grounded in Inuit knowledge and tradition.

General Summary

This research study respects the right of NunatuKavut Inuit to self-government and self-determination on their lands and according to their own ways of knowing and being. By building on and embracing the strengths of the people in this study, and by regarding Inuit as experts about matters that impact them on their lands, we are better able to understand the values, perspectives and priorities of Inuit in this region in relation to sustainability and governance in NunatuKavut. A strength and rights-based approach in this study helped to enhance research governance practices in NunatuKavut, whereby Inuit autonomy in research was exercised and validated in this study. The study also identified best practices and culturally relevant ways to engage community members in sustainability planning that is meaningful to Inuit and validate Inuit connection to community and culture. Finally, this study helped to identify important governance priorities for Inuit today, including some key considerations for reclaiming and revitalizing Inuit governance that align with the values and perspectives of Inuit in NunatuKavut. Overall, this study demonstrated that Inuit-led and centred research can be a useful tool for community and cultural survival.

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Glossary

Aboriginal: is used to refer to Indigenous peoples when referencing or citing a piece or body of work that uses the term Aboriginal to refer to Indigenous peoples generally. As with the term Indigenous, the term Aboriginal does not distinguish between collectives of Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous: refers to all Indigenous peoples (First Nation, Metis and Inuit) and its use in this dissertation does not distinguish between collectives of Indigenous peoples.

NunatuKavut: Translated from Inuttitut, NunatuKavut means ‘our ancient land’ and is the traditional homeland of NunatuKavut Inuit.

NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC): is the governing body of approximately 6000 Inuit who belong to NunatuKavut (southeast and central Labrador, Canada).

NunatuKavut Inuit: refers to Inuit who belong to NunatuKavut and are represented by the NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC). This group of Inuit are descendants of early Inuit to Labrador and who now reside primarily in southeast and central Labrador.

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List of Abbreviations

ACOA: Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency

CGSI: Community Governance and Sustainability Initiative

CLC: Comprehensive Land Claim

DIAND: Department of Indian and Northern Development

HVGB: Happy Valley-Goose Bay

ICEHR: Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research

ICSP: Integrated Community Sustainability Plan

IEP: Inuit Education Program

ITK: Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami

LIA: Labrador Inuit Association

LMA: Labrador Metis Association

LMN: Labrador Metis Nation

MMIWG: Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

MOU: Memorandum of Understanding

NIHB: Non-Insured Health Benefits

NCC: NunatuKavut Community Council

REC: Research, Education, Culture

RIRSD: Recognition of Indigenous Rights and Self-Determination Process

TEK: Traditional Ecological Knowledge

TLH: Trans-Labrador Highway

TRC: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

UNDRIP: United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview

1.1 Introduction to the Research

This research study examines the various intersections between research and Inuit governance and community sustainability planning in the Inuit territory of NunatuKavut in Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada. This study used a strength and rights-based approach to guide all facets of the research. The advancement of Inuit research protocols and methods, supported by leading Indigenous scholarship in the area of Indigenous research methodology and methods, guided the research in purpose and methods. A community governance and sustainability initiative (CGSI), whereby three Inuit communities in NunatuKavut collaborated in order to identify culturally relevant pathways to sustainability planning, is described and best practices in a sustainability planning process are identified. The CGSI resulted in an Inuit led framework for sustainability planning informed by the values, perspectives and knowledge of Inuit themselves. The collaborative work with Inuit in this study region revealed deep and enduring values associated with connection to place and culture and this further highlighted the need for Inuit self-government and self-determination. Furthermore, this work illustrated significant areas of interest related to self-governance in NunatuKavut, including the identification of two governance principles that are key to place-based decision making and reflect the ways of knowing and being expressed by Inuit in this study. They are: 1) relational governance: accountability to past, present and future; 2) governance as intergenerational, gender balanced and shared. In summary, this study illustrates that Inuit led research, community led sustainability planning and Inuit centred governance, can play important roles in ensuring a future whereby Inuit community and cultural survival are privileged and reinforced.

The doctoral research project that follows took place in collaboration with the NunatuKavut

Community Council (NCC), NunatuKavut Inuit and three Inuit communities in NunatuKavut, Labrador (see Figure 1.1 below). As described further in chapter two and three below, my participation took the form of PhD student, NCC employee and community member. I was born and raised in Black Tickle, one of participating communities in this study. I have Inuit ancestral ties to Black Tickle and area that go back many generations on both my maternal and paternal sides of my family. This research also serves to honour and respect my Inuit ancestors, as well as all of their descendants who continue to call NunatuKavut home.

Figure 1.1

Map of Study Pilot Communities



Source: Map developed by Bryn Wood, Manager of Research, Education and Culture, NCC.

This chapter provides an overview of the research study, including the stated purpose, goals

and objectives of the research. A review of the literature as it pertains to this study assists in contextualizing and situating this research within the scholarly literature and larger societal context.

1.1.2 Why does this research matter today?

In light of historic and emerging realities connected to the study communities in this research (and as detailed further in chapters four and five), existing and emerging scholarly literature in the area of Indigenous research, including sovereignty and decolonization, this study is a timely contribution to the study communities and to the field of Indigenous and interdisciplinary research related to governance and community sustainability. The field of governance research and scholarship in Canada has been largely dominated by ideologies that situate governance from a Euro-Western perspective where the subject of research, and consequent knowledge production is often voiced by non-Indigenous scholars (Ansell & Torfing, 2016; Alcantara, 2013; White & Alcantara, 2020). Increasingly, scholarship led by Indigenous people is addressing this gap in the literature (McGregor et al., 2020; Borrows 1998; Napoleon & Friedland 2016; Corntassel, 2012; Green, 2014). Likewise, the field of sustainability science has been largely informed by Euro-Western science that has marginalized Indigenous knowledge and peoples, even when sustainability science implicates Indigenous peoples and their lands (Whyte et al., 2016; Johnson et al., 2016; Hudson & Vodden, 2020). Therefore, this research aims to build largely on the work of Indigenous scholarship in these fields, integrating related and supportive non-Indigenous scholarship to contribute to the knowledge base around governance and sustainability in the content of Inuit society in NunatuKavut.

This research draws from my personal and professional experiences as an Indigenous female in this field and this study seeks to both privilege and demonstrate the integrity and veracity of Indigenous ways of knowing and being to conducting research, while simultaneously utilizing and building upon research that spans multiple disciplines. As a matter of strengthening my own

research practice, I have sought to reconcile the skills I have learned and cultivated as part of my formal education, with the knowledge and expertise I have gained through an informal education that is land based and experiential. This research is in part a reflection and expression of one of my greatest learnings thus far, which is that in the context of Indigenous research, research practices and outcomes are strengthened when Indigenous perspectives, values and worldviews are reconciled with the practice of “doing research.”

This research study is committed to the reclamation, revitalization and celebration of Indigenous histories and cultures broadly and NunatuKavut Inuit specifically. Throughout the research study, it was imperative to remain acutely aware of the role of research historically, and the impact it has had on Indigenous peoples over time. Understanding the consequences and sometimes negative impacts of a Euro-Western approach to research in Indigenous communities, is vital to this study. This awareness considers the impacts of research on Inuit in Labrador in particular, and I aim specifically to counter colonial ideas and paternalistic modes of thinking that have led to and which have perpetuated the western design and outward appearance of Inuit society(s) that we still see today.

In contrast to Euro-Western research practices, this research seeks to privilege the knowledge, expertise and history of Inuit on the southeast coast of Labrador. In so doing however, I am *not* dis-regarding or minimizing Inuit knowledge from other parts of Labrador, Canada, or the circumpolar north. There may be (and are) many synergies in goals, interests and stories as they relate to the impact of research on Inuit autonomy and decision-making across Inuit regions. This research allows for diversity and differences as well and does not seek to delineate lines or categories of authority amongst or between Inuit regions. The persistent and intentional reference to Inuit in southeast Labrador in this research is further evidence to the way in which Western-European society has delineated the geographic and socio-political-economic lines that exist today

and which shape Labrador society generally. It is important that I remain aware of the role of colonial governments in shaping this reality and the perpetuation of this mentality through Western scholarship so that I, hopefully, do not repeat or participate in this colonial tradition.

This research is relevant to the people and places where this study is situated. This study aims to contribute to the very fabric of Inuit life in NunatuKavut through strength-based community governance and sustainability planning that is locally and culturally relevant. Historically, Inuit in NunatuKavut have been misrepresented in ways that have marginalized the important role of Inuit women (Hudson, Moore, & Procter, 2015), and the creation of narratives that perpetuate colonists' ability to procure resources from Inuit lands, have furthered settler biases and interpretation of Inuit life ways (Procter, 2020a). These colonial tactics are well demonstrated throughout history, and Inuit in NunatuKavut have not been immune to these realities. Nor have NunatuKavut Inuit been silent throughout the colonial period. The people and communities in my study have been resisting colonial tactics, adapting to changing worlds around them, and strengthening their ability to ensure their continued survival on their lands over many generations (as described further in section 1.3.1 below). They remain living on and connected to the land of their Inuit ancestors. As this study demonstrates further, they remain committed to a sustainable, self-determined future on their lands and in their communities. Facilitating opportunities and creating space for Inuit to reconnect, revitalize, reclaim and celebrate who they are and where they come from, while also envisioning and shaping their future, was integral to this research. By grounding this research in the self-determination of Inuit, this study illustrates that transformative research in Indigenous communities is best led by Indigenous peoples themselves, leading with their local perspectives and worldviews. In doing so, we can learn from and reflect on the role of research in Indigenous communities and societies.

This study also responds to matters of national Indigenous interest. The Truth and

Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) outlines specific calls to action across a range of areas as an opportunity for Canada to redress a history of residential schools and to advance reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. These calls to action include the need to repudiate European concepts that serve to justify European sovereignty, the renewal or establishment of treaty relationships with Indigenous peoples, adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), among others relevant to this study (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015).

This study was inspired and motivated by the global and national persistence of Indigenous resistance measures, reclamation and revitalization efforts in the face of pervasive and intentional colonization globally. In this context, NunatuKavut Inuit are not unique in that they have faced generations (and continue to face) of colonization that have impacted Inuit life ways. Indigenous communities, scholars and advocacy groups have been calling for change in diverse areas that impact Indigenous people's lives and cultures in many ways and over many generations. The persistence and strength with which Indigenous peoples continue to assert autonomy and sovereignty on their own lands is both remarkable and humbling. Recently, the collective action and advocacy of Indigenous peoples in Canada led to a National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) (2019). Following the inquiry, a final report illustrated the historical and ongoing cumulative impact of colonization on Indigenous peoples in Canada throughout history. The report and its calls to action, released in 2019, demonstrates that Indigenous peoples have a right to culture, justice, health, amongst others and these rights-based areas have been and continue to be areas whereby Indigenous peoples face persistent oppression and marginalization through systematic assimilation practices by the state (National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, 2019). These findings from the MMIWG Inquiry are significant for this study. This research study seeks to counter some of the assimilative

and harmful impacts of colonization (as evidenced in the MMIWG report) to Inuit in NunatuKavut (Labrador) by centring the role of Inuit in their own lives and on their own lands.

Additionally, the MMIWG Inquiry provided further inspiration and guidance during the later stages of this research. In Toronto, June 2018, I was invited as a witness in the inquiry and I provided testimony as an expert and knowledge holder, in the area of institutional racism and the impact to Inuit. With the approval and encouragement of the NCC, I testified at the hearing and represented NunatuKavut Inuit. My participation in the inquiry also reflected my deep and personal connection to my home and to this study. My participation also deepened my knowledge of and connection to Indigenous advocacy, strengthened my relationship to my doctoral research and further centred the importance of this work to Inuit, academia, and myself today. It is with these realities in mind that I continued on this learning research journey.

1.1.3 Research Purpose and Goals

This research has materialized, in part, as a response to the detrimental impact of colonization upon Inuit in NunatuKavut, as noted above and further described in section 1.3.1. As the NCC continues to grow and evolve as a governing organization with a vision of self-government, community expectations in NunatuKavut have also evolved and expanded to include and identify interests that directly impact the longevity and sustainability of their communities. This research seeks to contribute to the scholarly literature in areas of Inuit governance, political theory and practice by assisting in the translation and articulation of Indigenous, and more specifically Inuit, perspectives and worldviews. As a result, this study illustrates how these perspectives and worldviews create opportunities for resurgence and self-determination in governance, enlightened by Inuit knowledge holders in NunatuKavut. Building on the work of Indigenous scholar Jeff Corntassel (2008; 2012) and others this research aims to identify pathways to sustainable self-determination in NunatuKavut by realizing and giving expression to community

governance priorities, interests and practices as they directly shape the sustainability of culture and community.

The focus on Inuit governance practice and priorities is also timely as the NCC continues to engage with Canada in rights-based negotiations (see 1.3.1 and chapter five). As this process with Canada continues to unfold, and as NunatuKavut communities become increasingly active participants in the future of their communities, a well-defined governance structure, that is at the core, informed by Inuit values, traditions, needs and interests, is paramount. In addition to informing theoretical understandings of Indigenous knowledge, political and governance systems, this work will practically assist (and, has begun to do so) in guiding the engagement between Canada and the NCC in the reconciliation, discussions and negotiation of interests. Ultimately, this work seeks to build a foundation, and strengthen capacity for NunatuKavut communities to both govern and sustain their communities into the future and on their own terms.

In summary, the stated goals of this research include:

1. Inform Inuit community governance practices, grounded in NunatuKavut Inuit knowledge and strength-based philosophy;
2. Create opportunities for Inuit self-determination and revitalization in NunatuKavut;
3. Reclaim Inuit knowledge in NunatuKavut;
4. Contribute to academic scholarship in research methodology, sustainability and governance from the worldviews of Inuit, a knowledge base that is currently lacking.

1.1.4 Theory to Practice: A Journey Towards Research Impact in NunatuKavut

As a matter of research practice, and as it is of relevance to Inuit in this study, storytelling and narrative enquiry were integral to this research. From the perspective from which I write, grounded in my community, this research story is a small part of my truth telling. When we tell our own story by reflecting our past from our place and values, we can begin to decolonize ourselves

from the stories that have been told about us by outsiders. This has been an important process for me as both researcher and as a community member. Through this process, I, and I believe that “we”, can begin to destabilize the authority that has been held for far too long by the Western European storyteller (discussed further in section 1.3). For too long, this type of outside actor has told our story (that of NunatuKavut Inuit and our history) and has benefited from the power and authority that comes with its creation. This study is my contribution to efforts that seek to re-claim research on Inuit terms, providing space for community members to do the same, with a determination for knowledge production that comes from the people themselves.

This research journey has been one of listening, learning, sharing, growing and understanding. By doing this, I have been able to better understand and apply key concepts like sovereignty, decolonization, sustainable self-determination, relationality and governance, (discussed in detail in chapters three, four and five), to everyday realities in NunatuKavut. This practice has strengthened the outcomes of this study, as well as my own knowledge in this area of scholarship. As this research study aims to propose alternative ways of thinking and doing, that connect and reconnect Inuit perspectives and worldviews to the very practice of sustainable self-determination-the application of these concepts in this study context was meaningful.

As demonstrated in this study and discussed in detail in chapter three, and as evidenced in the efforts of NCC (described in more detail below), research can be a powerful tool in the design of our society(s). Linda Smith (2012) talks about how research can be a tool for community survival. In fact, research has enabled the longevity, adaptation, survival and innovation of humans for generations. Indigenous peoples have been researchers on their lands since time immemorial-making observations of the changes around them and adapting to those changes in ways that are relevant and meaningful for them and their survival (Cunsolo & Hudson, 2018). This study highlights the interconnections that exist between research governance and self-governance on

Inuit lands in NunatuKavut. Indigenous knowledge can contribute to the strength and resilience of Indigenous peoples' that we see today. As discussed further in chapter four, most Indigenous peoples have their own forms of knowledge and traditions that equip them to live sustainably (McGregor, Whitaker & Sritharan, 2020) and this research contributes to growing conversations surrounding Indigenous autonomy and control in decision making on Indigenous homelands in a way that draws upon these traditions and knowledge. Furthermore, this study reveals how research can be an effective tool in the revitalization and reclamation of culture, history and story that respect the living histories and contributions of Indigenous peoples. From this perspective, decision making is privileged when guided by local knowledge and expertise, derived from generations of observations passed down from those who have come before, and further enlightened by the values and contributions of those belonging to a particular society today.

In chapter three, my role to this research and to the NCC's research governance journey is described, connecting my dual roles as PhD student and NCC employee (where I lead and co-lead on various projects as the Director of the Department of Research, Education, and culture and NCC co-lead negotiator at the Recognition of Indigenous Rights and Self-Determination table). These realities have provided me with countless opportunities to grow and evolve as a student, professional and a person belonging to NunatuKavut. I have represented NCC to various levels of government (provincial and federal) and with institutions, etc. As I reflect on my roles and relationships with colleagues and friends, the teachings I have benefited from, I am keenly aware of the importance of accountability and responsibility in research specifically and in governance generally. I have been a witness to countless acts of good faith and good intention on behalf of the NCC for the people and communities that they represent in NunatuKavut. And, I continue to be humbled as I too am privileged to play a part in contributing to this end. I have personally seen, benefited from, contributed to, and participated in efforts to ensure community and cultural

preservation in NunatuKavut. Reflecting on these opportunities, and grounding oneself in what is most important in this kind of work (our people and communities), is a reward in and of itself. I am certain that many Indigenous people can relate to the complexities involved in working with and for one's own people and the importance of seeing positive impacts to community. In my experience, this type of work requires more than collegiality-but a deep and enduring commitment to people we represent. As it is for my part in this work, these collective efforts have been a significant source of inspiration for this study and for the outcomes that have, and I hope will continue to follow.

A relationship of trust has meant that I have been privileged to contribute to significant advancements in research practice and research governance at the NCC. My doctoral studies equipped me with the necessary skills and foresight to strengthen, establish and lead research governance efforts in NunatuKavut in ways that reflect the principles underscored throughout this study. My experiences at NCC, and my connection to my community and culture further grounded these contributions. In order to explain the implications of this on research in NunatuKavut today, I must digress, I am a little unsettled by what may sound like an ego driven exercise in advancing research governance in NunatuKavut. But as I was recently reminded, the work to advance research governance in NunatuKavut cannot be separated from my role as PhD student, employee, and community member. In fact, this work is in part, the result of my interconnected and deeply rooted relationships to NunatuKavut, the NCC and academia. It is with this in mind that I lay out some of my contributions over the course of my doctoral studies and hope that they too may be utilized, strengthened and built upon by others as we/NCC continue the journey of sustainable self-determination on our/their lands. These contributions should not be seen or heard as a marker of individual success, but rather, as an example of Inuit led research in practice, developed from work

around research ethics before me, and from the continued teachings made accessible by Inuit themselves.

Aligning theory with practice has always been an academic goal of mine. I have always enjoyed the potential of theory in real life. My doctoral studies provided time and space to pursue readership of Indigenous scholarship respecting decolonizing research practices, research autonomy, sovereignty and rights-based matters. This has enabled me to work with NCC colleagues and identify and assist in implementation of valuable recommendations that have benefited the NCC and our communities (in research, Recognition of Indigenous Rights and Self-Determination Process (RIRSD), community engagement, community cultural connections and reconnection, Inuit education, governance, etc.). The dissertation that follows describes a learning and research journey for all involved. As one example, the establishment of a research department at NCC was no small order and its development ultimately came as a result of a growth in knowledge and experience, in part through this research, that connected the importance of research to governance. Prior to the establishment of a research department at NCC in May of 2016, research practice was done largely off the side of individuals' desks. These early efforts reflect a commitment to research. But, without a dedicated space for research governance to flourish it was challenging to keep up with the increasing demands of external researchers to do research in NunatuKavut and to establish research governance protocols that ensure Inuit autonomy and leadership in research. The NCC is a non-profit organization and the majority of programs and services undertaken are project funded. The creation of the research department (with myself as lead) came two years into my employment with NCC. I shared a vision for such a department and the vision was supported by the President and others. The agreement to establish the department is indicative of an Inuit organization with a vision for the future and to some degree, with some faith that I (as appointed department lead) could help make something of the department and ensure its

success. With the foresight and commitment of NCC President and Council, a research department was approved and then established shortly thereafter. Today, the department, known as Research, Education, Culture (REC) is advancing and leading diverse research from renewable energy, education, policy, governance, etc. The portfolios of education and culture, for which I am also responsible, have been having a significant impact to NCC and NunatuKavut communities as well (e.g. Inuit education program developed for secondary schools, curriculum review, partnership with the provincial department of education, cultural awareness and related activities, etc.). Under my leadership, (a leadership shared with my colleagues in other departments at NCC), the REC department has hosted multiple research forums and gatherings in areas like sustainability and energy science, and we have brought together NunatuKavut communities, academia, governments, and other stakeholders, to discuss NunatuKavut interests and priorities in ways that privilege Inuit as experts and knowledge holders about matters that impact them on their lands. My doctoral research, which includes a CGSI, is an example of innovative and Inuit led research in NunatuKavut that is highly regarded by NCC. The evolution of research governance at NCC has also led to the addition of research governance as a stated priority area of focus for NCC's governing strategic plan. All of this reflects a monumental movement towards autonomous and community led research governance in NunatuKavut.

The next step (which is currently in progress) is to take what we have learned from the past, including from Indigenous scholars and leaders in this field, to strengthen and further develop research protocols and processes that give rise to the way we envision research on NunatuKavut lands today and in efforts to counter the colonial research practices of the past. This work will be accompanied by a NunatuKavut Inuit strategic research plan (forthcoming 2020-21). Updated and strengthened Inuit research and community engagement protocols (now complete) and a strategic research plan all aim to strengthen NCC's position to govern research on its lands. My ability to

contribute to and lead these efforts with and for NCC and NunatuKavut is a direct outcome of what I have learned along the way. And, I will be forever humbled and appreciative that I have been given the space and role to work with my friends and colleagues to make this happen.

As co-lead negotiator on NCC's RIRSD team I am also taking much of what I have learned to contribute to this process. And, I am continually learning from this process and my colleagues. This doctoral research has proven valuable to further understanding the role of community engagement and in ways that ensure that community members are reflected as leaders and experts. The research process and outcomes of this study has resulted in best practices that further enhance NCC's ability to strengthen and understand community goals and priorities that are pertinent to the work we do with Canada at the RIRSD table, and on behalf of NunatuKavut Inuit. This work is done similarly to the research itself-with accountability and responsibility top of mind.

Finally, and as discussed in more detail in chapters four and five, this research study responds to a gap in the scholarly literature as it relates to Indigenous, and more specifically Inuit, governance and sustainability, by Inuit and for Inuit. The approach to research in this study demands accountability and responsibility in conducting research in, with and for Indigenous communities. From theory development to praxis, including community development and capacity strengthening efforts, this study has made innovative contributions that are beneficial to the NCC and NunatuKavut communities broadly. Throughout this dissertation and related manuscripts, the lessons and best practices from this study are also available and, I hope, useful to other Indigenous communities, academic institutions, and governments. As this research journey is coming to a close, I remain accountable and committed to NunatuKavut Inuit in research, social justice and beyond. I will continue to take what I have learned from my role in this research and apply those teachings in ways that are beneficial to the NCC (in governance and process building) and hopefully, to NunatuKavut Inuit.

1.1.5 Organization of Dissertation

The dissertation is organized in a way that situates the study context for the reader. Chapter one provides an overview and introduction of the research study, including the people with whom this study is carried out. This chapter ensures that the research questions and objectives are clear, and context is provided for the study. As an Indigenous author and researcher, I situate my multifaceted role in this research. This chapter also provides a review of the literature as it relates to the study topics that focuses on Indigenous research methodology and a history of colonization. This background review provides further understanding as it relates to the use of Indigenous research methods, and the role of perspectives and worldviews (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) in shaping research design and practice. I further situate the research within the sustainability science and governance literature. Chapter two outlines the conceptual framework underpinning this study. This chapter situates how the framework is integral to the approach taken in this research and then goes on to outline the research design and methodology. Chapters three, four and five contain the core manuscripts in this dissertation. Each manuscript contains a further review of the literature related to each paper topic as well as a description of the findings from the research. Chapter six provides a summary conclusion of the dissertation in its entirety, including my reflections and thoughts about future directions in research and Inuit governance in NunatuKavut.

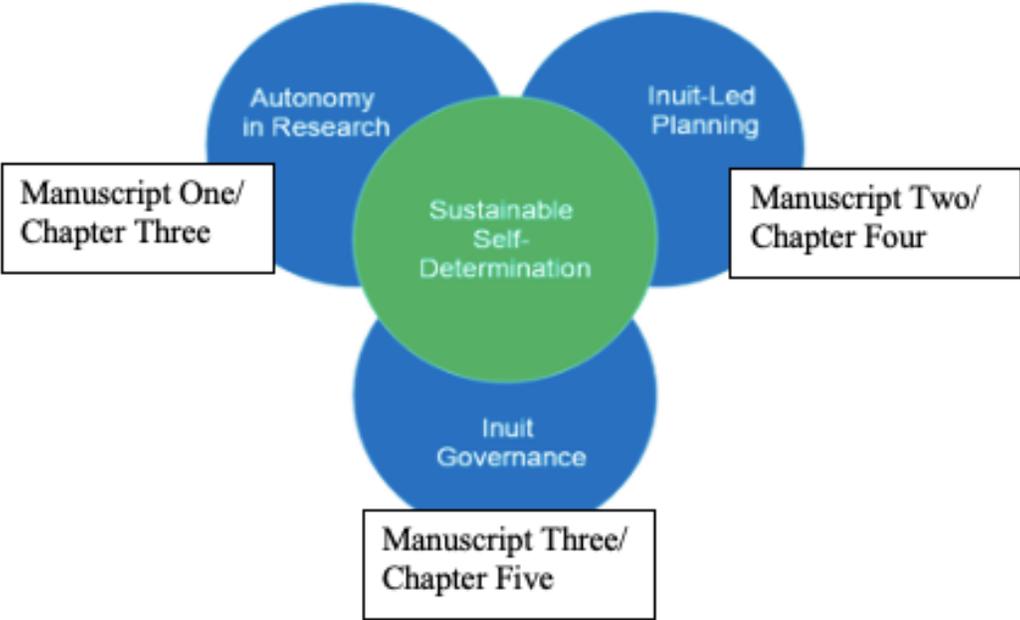
1.1.6 Connecting the Manuscripts

As a whole, the three manuscripts provided in this dissertation (chapters three, four and five) respond to the overarching goals and objectives of this research and give expression to the diverse and interdisciplinary nature of this study, including insights from education, philosophy, policy and geography and from Indigenous research, governance and planning literatures . In addition, they inform and give rise to a new and emergent knowledge base, respecting and building on Inuit knowledge, tradition, history and culture in NunatuKavut around governance and planning

for the future. Together they aim to contribute to ongoing efforts to pursue sustainable self-determination. In particular, the results of this study, the knowledge gained, and the lessons learned, can assist in identifying pathways to self-determination that are rooted in Inuit values and perspectives in NunatuKavut (see Figure 1.2 below).

Figure 1.2

Sustainable Self-Determination in Inuit Led Research



While the findings from this study are largely informed by NunatuKavut Inuit, there is much that can be learned by those outside NunatuKavut and transferred to other communities and people. Manuscript one, entitled “Reclaiming Inuit Knowledge in Pursuit of Self-Governance: Regulating Research through Relationships”, speaks to the multi-faceted relationship between research governance and Inuit self-governance. This manuscript makes clear that autonomy and Inuit led research is a necessary component in the pursuit of autonomy in Inuit governance and self-determination. Further, relationships are fundamental to self-determined research on Inuit lands. This manuscript provides the foundational expectations upon which this study is carried out,

while setting the tone for research with Inuit in NunatuKavut in an era of truth and reconciliation. Manuscript one is published, and peer reviewed as a chapter in the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER Books) (see chapter three).

Manuscript two, entitled “Decolonizing pathways to sustainability: Lessons learned from three Inuit communities in NunatuKavut, Canada” illustrates the strength and possibilities that come from Inuit led and autonomous community planning and the role of research in achieving this end (building further on the discussion in manuscript one). This manuscript illustrates that decolonizing research theory and practice can indeed lead to self-determined research on Inuit lands. Furthermore, Inuit values of homeland and community underscore the decolonizing principles used in this paper. This paper makes clear that Inuit knowledge and appreciation of home and community can give rise to research possibilities that are at its core, sustainable and self-determined. Manuscript two is peer-reviewed published in the journal *Sustainability*. (See chapter four).

Manuscript three, entitled “Re-claiming Inuit Governance and Revitalizing Autonomy in NunatuKavut” uses the principles and knowledge gained from the research as a whole, including community collaborations, best practices in engagement, community planning, etc., to illustrate the way that Inuit knowledge, perspectives and worldviews do and should inform governance on Inuit lands. This manuscript not only privileges Inuit expertise and voice as it relates to matters that impact Inuit, but also contributes to an understanding of Inuit governance theory that is marginal in the scholarly literature to date. Manuscript three has been accepted as a chapter in a book volume entitled *The Inuit World*, part of the Routledge Worlds Series. (See chapter five). This chapter has undergone review by the book editor who has expertise in the field. In addition, the chapter has undergone review by NCC’s legal team at Burchells LLP.

1.1.7 Co-Authorship Statement

Amy Hudson (with guidance from her supervisor and committee) designed the research study and undertook data collection and completed all data analysis. Hudson wrote the dissertation in its entirety, with the exception of co-authorship in manuscript one and two. Julie Bull was asked to co-author manuscript one given the obvious interconnections between the work and interests of Hudson and Bull in the area of research governance and ethics respectively. Bull has contributed to research ethics nationally and in NunatuKavut (Bull & Hudson, 2018; Bull, 2016; Bull, 2010) in various forms over the past decade. As such, integrating her contributions in the field and in this context demonstrated the strength and leadership of Inuit in research governance on their homeland. Hudson was the principal and primary author for manuscript one.

Dr. Kelly Vodden, (Hudson's supervisor) was invited to co-author manuscript two. Hudson was the principal and primary author for the manuscript. However, Dr. Vodden's wealth of knowledge and experience in the area of rural and remote community sustainability provided valuable guidance to the structure of the manuscript and her expertise assisted in strengthening the manuscript as a whole.

Manuscript three was authored solely by I, Amy Hudson. I thank my supervisor and committee members for their thoughtful review of this manuscript.

Literature review section 1.3.1 is an article in early stage development. Additionally, I intend to include key elements of chapter two in an article on Inuit research methods and decolonization. I am currently examining appropriate publishers for this work.

1.2 Background Literature Review

1.2.1 Introduction

The following review of the literature covers key concepts, themes and frameworks used in this research study, and presents a holistic research framework that encompasses the key concepts further discussed in more specific literature reviews within each of the three research papers (see

chapters three, four and five). The first section of this review contains and examines literature surrounding Indigenous research methodology. This section situates the utility of Indigenous research methodology to research led by and for Indigenous peoples and why it is integral to this study. The discourse surrounding Indigenous research methodology further demonstrates the negative implications of colonial research on Indigenous lands and to Indigenous peoples, offering a different way to not only think about research, but about the role of the actors within the research journey. Dialogue surrounding accountability and responsibility are paramount and research is situated as a tool for Indigenous empowerment. Finally, both Indigenous and Euro-Western research methods are discussed, revealing important and fundamental differences in theory and practice between the two, and which have implications for the field.

The next section contains a review of the literature surrounding the historic role of the state in acquiring and sustaining authority on matters respecting Indigenous peoples. A discussion of governance, particularly as it pertains to state led governance, is critically analysed in light of Indigenous rights to land and self-determination. Next, a review of the literature related to Inuit society, governance and a colonial history in Labrador helps to advance understanding of the complex web of relationships between Inuit and colonists over time, that have had and continues to have an impact on Inuit society in Labrador today. The final section of this review is a discussion that situates sustainability, as well as community sustainability planning, as a concept in research and policy development. Understanding sustainability, in this form, highlights why sustainability and self-determination are central to Inuit lives in NunatuKavut today.

1.2.2 Confronting Colonial Research Practices with Indigenous Research Methodology

Colonial research practices have undermined and marginalized Indigenous peoples on their lands for decades (see chapter three for more information). Indigenous scholar Linda Smith (2012) has provided a thoughtful, anti-colonial critique of the imperially rooted research tradition, calling

instead for Indigenous researchers to lead research on their lands, and in ways beneficial to their survival as a people. Rigney (1999) explains that western research has often served to alienate Indigenous peoples. He states that “The research enterprise as a vehicle for investigation has poked, prodded, measured, tested, and compared data toward understanding Indigenous cultures and human nature (p.109). Over the last decades of the 20th century in particular, political struggles and matters pertaining to rights to Indigenous lands have increased the need for Indigenous peoples to become proficient participants in the discourse of courts and governments – a discourse that is informed and shaped by research (Castellano, 2004).

As described further in chapter two, Indigenous research practices and methodologies are increasingly challenging the way that western academia is viewed, and scholarship produced. Indigenous scholars have demonstrated an alternative approach that not only challenges the status quo of academe but also confronts the historical and colonial intent of western scholarship (Simpson, 2001; Wilson, 2008; Kovach, 2009; Smith, 2012). For Indigenous scholars, community members and non-Indigenous allies, it is becoming increasingly clear that research “on” Indigenous peoples (as described by Rigney above), is no longer appropriate and there is a need for an Indigenous research paradigm that reflects Indigenous values and culture (Wilson, 2008). Yet, the Euro-western approach to research practice continues to be perpetuated and privileged within the academy (Cunsolo & Hudson, 2018).

As illustrated in the works of Indigenous scholars like Shawn Wilson, Lori Lambert, Linda Smith and others, Indigenous research methodology decolonizes colonial research practices by grounding knowledge within the expertise of Indigenous peoples and communities themselves. As a result, Indigenous research methodologies are making significant advancements in the scope and quality of work that is being done within Indigenous communities. The field of Indigenous research and knowledge production (for example, storytelling) are challenging the normative tradition of

Euro-western practices, helping us to rethink historically primal concepts like ownership and objectivity in favour of research and knowledge production that recognizes Indigenous ethics, values, and ways of knowing (Lambert, 2014; Wilson, 2008). The consequences of research and scholarship that locate Indigenous peoples as those with the relevant knowledge and expertise to lead and participate in research on Indigenous lands can be seen in the influential work of Indigenous scholars like Jeff Corntassel, Linda Smith, Shawn Wilson, Margaret Kovach, Joyce Green, Deborah McGregor, among others. Scholarly contributions about Indigenous research, from Indigenous academics, has not only set a precedent, but also created expectations of researchers and scholars alike to do research better (Wilson, 2008; Kovach, 2009; Smith, 2012).

Indigenous research seeks to enhance the social and political fabric of Indigenous societies (Corntassel, 2008). Castellano (2004) defines Aboriginal research as:

research that touches the life and well-being of Aboriginal peoples. It may involve Aboriginal peoples and their communities directly. It may assemble data that describes or claims to describe Aboriginal peoples and their heritage. Or, it may affect the human and natural environment in which Aboriginal peoples live (p. 99).

This form of research necessitates the participation and leadership of Indigenous peoples and communities in the research process. Indigenous knowledge, expertise, and perspectives are recognized as vital to Indigenous research in practice (Lambert 2014; Wilson, 2008; Smith, 2012; Kovach, 2009). Smith (2012) maintains that research can no longer be conducted in Indigenous communities as if the knowledge of Indigenous peoples is secondary or their lives are unimportant. She explains that “Research is not an innocent or distant academic exercise but an activity that has something at stake and that occurs in a set of political and social conditions” (Smith, 2012, p.5).

For many Indigenous people, research is about survival (Smith, 2012). Margaret Kovach (2009) speaks to the way that cultural longevity and cultural knowledge systems are related. She states:

Colonial history has disrupted the ability of Indigenous peoples to uphold knowledges by cultural methodologies. While colonialism has interrupted this organic transmission, many Indigenous peoples recognize that for their cultural knowledge to thrive it must live in many sites, including western education and research (p.12).

Indigenous peoples have a responsibility in research, and part of that responsibility includes perpetuating and articulating Indigenous worldviews and perspectives (Kovach, 2009). Building on the idea of Indigenous responsibility in research, Weber-Pillwax (2001) cites the responsibility to challenge dominant discourse that may harm Indigenous peoples and communities. She describes a personal experience whereby knowledge produced about her family history by a non-Indigenous person, inaccurately represented a family member, and by relation, her family, culture and history. Thus, she reiterates that the researcher must take care to do work that is to the benefit of, and that comes from and is supported by, the Indigenous community itself. The relationship between Indigenous researcher and community will exist and outlive that of the relationship between community members and Indigenous researcher in the context of the research alone (Weber-Pillwax, 2001). Drawing from the work of Wilson, when Indigenous researchers are accountable and responsible for research and collaborations within their communities, this accountability can translate into a mutually respectful relationship.

These contributions from Indigenous scholars illustrate that when Indigenous peoples challenge colonial research practices, they inform their own research protocols and ethics of conduct and are resisting dominant sites of colonialism. Building on the work of Shawn Wilson and Linda Smith, by creating guidelines of conduct around research in their own communities, Indigenous peoples can effectively create expectations and demand appropriate ethics and behaviours of scholars and researchers who come to work in their communities and on their lands. With this in mind, Indigenous communities, particularly those of the Inuit in Labrador, are increasingly strengthening their capacity and knowledge as it relates to research and are often deciding who gets to do research

in their communities and for what purpose (see further chapters three and four).

The ‘nature’ of Indigenous research methodology is such that Indigenous research and methodological approaches are grounded in Indigenous community values, interests and priorities whereby accountability and responsibility are paramount (Wilson, 2008). Wilson (2008) states that “research by and for Indigenous peoples is a ceremony that brings relationships together” (p. 8). The idea that research is relational is expressed in a way where one’s relationship to the land, sea, people, natural environment are all equally integral to informing one’s experience and holds a prominent place within Indigenous research (Wilson, 2008; Smith 2012). Indigenous research is embedded and informed by these relations. The significance of building meaningful and lasting relationships with those around you, and the knowledge that comes from this interconnectedness, is paramount in Indigenous research, and such relationality requires and demands accountability. Wilson (2008) explains that when doing research in and on one’s own land, the researcher(s) is accountable to all her/his relations (i.e., the land, sea, people, trees, animals, tradition, etc.). It is this accountability which keeps research in Indigenous communities integral and beneficial to community (Wilson, 2008). Thus, rather than seeing Indigenous researchers or community members as biased or in a potential conflict of interest when leading community research, Indigenous research methodology suggests that Indigenous researchers, from or connected to the community from which the research is being led, maintain a depth of knowledge, and are in fact accountable to a community of relations and have much more at stake than outsiders (Wilson, 2008).

The concept of relationships is central to an Indigenous research paradigm in many ways. Indigenous research paradigms are integral to Indigenous research methodologies, ensuring that research is framed within the context of the Indigenous peoples (Wilson, 2008). In further explaining the role of Indigenous research paradigms to the research, Wilson (2008, p.13) explains that a

research paradigm:

... is a set of underlying beliefs that guide our actions. So a research paradigm is the beliefs that guide our actions as researchers. These beliefs include the way that we view reality (ontology), how we think about or know this reality (epistemology), our ethics and morals (axiology), and how we go about gaining more knowledge about reality (methodology).

An Indigenous research paradigm, informed from an Indigenous perspective or worldview, will be guided by the interests, protocols, values and goals that are integral to Indigenous peoples. This is increasingly significant in an era where academics and scholars still remain interested in “studying,” “helping,” or working with Indigenous communities.

1.2.3 Distinguishing between Western and Indigenous Research Practices

As described above, Western research paradigms and methodologies tend to reflect the cultural assumptions of dominant or settler society rather than being informed by Indigenous knowledge and values (Rigney, 1999). This tradition has often led to a situation whereby outsiders enter into Indigenous communities, observe from their cultural lens and bias, and then produce knowledge and stories that inaccurately reflect the Indigenous community, culture and society in question, while reflecting the values of dominant society (Simpson, 2001). This form of researcher/researched relationship has been articulated time and time again in the literature as that which often privileges Eurocentric forms of knowledge and result in observations of an Indigenous community and culture that is informed by a non-Indigenous perspective. This form of relationship has often resulted in harm to Indigenous peoples as “the wave of Europeans swept across the North American, Australian, and Asian continents, the colonizers trivialized Indigenous knowledge, research, and life ways” (Lambert, 2014, pp.60). Simpson (2001) gives an example whereby elders were interviewed by external researchers in an effort to collect and understand their Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). In this example, the TEK was analyzed, interpreted and storied by non-Indigenous scientists, while the Indigenous elders and the community had no power over how

the research was interpreted or used. Simpson (2001) explains how this common practice has implications for the way in which the research is interpreted and then shared with the world, and in ways that inaccurately reflect the Indigenous peoples from which the knowledge has come. Examples of this kind of researcher/researched relationship can be seen in the field of health research as well, with inappropriate research methods and practices being employed in Indigenous communities in ways that have caused harm and distress to Indigenous peoples (Cochran, Marshall, Garcia-Downing, Kendall, Cook, McCubbin, & Gover, 2008). The authors challenge the very utility of this kind of common health research practice, especially given the continued disparity in Indigenous peoples' health and well-being today.

In mainstream, western research practices, it is often the goal to separate people and knowledge, so that knowledge is seen as a separate entity, something that can be removed from those who possess it (Simpson, 2001). The primary difference between western paradigms and Indigenous paradigms are in the way that dominant western paradigms propose that knowledge is or can be owned by an individual entity (Wilson, 2008). Smith (2012, p.13) states that "Indigenous methodologies tend to approach cultural protocols, values and behaviours as an integral part of methodology." Therefore, in engaging Indigenous peoples in research, western research practices have typically rendered the Indigenous peoples and community as secondary or inferior to the knowledge and contributions of western researchers and academia (Simpson, 2001).

Unlike western methods of research, Indigenous research is informed by community and serves to reflect the totality of the community. For many Indigenous communities, matters of survival and struggles (to counter the impacts of colonial research) take precedence over knowledge production as an end goal, in a conventional western sense (Zavala, 2013). The intricacies and polar distinctions between Indigenous and western research methodologies are evident. Indigenous research operates under complex interrelationships and rules are always

informed by the Indigenous community itself (Stewart-Harawira, 2013). Story telling is integral to Indigenous peoples lives and knowledge sharing (King, 2003; Kovach, 2009; Borrows, 2010) and, can serve as a way to disseminate research findings and knowledge to community members in a way that is culturally relevant and meaningful (Christensen, 2012).

1.2.4 Indigenous Perspectives and Storytelling as Methodology

“When you create something from an Indigenous perspective, you are creating it from that environment, from that land that it sits in” (Wilson, 2008, p.88).

Indigenous research methodology and practices assist in the decolonization of scholarship by resisting colonial worldviews and practices. Storytelling is one such practice that is core to Indigenous research methodology and is intertwined with knowledge (Kovach, 2009; Smith, 2012). Indigenous perspective and stories are informed by knowledge (Wilson, 2008). And, it is our relationships with those around us, with the land, and with our histories, that shape this knowledge (Healey & Tagak Sr., 2014). Storytelling, knowledge and perspective are interconnected.

Within Indigenous societies storytelling is a method of passing on knowledge from generation to generation, and for teaching and learning (Kovach, 2009). Kovach (2009) explains that the relationships between knowing and story, and narrative and research, cannot be separated from one another. Moore (2017) speaks to how relationality is embedded in storytelling, and how it is significant to research methodology as it honors both traditions and ancestors. Indigenous storytelling as research methodology illustrates that for Indigenous peoples, research, and the creation of and/or contributions to knowledge through research, is something beyond that which is simply to become known or investigated, it is also about survival.

Storytelling in research plays an important role in decolonizing scholarship that has otherwise served to colonize Indigenous peoples through the imposition of outsider narratives. Lori Lambert (2014) reinforces the legitimacy of storytelling as a research methodology. She observes

that, as a method, story informs theory and is not separate from it. Stories are legitimate sources of data. Jeff Corntassel (2008, p.137) explains that “Indigenous storytelling is connected to our homelands and is crucial to the cultural and political resurgence of Indigenous nations.” Renowned Indigenous, literary author Thomas King (2003) also talks about the significance of story, as he exclaims that we are made up of stories. King (2003, p.10) also cautions that “once a story is told, it cannot be called back.” In research methodology and practice, stories are integral to Indigenous societies generally and to this research study specifically.

1.2.5 Barriers to Decolonizing and Indigenizing Western Research and Possibilities of Resistance, Reform and Self-Determination

It is undeniable that perspectives shape our world and our experiences and vice versa. What we value, who and why, our relationships to one another and the land around us, all combine to shape our reality and our way of living together. Research can be conceived of in this light. While there is much work being done to advance the knowledge and contributions of Indigenous research paradigms and methodology, Mihesuah and Wilson (2004) reiterate that academic institutions often still remain entrenched in a mentality of control and superiority. In a discussion of the implications of such a reality they speak to the way in which Indigenous ethics protocols are relegated to the domain of inferiority, whereby institutions often see the ethics and protocols of engagement for research as something that must be done to appease Indigenous peoples, rather than understanding that these ethics and protocols are embedded in governance and are integral to Indigenous people’s rights to self-determination.

Kovach (2009) maintains that acknowledging an Indigenous perspective and embracing an alternative way of seeing and knowing the world, unsettles western approaches to investigation. In her work in Indigenous research and methodology, Kovach (2009, p.29) has “come to believe that a significant site of struggle for Indigenous researchers will be at the level of epistemology because

Indigenous epistemologies challenge the very core of knowledge production and purpose.” This continues to happen in part because a western research paradigm, or a western way of understanding or knowing the world, is used as a reference point to determine the validity of one approach over another. This bias continues to be clearly and consistently perpetuated within academic institutions. Mihesuah and Wilson (2004) note that barriers still exist for Indigenous academics in their ability to reach parity with that of non-Indigenous academics. Even when there is demand for Indigenous professors, their opportunities often tend to be relegated to entry level positions (Mihesuah & Wilson, 2004).

Indigenous scholar Marie Battiste (1998, p.16) explains that “Aboriginal communities continue to suffer the effects of colonization and imperialistic policies that erode the base of Indigenous knowledge necessary for the healing and development of Aboriginal peoples.” Battiste’s work demonstrates the necessity of Indigenous knowledge and scholarship in moving forward and in informing research relationships. Her work is important for considering this research study in the context of research governance as a strategy for sustainable self-determination. Battiste states that “As outsiders, Eurocentric scholars may be useful in helping Indigenous people articulate their concerns, but to speak for them is to deny them the self-determination so essential to human progress” (1998, p. 25).

Indigenous peoples must be able to employ their own knowledge and assert their own priorities if Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples are to work together to counter the historical and modern-day impacts of colonization evidenced throughout western scholarship. I propose that sites of knowledge production, like academic institutions as one example, have the potential to assist Indigenous communities in countering a colonial legacy. This is consistent with national findings related to overcoming a history of colonization, including those perpetuated by academic institutions, governments, etc. (TRC, 2015; MMIWG Inquiry, 2019). Academic institutions have

been the site or breeding ground of knowledge production, whereby research was often conducted “on” Indigenous peoples and communities without their permission (Martin & Mirraboopa, 2003). Thus, it is necessary that Indigenous and non-Indigenous academics and scholars acknowledge the history of research in Indigenous communities and reflect upon their culpability in perpetuating western research paradigms and methodologies that are counter intuitive to Indigenous self-determination. Indigenous methodologies grounded in Indigenous values and beliefs are still seen as inferior to western research practices and/or are engaged as simply something that western researchers should be aware and respectful of, taking care not to offend to Indigenous communities in the process (Smith, 2012). These are significant barriers to Indigenous scholarship and self-determination.

Barriers to decolonization often exist beyond the physical realm, or that which can be seen and heard. Internalized barriers also exist in the hearts, minds and spirits of Indigenous researchers as they and we continue to work towards the self-determination of our people and communities through research in our own way(s). I have many times experienced emotional and psychological pain and frustrations in my relationships with academia. I have been reminded that this pain and frustration is rarely discussed in the context of Indigenous research and that these realizations are integral contributions to scholarship. Further reflection upon these experiences have helped me to come to terms with the reality that these pains and frustrations are a part of Indigenous research with colonial institutions. These experiences illustrate that power relationships between research institutions and Indigenous communities remain intact. In speaking to power relationships within Indigenous research collaborations and the emotional and psychological harm that can result, Cunsolo explains:

It’s gotten as far as saying it does harm to research and to politics and to relationships. But no one is speaking about the emotional and psychological harm to have it perpetuated over and over again in these types of contexts (Cunsolo, Personal Communications, 2017).

In my experience, barriers to decolonizing and indigenizing western research and possibilities of resistance, reform and self-determination continue to be perpetuated whereby Euro-western power relations are dominant. In writing about how Indigenous research methodology is impacting the decolonization and Indigenization of scholarship, it is necessary to acknowledge and own the limitations of colonial institutions in their ability to lead or control change in this area. As Linda Smith has stated, “decolonization is not a metaphor” and this reality holds a deep and sincere place within Indigenous peoples’ lives, including mine.

As will be discussed in the following section, Indigenous peoples continue to demonstrate their resistance to imposed barriers of dominant systems of power and control that are present within colonial institutions and governments. In order to confront these barriers it is imperative that Indigenous scholars’ contributions to research methodology be identified, the expertise of Indigenous researchers in communities be embraced, Indigenous research methodology be better described and understood, Indigenous perspective and knowledge valued as a way of being and knowing, and the relevance of Indigenous research methodology to Indigenous communities acknowledged. Despite a history of the colonial roots, research in practice can be valuable to Indigenous peoples. When research is engaged in the context of enhancing the social, cultural, political and spiritual well-being of a people and a nation, as Indigenous scholars like Corntassel (2008, 2012) have made reference to, self-determination is implied and is imminent. For many Indigenous peoples engaged in research, myself included, their (my) approach to Indigenous research is fundamentally driven by an Indigenous right and responsibility to self-determine.

1.3 A Colonial History: The State, Governance and Indigenous Peoples in Canada

Many accounts of Canada’s rise to statehood exist and yet one that is arguably less popular amongst mainstream society relates to the displacement and dispossession of Indigenous peoples as

part of Canada's beginnings (Borrows & Coyle, 2017). In the common narrative, the doctrines used to justify Canada's possession include "doctrines of discovery, adverse possession, and conquest" (Borrows & Coyle, 2017, p.18). These doctrines rest on the premise that Canada was empty, at least legally, when Europeans first arrived in what is now known as Canada. Quoting the Supreme Court of Canada, Borrows and Coyle (2017) state "that the Crown had sovereignty and underlying title in Canada because Indigenous peoples have inferior legal status" (p. 18). Snyder (2019, p.36) states that "colonial stereotypes treat Indigenous laws as simple, not adaptable, dysfunctional, and inferior to settler laws." This is despite the fact that the Indigenous peoples of North America held and exercised sovereignty over "persons and territory" before European contact (Macklem & Martin, 2002, p.1). A heavy reliance on narratives that perpetuate the inferiority of Indigenous peoples and their legal status in the formation of the Canadian state reflects a fundamental disregard of Indigenous peoples and their pre-existing and evolving governance systems by the newcomers (Harding, 2006).

The Royal Proclamation of 1763 serves as a critical example of colonial interference with Indigenous peoples. The Proclamation was originally conceived to guide and uphold relations between Indigenous nations and the Crown. Attempts were made to assure Indigenous peoples that no harm would come to them in their relationship with the colonists, yet, statements in the proclamation were contradictory as the British claimed "dominion and sovereignty over the territories that First Nations occupied" (Borrows & Rotman, 1998, p. 680). In this context, sovereignty meant that the Crown would hold ultimate decision-making power on matters related to the purchase and acquisition of land and the proclamation itself drew a boundary between lands reserved for colonists and those for First Nations. As an early document, the Proclamation is the basis of the Canadian legal system respecting Indigenous peoples. Borrows and Rotman (1998) write that "while the Proclamation seemingly reinforced Indian preferences that their territories

remain free from European settlement, it also opened the door for the erosion of these same preferences” (p.680). This has led to a weak understanding of Aboriginal rights and a failure to embed mutual understandings in the Proclamation of 1763 into the Canadian legal system, which in turn reinforced British dominance over Indigenous lands (Borrows & Rotman, 1998). While Aboriginal or Indigenous rights have been affirmed in Canada, courts have not always considered the perspectives of Indigenous peoples and have failed to include and embed Indigenous perspectives and legal traditions in the analysis of law itself (Borrows & Rotman, 1998; Napoleon & Friedland, 2016). These failures are evident throughout history and the implications have been ever present in the expression of state governance in the country over time and can still be seen today.

Canada’s rise to statehood remains relevant to discussions of governance today. Theories of governance help us to understand the complexities of our world (Ansell & Torfing, 2016). The creation of a governance apparatus can assist in maintaining strong and vibrant societies.

Definitions and expressions of governance are diverse, reflecting the ideologies of the state in which governance is located as well as the perspectives of those writing about it. While there is no universally accepted definition of governance, governance often entails relationships, processes, and structures that evolve over time and whereby a collective of people (community, society, etc.) organize to achieve their goals (Tsey, McCalman, Bainbridge, & Brown, 2012). Simply put, governance is about organizing to achieve what is considered to be important and of greatest value to people in a community or society. Today it is generally recognized that governance can be exercised by both state and non-state actors and often involves both sets of actors, occurring in ways that challenge established state order and hierarchy (Wilson, 2017).

Understanding the specific context, including the place, time, ideologies, goals and values from which systems and forms of governance arise is important when examining the role that state

governance occupies in society, and in Indigenous societies more specifically. In Canada, the state system of governance is known as a parliamentary democracy, where the state is the sovereign authority on law over Canadian citizens, including Indigenous peoples (Marleau & Montpetit, 2000). The very basis of Canada's constitution is articulated in the Constitution Act 1867. This constitution was created as the basis of Canadian society with the intent to first attain and then maintain sovereign jurisdiction over all Canadians. There is one parliament for Canada, which includes the Senate, House of Commons and the Crown, and lawmaking responsibility is further shared among federal, provincial and territorial governments (Marleau & Montpetit, 2000).

Harold Cardinal (1999) describes what he refers to as a series of events that demonstrate state culpability in maintaining sovereign rule at the expense of, or minimization of, Indigenous political society and sovereignty. The process of the sovereign state granting Aboriginal rights and title upon Indigenous peoples is an example of how sovereign rule is exercised and how Canadian governments impose "systems of dominance on Indigenous communities despite the re-institution of sovereignty" (Von der Porten, 2012, p.4). Turner (2006) adds that the very characterization of Indigenous rights, and the way they are granted to Indigenous peoples as minority people, fails to recognize Indigenous political sovereignty as legitimate. He adds that "Aboriginal rights, then, if they exist at all, are subsumed within the superior forms of sovereignty held by the provincial and federal governments" (Turner, 2006, p.56). This dominance manifests itself in diverse ways and impacts Indigenous governance potential as Canada continues to assume sovereign authority to rule and govern all peoples in Canada. For example, under section 91(24) of the Constitution Act, 1867, the federal government has the authority to make laws "over Indians and land reserved for Indians" (Olthius, Kleer, & Townshend, 2012, p.4).

Cardinal (1999) writes that there have been many consequences of state created laws and these laws have intergenerational effects on Indigenous peoples. One of the ways that Canada

attempted to assimilate First Nations and control lands was through the erection of the Indian Act, which continues to govern matters pertaining to Indian status, bands, and Indian reserves in the country today. Inuit were intentionally excluded from the Indian Act as it was reasoned at the time that they would not become wards of the state as such, like First Nations. However, in the absence of certainty around jurisdiction over Inuit affairs, Inuit were managed federally and later entitled, by the state, to program access, like health (Bonesteel & Anderson, 2008). Such entitlement, in this context, further reflects the management of Inuit lives by state actors.

State dominance is reinforced by the perpetuation of western dominant ideologies and mainstream thinking, and this continues to shape relationships between state and Indigenous peoples. Cardinal (1999) maintains that the creation of laws in a society that viewed and continues to view Indians as “primitive savages” serves to reinforce the actions of the government, make them agreeable to Canada’s legal system and to Canadians generally. Green (2014) proposes that the perpetuated narrative of Indigenous ideologies as inferior ideologies reinforces the ‘dehumanization’ of Indigenous peoples that was (and, is) a precipitating factor for dispossessing Indigenous people from their lands. This treatment of Indigenous societies as inferior and lacking political order and sophistication supported and continues to support colonization through the imposition of western laws and notions of sovereignty that are deeply rooted in ethnocentrism (Widdowson, Voth & Anderson, 2012). Further, it is clear that the state has a vested interest in the assimilation of Indigenous peoples into settler society. Understanding the legacy of Canada’s ‘dealings’ with Indigenous peoples is of importance when examining Canadian policy that purports to resolve land and other issues between Canada and Indigenous peoples today.

Discussions of Canadian sovereignty and democracy lead to questions around sovereign foundations. Borrows and Coyle (2017) suggest that Canada’s foundations rest on “racism, discrimination and force”, as well as “doctrines of persuasion, reason, peace, friendship, and

respect” (p.19), which is further described by Borrows as both good and bad. Whether good and/or bad, the reality remains that throughout colonial history, Indigenous peoples faced discrimination and marginalization and have endured a diverse range of assimilation tactics as colonizers sought to control the lands and benefit from them. This was illustrated by the efforts of Indian Affairs and Superintendent Duncan Campbell Scott in the late 19th and early part of the 20th century. Doxtater (2011) writes that Scott made clear the stated intent of Indian legislation, from 1857 onwards, was to get rid of Indian sovereignty entirely. Scott wrote: “Our subject is to continue, until there is not a single Indian that has not been absorbed into the body politic of Canada and there is no more Indian question” (Doxtater, 2011, p.388). Over a century later, both Cardinal (1999) and Turner (2006) further highlight the example of the 1969 White paper as a national assimilationist strategy, again with the intent of erasing Indigenous peoples under the auspice of Canadian equality measures. Green (2014) refers to Canadian democracy as a tool of oppression, while highlighting the colonialism inherent in Canadian democracy.

Colonization by assimilation furthered attempts by outsiders to secure, control and to impose western ideals, laws, and values upon the Indigenous peoples they encountered. This was necessary in colonists’ efforts to advance Western European governance as superior to all other alternatives, which in turn supported efforts to control valuable lands and resources. Coulthard (2014) maintains that the impetus of settler colonialism has always been the outright dispossession of Indigenous lands. These realities are integral to a history of Western European governance, with consequences upon Indigenous governance today.

While Inuit were not and are not included under the Indian Act, as discussed above, legal and jurisdictional control of Inuit affairs by the state point to the positioning of Inuit as inferior in relation to the state. Inuit share a colonial history with other Indigenous nations and peoples, including “a more recent history of sustained contact with fur traders and other outsiders, to the dog

massacres and re-locations” (Fast, Trocmé, & Ives, 2014, p. 69). Assimilative efforts, such as forced relocations (into present day), dispossession (from place, culture, laws), and residential schools (Procter, 2020b) give rise to an enduring era of colonialism in Inuit territories across Canada, and upon Indigenous peoples more broadly.

As the state continues to hold claim to sovereign law-making authority on the lands now known as Canada, we continue to see the self-determining efforts of Indigenous peoples. Often, the view held by Indigenous peoples and federal and provincial governments are at odds. For example, the Haudenosaunee do not see themselves as “within” the constitution of Canada, but as a “parallel government” (Olthius et al., 2012, p.3). In this light, they recognize the authority of their own laws and knowledge. The findings from the TRC make apparent the need for the revitalization of Indigenous laws as a necessary step in reconciliation (Napoleon & Friedland, 2016). Borrows (2010) explains the importance of deep and interconnected knowledge of the land as a precursor to exercising agency and informing good decisions within these self-determining efforts. The imposition of policy and laws designed to undermine Indigenous sovereignty, perpetuate inferiority, and advance efforts of state sovereignty is evidenced throughout Canada’s history and can be seen further in the case of Inuit in Labrador, Canada.

1.3.1 A Lasting Colonial Legacy: Inuit society and Governance in Labrador

Canada’s colonial history is multifaceted and enduring. The influence of early colonists on Inuit society in Labrador is pronounced, the perils of which are still seen and felt today through scholarly and other accounts of Inuit history and in the geographic and boundary driven expressions of Inuit history and governance in Labrador (Rankin, Stopp, & Crompton, 2015; Procter, 2020; Pope 2015; Royal Commission on Labrador, 1974; Alcantara, 2013). Early accounts of European and Inuit interaction along the Labrador coast illustrate that Inuit were active agents (Rankin, Stopp, & Crompton, 2015) and persistent in their violent resistance of European whalers,

fishers and traders whose intent it was to exploit the rich marine resources in the region (each summer dating back to the 15th century) (Pope, 2015). In 1763, Britain gained colonial control of Labrador from the French and the violence continued (NunatuKavut, 2010). In the years leading up to 1765, and in their attempts to further their exploitative efforts on Inuit lands in south Labrador, the British (and before that, the French), made several attempts to enter into treaties with Inuit (NCC, 2010). In 1765, the British were finally successful in making a peace and friendship treaty with Inuit in southern Labrador (NunatuKavut Community Council, 2020). The Crown also encouraged and invited the Moravian missionaries to establish trading posts and mission stations further north, in their attempt to move Inuit out of the south, leaving the lucrative fishing resources in the south free from Inuit interference (Hiller, 1971). Despite the attempts by Moravians to draw Inuit north, Inuit continued to live in the south and along the entire coast of Labrador (Procter, 2020a). However, British and Moravian efforts towards the containment of Inuit and the pursuit for control and economic gain from a resource rich land, continued.

Newfoundland's confederation with Canada in 1949 marks a more modern historical account of Inuit relations with colonists, that continued to illustrate a disregard for Inuit autonomy and peoplehood by Canada and the newly formed province of Newfoundland. Confederation with Canada failed to bring with it any wider understanding or commitment to Indigenous peoples of the province generally, or Inuit in Labrador specifically (Procter, 2012). In fact, there was no mention of Aboriginal peoples in the Terms of Union nor clarification of their status within the new province and country (Hanrahan, 2003), and the Premier of Newfoundland held steadfast in his position at the time that there were no Indigenous peoples in the province of Newfoundland. While this new relationship with Canada meant that Canadian citizens would now enjoy some of the benefits associated with citizenship, for the Inuit in Labrador it would be some years before they were "recognized" and granted access to services and supports available to other Indigenous

peoples within the country (Tompkins, 1988; Hanrahan, 2003).

In the early part of the 1950s the federal government finally agreed to some degree of fiduciary responsibility for the Indigenous peoples of Newfoundland (which included Labrador), and they struck an agreement with the province to cost share on matters respecting health, social and economic development (Royal Commission on Labrador, 1974). The basis for identifying Inuit that would receive supports was predicated upon geography and for the most part, recipient communities were designated on the basis of what communities' governments deemed to be within Moravian territory, and not upon any definition or understanding of Inuit themselves (Procter, 2020a). The designated communities consisted of Hebron, Nutak, Nain, Hopedale, Makkovik and Postville. Later, the communities of Rigolet (1967), Black Tickle (1972) and Mud Lake (1975) were included, with the later exclusion of Black Tickle and Mud Lake from this list (Procter, 2020a). The later exclusion of Black Tickle (a community represented today by NCC) from community designation came two years after the Labrador Inuit Association (LIA) filed their comprehensive land claim to the federal government. Meeting minutes from a Federal-Provincial committee on financial assistance for Indians and Eskimos on August 31, 1979, revealed that the LIA specifically proposed that both Black Tickle and Mud Lake be excluded from the list of designated communities (Minutes of Federal-Provincial Committee on Financial Assistance for Indians and Eskimos, 1979). Their exclusion was related to the LIA comprehensive land claim and LIA's prerogative to determine eligibility criteria given the fact that a participation formula would be required if the LIA reached a final land claim settlement (President Edmunds, 1977).

Over time, and demonstrated by the example above, the province of Newfoundland and the federal government, further reinforced the boundary declared by Moravians to be that of Inuit settlement (e.g., financial, social and economic development resources to Inuit communities in Labrador, failure to recognize Inuit in the south and their exclusion, etc.). This is despite the fact

that in pre-and early contact society, Inuit travelled freely over the Labrador coast (Rankin, 2014; Crompton, 2014) and they remained in the south after Moravian Missionaries attempted to move Inuit north (Procter 2020a), and this is further confirmed by the presence of Inuit in the south into present day (Rankin, 2014; 2015). Furthermore, there exists clear Inuit genealogical and cultural connections in south Labrador today (NunatuKavut, 2010).

Modern Inuit governance in Labrador is rooted in a varied and complex colonial history- one that cannot be simply understood on the basis of arbitrary decisions about who is, or is not, Inuit. The impact of early Inuit-colonist relations have had significant consequences for the 20th and 21st century, whereby the division between the non-Moravian territory in the south and the Moravian territory in the north has manifested into two distinct Inuit territories-that of NunatuKavut in the south and Nunatsiavut in the north (Procter, 2020a). Similarly, these early divisions that have given rise to modern Inuit society are not a historical or modern reflection of ‘authentic’ Indigeneity- matters concerning identity are owned by Indigenous peoples themselves. Identity is not unimpacted by settler interpretation of Indigeneity, however (Kennedy, 2015; 2014). Rather, modern Inuit society and the way in which governance is expressed in Labrador is largely shaped by colonists’ interests in control of and power over lands, resources and people. For example, Kennedy (2015) states that “by the early twentieth century, speculators considered Labrador an unbounded wilderness awaiting industrial projects; distant investors envisioned grandiose schemes” (p.198-199). In a more recent context, the relationship between colonial control and power of lands and the connection to Indigenous self-government can be seen in the way that resource development in Voisey’s Bay Labrador evolved with the expedition of the LIA land claims settlement as a result of increased interest from governments in their willingness to negotiate with the LIA and Innu Nation (O’Faircheallaigh, 2016).

Representing Inuit in the north, the Nunatsiavut Government (formerly the LIA) settled their land claim with the federal government in 2005. This marked the end of an era of persistent negotiations between Inuit from this region with Canada and the Province of Newfoundland (and later, Labrador) with respect to their Comprehensive Land Claim (CLC), which was filed in 1977. Their efforts and success are not to be understated. They too represent the role that Inuit do and can play in asserting their rights to their lands and lives. However, their road to finalizing their land claim was not unmarked by struggle. Procter (2012; 2016) examined, for example, how concepts of cultural difference and culture impact the struggles for economic and political control in Nunatsiavut, Labrador. She states (p.133):

Echoes of the Moravian Missions' attempts at cultural, geographic, and economic containment and isolation can be seen in both Inuit leaders' claims for self-government as they engage historical constructs, and in the attempts of the state to limit these claims.

Inuit governance in Labrador today is a further manifestation of the early colonial boundaries applied by the Moravian missionaries and the British, and later perpetuated by the provincial and federal governments. Just as Indigenous governance systems broadly have been impacted by colonial interference (Borrows & Rotman, 1998), so too were Inuit impacted by colonial interference in pre and post confederation Labrador. Today, the Inuit territories of NunatuKavut to the south and Nunatsiavut to the north, both give expression to governance and self-determination on their lands.

In representing Inuit in the southeast (and central Labrador), and in their efforts towards self-government, a CLC was filed with the federal government in 1991 and under the organizational name of the Labrador Metis Nation (LMN) - previously the Labrador Metis Association (LMA) and known today as the NCC. The claim that was filed in 1991, and all consequent supplemental information regarding the claim, was then and remains today, an Inuit based claim (NCC, 2010). The 1991 CLC filing by LMN was not meant to be exhaustive nor final,

as understood by both the LMN and Department of Indian and Northern Development (DIAND) at the time (LMN, 2002). There were subsequent supplemental documents submitted to the federal government, culminating with the 2010 submission entitled: Unveiling NunatuKavut (NunatuKavut, 2010).

In June 2018, NCC was accepted into Canada's new process, namely, the RIRSD, with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in September 2019. The RIRSD is a fairly new process that Canada has implemented in their stated efforts to advance the "recognition of Indigenous rights and self-determination" (Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, 2019). The MOU with NCC, signed in 2019, exists to guide self-government discussions and negotiations on matters of interest between NCC (representing NunatuKavut Inuit) and Canada.

Today, Inuit in Canada and in Labrador continue to assert their rights to and on their lands through their efforts to self-govern. Aboriginal rights and title are the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples (McNeil, 2016), including Inuit in Labrador. Generations of colonization in Labrador have impacted the current state of knowledge, scholarship and governance as it relates to Inuit in both NunatuKavut and Nunatsiavut. This study takes care to avoid laying blame or pointing fingers at Inuit groups or Inuit leaders, offering instead a way to interpret and re-consider Inuit history that holds accountable the colonists and their governing institutions. Despite generations of interference on Inuit lands and the impacts on Inuit society in Labrador, both Inuit groups in Labrador (in NunatuKavut and Nunatsiavut) should be upheld and celebrated as they continue to serve the interests and rights of the people they represent, despite a colonial history and present.

While the experience of colonization in Canada is not unique to Inuit, the reality of colonial governance structures and institutions have undermined the ability of NunatuKavut communities to determine for themselves as Inuit, the future of their communities (see chapter four: Hudson &

Vodden, 2020, and chapter five for more information). Colonial governments have sustained their presence in NunatuKavut through the elevation of Western European ways of knowing as superior (e.g., laws) and the attempted dispossession of Inuit from their lifeways and land (as described in detail above and further in the chapters that follow). Such realities have led to the production of false narratives (e.g., the claim that there are no Inuit in south Labrador) that serve the agenda of the colonizer in a quest to control lands and resources. This project seeks to respectfully acknowledge both the historical and present-day reality of colonization and the impacts to NunatuKavut Inuit and the sustainability of their communities, while also demonstrating the strength and determination of Inuit as they continue to persist, resurge and resist colonial structures with a view towards revitalizing their communities.

1.4 Situating Sustainability as a Concept and its Relevance for Inuit-Led Planning and Governance

In an increasingly global world and economy, and in the face of global challenges such as climate change, discussions geared towards planning for a sustainable future are becoming more commonplace. As a globally recognized research and policy concept, sustainability was driven from the 1987 Brundtland report, which expressed the aim of reconciling the need for both environmental protection and human development in the interest of current and particularly future generations (Kuhlman & Farrington, 2010; World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). More recently, in 2015, a sustainable development agenda was adopted by 193 UN members that committed to national and international cooperation to take action to better the world in areas like health, poverty, education, economic growth, environmental protection, etc., through 17 sustainable development goals (United Nations, 2015). The idea of sustainability has been evolving over centuries and as a direct response to matters and dialogue surrounding human progress (Du, 2007). Kuhlman and Farrington (2010) maintain that over time, evolving and

contested definitions of sustainability have proven problematic, with sustainability remaining difficult to measure. Others claim that sustainability is many things all at once- “it is a goal, an idea, an umbrella, and a sub discipline of multiple disciplines” (Stock & Burton, 2011). Waas, Hugé, Block, Wright, Benitez-Capistros, and Verbruggen (2014) agree with the challenges of defining and measuring sustainability. Other scholars have further critiqued sustainable development, arguing that it has illustrated promise and at the same time ignited the concerns of some who fear that the very malleability of the term, which allows it to be adapted across situations, from global to local interests, may also allow it justify or reinforce destructive environmental or social activities (Kates, Parris, & Leiserowitz, 2005). This is of concern and relevance to Indigenous governance and planning work.

Jokhu and Kutay (2020) suggest that the primary cause of technological developments in pursuit of sustainability in recent times is globalization. Global efforts to identify global approaches to sustainability are a part of the work of sustainability scientists. Yet, there is also a growing recognition of the importance of place specific sustainability goals that are appropriate for local contexts (Crate, 2006). As one example, Nilsson and Larsen (2020) point to the need to develop sustainability goals and strategies in Arctic regions that are aligned with Arctic needs, knowing that these may differ from global efforts and responses. Rural and remote regions often face additional barriers to sustainability that require attention given their dependency on local ecosystems for their livelihoods, knowledge systems, cultures, health and well-being, as well as challenges and gaps in infrastructure, financial and human resource means, etc. (Markey, Connelly & Roseland, 2010; Kipp et al., 2019; Crate, 2006). In NunatuKavut, Labrador, place-based community planning and Inuit centred research has highlighted that community sustainability challenges are largely externally driven, and these communities share similarities with other Inuit and northern communities in areas like resource depletion, economic development opportunities,

reduction in provincial and federal government services, impacts to health and well-being, etc. (Hudson & Vodden, 2020; Mercer, Parker, Hudson & Martin, 2020).

Despite these ongoing debates, Stock and Burton's (2011) work demonstrates that sustainability, and related research, is integral to global and local interests and it will continue to need collaboration across boundaries. National and international governments face limitations in their ability to effect change alone (Hajer et al., 2015). Hajer et al. (2015) explain that additional agents of change need to be mobilized across areas like cities, businesses, civil society, to name a few. They state that "multiple perspectives on sustainable development are needed that respond to the various motives and logics of change of these different actors" (p.1652). In the Arctic, sustainability has become a central concept and its meaning can be interpreted diversely across different actors (i.e., Indigenous people, governments, etc.) (Gad, Jakobsen, & Strandsbjerg, 2017). This is particularly relevant to Inuit who occupy Arctic and Subarctic territories, where Indigenous peoples often have strong organizational representation and decision-making autonomy (Gad, Jakobsen, & Strandsbjerg, 2017).

When sustainability is framed as a decision-making strategy it is "moving beyond rhetoric and turning sustainability and its action guiding power into an action generating concept" (Waas et al., 2014, p. 5515). Waas et al. (2014) claim that decision making tools are important to tend to a gap in implementation across: "interpretation, information structuring and influence" (p. 5513). Locating effective ways to develop and implement sustainability goals are crucial as gaps and failures in implementation are a noted reality in the field of sustainability (Hajer et al., 2015; Hák et al., 2018; Holman, 2009). Community planning is an example of one tool for decision-making and implementation of sustainability goals at the local level.

Since its widespread adoption as a concept in the late 1980s, sustainability has become a commonly cited aim in community planning (e.g., Lowery & Vodden, 2017; Holisko & Vodden,

2015; Bantjes, 2011; Holden, 2012). An Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (or ICSP), as an example, is defined as a “a high-level overarching document for a community that is informed by sustainability principles and guides the community into the future” (Baxter & Purcell, 2007, p.35). In Canada, ICSPs became common in the mid to late 2000s as a requirement for receiving federal “gas tax” funds to support physical infrastructure development (Holden, 2012). While community planning appears to offer much potential for defining and addressing sustainability goals, as noted above, many rural, remote and/or resource-dependent communities are marked by a lack of infrastructure or other barriers that challenge sustainability planning and implementation like financial resources, human capacity, and climate change to name a few (Markey, Connelly & Roseland, 2010; Hall, Vodden & Greenwood, 2016). Furthermore, local people themselves, and as particularly evidenced in Indigenous rural and remote community contexts, have often been marginal to the planning process (Hibbard, Lane, & Rasmussen, 2008).

Recent scholarship and practice have called for more inclusive planning approaches that involve multi-stakeholder or participatory processes and co-construction of a shared vision (Holden, 2012). As a result, these community sustainability plans often take into consideration the social and cultural norms, and relationships that exist in a place and between people (Vodden, Baldacchino, & Gibson, 2015). In Nunatsiavut, Labrador it is recognized that Inuit approaches to sustainability are relevant, and a Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI) was implemented that seeks to “ensure individual and community well-being in climate adapted communities (Reidsperger, Goldhar, & Sheldon, 2017, p. 317). This form of community led sustainability planning was well evidenced in NunatuKavut during the CGSI described in this research. For further information see chapter four, Hudson and Vodden (2020).

1.4.1. Indigenous-Led Community Sustainability Planning

Community specific planning guidelines that reflect the principles of the people in their communities are relevant to the aims of this study. Indigenous practices in governance and planning can lend towards more sustainable communities (Jokhu & Kutay, 2020). There is an interest on behalf of planners in planning approaches that are long term and adaptable to change (Walker, Haasnoon, & Kwakkel, 2013). Adaptability is a key feature of Inuit societies (Hák et al., 2017) and the need for adaptability, flexibility, and responsive approaches in rural, remote and Indigenous led community sustainability planning is evidenced in this study (see chapter four for more information) and in contemporary community sustainability planning scholarship (Vodden, Baldacchino, & Gibson, 2015; Kates, Parris & Leiserowitz, 2005). While uncertainties are a reality, and an impediment to sustainability, Walker et al. (2013) explain that planning for change while being adaptable and flexible is integral to sustainability into the future. The authors cite the importance of exploring and anticipating uncertainties, connecting long term goals and short-term goals, and planning for and committing to actions in the short term while remaining open for the future (Walker et al., 2013).

Although there have been advancements in sustainability science from Western scholarship, Indigenous peoples also have their own forms of knowledge, expertise and governance and it is therefore not practical for Indigenous societies to depend upon global or national knowledge and expertise for creating their sustainable futures (McGregor, Whitaker, & Sritharan, 2020). However, Indigenous participation in planning processes and their ability to exert control and autonomy has been notably marginalized, particularly given the primary role of external planning actors (Hibbard, Lane, & Rasmussen, 2008). Over time, external planning actors have been active in the dispossession and marginalization of Indigenous peoples (Ugarte, 2014). The Brundtland report contained a section on Indigenous peoples that identified the destructive role of formal

developments on Indigenous cultures, while at the same time emphasizing that traditional rights and the preservation and protection of Indigenous or local institutions are necessary (Crate, 2006). Yet, it has been a common practice of governments to ignore this finding in the report (Crate, 2006).

There has long been a disconnect between sustainability science and Indigenous science whereby Western science has not fully engaged Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous rights in scientific inquiry (Johnson, Howitt, Cajete, Berkes, Louis, & Kliskey, 2016). In their work, Johnson et al. (2016) challenge the presumptive authority of the scientific method and call for a reframing of the method that includes relationships and listening with respect. This call can be taken up within research related to community planning as well, as it has been in this study. This study seeks to contribute to the discourse surrounding sustainability science from the perspective of Inuit as they plan for the future on their lands, and whereby planning is integral to Indigenous governance (see chapters four and five for more information). This study is especially timely as Western forms of enquiry have not always engaged adequately Indigenous knowledge and rights (Johnson, Howitt, Cajete, Berkes, Louis, & Kliskey, 2016) including those of Inuit in this study. However, “Indigenous peoples possess deep connections to place and knowledge of the land upon which they have lived for thousands of years” (McGregor, 2013, p.428), and these connections are central to Indigenous led community sustainability planning. This study seeks to address an existing gap in the way that Indigenous peoples are often left out of planning processes by ensuring that Inuit lead planning on their terms (see chapter four, Hudson & Vodden, 2020).

1.4.2 Sustainability and Governance in a time of Changing Realities amongst Inuit

Inuit have been evolving and adapting to a changing world around them for millennia (Sackett, 2002). The way that Inuit have adapted, and continue to do so, reinforces the significance

of Inuit life ways and Inuit autonomy (or rather, governance practices) to ensuring their very survival. Arctic regions of the world, that are primarily occupied by Inuit, are experiencing rapidly growing and significant changes (Dodds, 2012). Discussions around Arctic governance are thought to be driven by the realities of transforming geographies. Dodds (2012, p.2) states, for example, that the “thinning and disappearing sea ice, melting permafrost, and circumpolar climate change, however locally and regionally varied, are commonly identified as playing their part in unsettling the geographies of Arctic governance.” Scholars point out that social and geographic location impact the perception of sustainability (Fondahl & Wilson, 2017). This is particularly relevant to sustainability planning in Inuit societies as Inuit themselves are experienced in adaptation (Sackett, 2002) and are currently experiencing rapid changes to their environment (ice thickness and weather) and way of life (hunting) as a result of things like climate change (Ford, Pearce, Duerden, Furgal, & Smit, 2010). As such, there is a clear connection between geography (homeland) and governance (autonomy to make decisions) in informing a sustainable future in the context of Inuit.

It is well accepted that sustainability is a priority concern across the north, with sustainable development being hindered by a multitude of factors-including climate change and globalization (Fondahl & Wilson, 2017). Food, water and health insecurities are also prevalent amongst Inuit communities and hinder sustainability in Arctic and sub-Arctic regions. For example, authors point to the degree of challenges faced by Black Tickle (a community in this study and located in the Inuit region of NunatuKavut) as being significantly impacted by food, water, health and heat related insecurities (Hanrahan, Sarkar, & Hudson, 2014; Mercer, Parker, Hudson, & Martin, 2020). Research in the Nunatsiavut region of Labrador highlights the impacts of climate change to health, infrastructure, culture, education, among others (Ford, Couture, Bell, & Clark, 2018). A Nunatsiavut Government research program called *Going Off, Growing Strong* seeks to build resiliency and address solutions to food insecurity in two communities on the North coast by

engaging at risk youth in land-based activities (hunting, harvesting, food preparation, etc.) (Hirsch, Angnatok, Winters, Pamak, Sheldon, Furgl, & Bell, 2014). Recent research further supports similar realities in the NunatuKavut community of Black Tickle (Hudson & Vodden, 2020; Mercer, Parker, Hudson, & Martin, 2020), illustrating that they are not unlike other Inuit regions across the North in Canada (Ford, Pearce, Duerden, Furgal, & Smit, 2010; Ford & Pearce, 2012) who experience similar challenges.

Opportunities to address these sustainability realities from a governance and, more specifically, a community planning (and implementation) perspective are varied and diverse across Inuit regions in Canada. Four of five Inuit groups in Canada have settled land claims, while NunatuKavut Inuit do not (see chapter five for more information). Integral to sustainable futures is the ability and capacity of individuals to make decisions that impact them and their future (Ozkan & Schott, 2017). Those groups with land claims have a relationship with federal and provincial counterparts whereby jurisdictional matters are defined and set out, and autonomy and control are vested (to various degrees) with the Indigenous group. Yet, challenges remain and in 2003 Indigenous groups with modern treaties formed a Land Claims Agreement Coalition to push for improved policies around treaty implementation (Standing Senate Committee on Aboriginal Peoples, 2008). During a recent Modern Land Claims Coalition conference in February 2020 in Gatineau, Quebec, Inuit and other Indigenous groups presented about their experiences in treaty implementation with Canada, noting flawed policy and process in treaty implementation that does not align with the spirit and intent of the treaty. Yet, land claimant groups undoubtedly have an advantage over non-land claimant groups in matters respecting governance on their lands (Alcantara, 2013). This creates inequitable and unequal realities on the ground and impact the way that Inuit can respond to priority concerns around sustainability in the North. This is particularly relevant for the study communities in this research. The advantage of modern treaties or land

claims agreements are relevant to discussions of sustainability planning in the North. The need for autonomy and governance in sustainability planning in Inuit communities and regions across the North is pronounced. As Fondahl and Wilson (2017, p.9) state, “a focus on local understandings of, and approaches to, sustainability may offer a much-needed counterpoint to sustainability initiatives imported from the south and informed by comprehensions distant from local values, philosophies and practices.”

The literature reviewed above illustrates the need for Inuit autonomy and Inuit led governance in leading and making decisions that impact them on their lands. When decisions are made and instituted by foreign governance systems, foreign ideas, values and perspectives take the lead and shape governance and ultimately Inuit lives. Inuit have proven innovative over hundreds of years in their ability to sustain themselves, their kinship networks, and communities. Community sustainability planning methods in the North must learn from the past and build on the strength of Inuit experiences in designing and leading a future on their terms. This research study seeks to create opportunities to do just that.

Chapter 2. Research Approach and Conceptual Framework:

Supporting Inuit Connections to Lands, Waters and Ice

2.1 Indigenous Storytelling in Research, Sustainability and Governance

The conceptual framework guiding this research, discussed previously in chapter one and as further elaborated on in chapter three, validates Indigenous knowledge, worldviews and perspectives as integral to research design that challenges and confronts a history of colonial research on Indigenous lands. Smith (2012) explains that “the term research is inextricably linked to European imperialism and colonialism” (p.1). Therefore, research must be conducted in ways that are compatible with the values, goals and ideology of Indigenous peoples. Recognizing the role that Indigenous peoples have played, and continue to play, in preserving and conserving their lands, culture and traditions for generations is integral to the conceptual framework of this study.

The approach to this study also borrows from the work of Shawn Wilson (2008) by building on his description of an Indigenous research paradigm to ensure a culturally relevant and appropriate approach to research design and methodology. In this study, ontology, epistemology, methodology and axiology are informed by Inuit realities. The ontological basis of this study is rooted in the very existence of Inuit in NunatuKavut today and throughout history. Inuit in this region exist as rights holders on, and as part of, their ancestral lands. What is real and who we are is understood in relation to our lands, communities and ancestors. The lands, waters, ice and interconnected relationships to which Inuit belong and continue to maintain, inform and guide epistemology. Culturally relevant methodology assisted with engaging Inuit in this study in ways that respect their existence as a people, while recognizing them as experts on their lands. Axiology, grounded in Inuit perspectives and values, further guided and shaped this study. Inuit were revered as knowledge holders, experts and rights holders with autonomy to guide and make decisions on their lands. Inuit values respecting reverence for culture, tradition, family, health, safety, respect for

all relations (human and natural environment), and responsibility to community and to each other served to guide the search for knowledge in this study.

A strength and rights-based approach was taken in pursuit of Inuit-led community sustainability planning and in interpreting and describing Inuit governance priorities and practices. The stated goals of this research sought to identify pathways to self-determination by informing and adhering to Inuit research practices (detailed in chapter three), illustrating Inuit-led sustainability planning (detailed in chapter four) and articulating Inuit governance priorities and practices (detailed in chapter five) from the values, perspectives and worldviews of the people who live on their lands and who were a part of this study. As a result, an Indigenous research paradigm was vital to guiding this research project. Indigenous Peoples in Canada have been engaged in and leading research on their own lands since time immemorial (Stewart-Harawira, 2013). Inuit led research was one of the fundamental elements of this study.

Storytelling, which privileges Indigenous knowledge, worldviews and perspectives, was key to grounding the conceptual framework of this study and to ensuring that the results reflected the strength and resilience of Inuit, while respecting their Indigenous rights in the process. Indigenous scholar Lori Lambert (2014, p. xi) writes that “oral tradition and learning from the land itself are deep sources of knowledge that must be included in research methods as well as in the analysis of data.” Indigenous scholars Corntassel, Chaw-win-is, and T’lakwadzi (2009) add that “Indigenous storytelling is connected to our homelands and is crucial to the cultural and political resurgence of Indigenous nations” (p. 137). Indigenous scholar Thomas King (2003), writes “The truth about stories is that that’s all that we are” (p. 2). As a result, storytelling as a form of knowledge production was embraced and prioritized in this study and further analysed and interpreted as related to sustainability and governance. I chose to utilize Indigenous research methodology given the colonial history of research practices on Indigenous peoples and

communities globally, and NunatuKavut Inuit specifically. This methodology ensured space for storytelling to inform research practice and methods and validated that the stories from Inuit themselves were and are important sources of knowledge and expertise. This is particularly evident in chapter four and five, where stories, and research methods like community gatherings, participant led workshops and strength-based dialogue, supplied a wealth of data and insights.

The conceptual framework of this study also recognizes my role as researcher. Borrowing from Indigenous scholar Margaret Kovach (2009) the following makes transparent the way I, as researcher and community member, see and understand the world in which I live and work. A conceptual framework shapes researcher belief about the production of knowledge and is a necessary part of research that influences knowledge production and outcomes (Kovach, 2009). For example, Kovach (2009) writes that “the use of conceptual frameworks to reveal privileged epistemologies can work towards instigating change or, at the least, mitigate methodological inconsistencies that tend to arise when integrating Indigenous and western methods” (p.43). Given the location of my research and the collaborative and reciprocal learning processes that were intended from the beginning of my research journey, I chose to employ a conceptual framework that privileges that which is most relatable to Inuit in their place (as I have learned from experience, belonging, active listening and observing) and which continues to ground them as a people today (as I continue to see and hear from people themselves): Land, Ice and Waters. There is no greater way to describe one’s sense of belonging than in relation to the land, ice, waters and people to which NunatuKavut Inuit belong (Hudson, Moore & Procter, 2015). The reality of these relationships between humans, land, ice and waters, and all that is contained within and upon it (including planning and governance models that impacts these relationships), is indicative of a people and a place who live in relation with their world and community. Wilson (2008) explains that “relationships do not merely shape reality, they are reality” (p.7). It is with this reality in mind

that the conceptual framework for this study is understood and interpreted. The knowledge and expertise of Inuit, in their time and place, and as guided and informed by their continuous and necessary relations with the land, ice and waters that they call home, inform this approach. This means that people's values, worldviews and perspectives, grounded in the lands, waters, ice and relations around them, have shaped and guided this study. This approach is further supported by the knowledge and expertise of leading Indigenous scholars who privilege the role of storytelling in ensuring strength and rights-based, Indigenous led research (as described above).

2.2 Research Design and Methodology

As described above, this research study employed Indigenous and qualitative research methodology that privileged the stories of Indigenous peoples on their own lands. Both forms of enquiry were chosen for this study given the varied, interdisciplinary and often complex nature of the study itself. The balance of both forms of enquiry served to further enrich the outcome. In fact, the two were not mutually exclusive. Aspects of qualitative research are supportive of and conducive to Indigenous research (Kovach, 2009). This research sought to ensure cultural integrity and validity through an Indigenous research framework, and supportive qualitative methodology that aligned well with Indigenous research methodology.

This research was designed in collaboration with NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC) and in ways that were relevant and built upon the knowledge, expertise and autonomy of Inuit in this study. The conceptual framework (described earlier), along with the methodology and specific methods further ensured that the research remained committed to the values, perspectives and interests of NunatuKavut Inuit and the NCC. Collaborative efforts and community knowledge (including that of Inuit governance representatives, community knowledge holders and elders, experiences shaped by the land, water and ice to which Inuit belong, and the reflections and experiential knowledge of the researcher), all provided sources of knowledge from a place of

strength to inform the design and goals of this research study.

Community members' continued interest in cultural and community preservation despite experiencing the negative impacts to community by government policies over the years (cutbacks in government spending, lack of services, lack of investment in necessary infrastructure), make the pilot communities (introduced in chapter one and referenced below) in this study ideal for learning and visioning for further growth in the region. The ability to assist and facilitate opportunities for these pilot communities, and NunatuKavut broadly, aid in NCC learning and growth as it relates to updating tools and knowledge to engage and work with communities across NunatuKavut. In addition, providing opportunities for communities otherwise often identified as marginal (due to reasons noted above), gave space for community voice in ways that many community members felt they had long been without (see chapter four for more detail). An approach to equity was important to this study.

In partnership with the NCC, three select communities in NunatuKavut were identified as pilot communities for participation in this research project. The pilot communities were identified collaboratively and based on NCC's strategy to respond to significant and urgent community needs and interests as well as opportunities to learn from and across some of the most remote communities in NunatuKavut. The communities of Black Tickle, Norman Bay and St. Lewis were chosen for diverse reasons related to their relative and respective remoteness in NunatuKavut, loss of major industry, and other challenges such as water and fuel insecurity, to name a few, which community sustainability planning and governance offered potential to address. Given the infrastructure and related barriers, and the acute remoteness and access to community (particularly as it relates to Black Tickle and Norman Bay), these communities also continue to resist and resurge in the face of urbanization that is increasingly seeing necessary services go to communities and areas with larger populations. However, amidst the change and global impacts on these

communities, their strength, persistence and connection to homeland made them ideal pilot communities to do this work. Once the NCC agreed that these communities were ideal pilots for this study I connected with each of the communities via their respective governance structures (Local Service District in Black Tickle, Recreation Committee in Norman Bay, and Municipality in St. Lewis). I extended an invitation through these means and explained the goal of the research project and the anticipated role of each community. All three communities agreed to participate in this study. Research ethics approval was sought and obtained from Memorial University and from NCC before proceeding with data collection.

2.3 Methods

An interdisciplinary approach to data collection was undertaken in this study. Given the varied nature of engagement and participants' roles in the research study itself, data was collected in ways that were relevant, rigorous and conducive to collaborative research efforts in participation with the study communities and NCC. Data collection methods included focus groups, one on one interviews, surveys, community gatherings, participant submissions in writing, workshops and document review. See Table 4.3 in chapter four for a detailed breakdown of data collection activities. Participant observation, reflexive journaling and knowledge/lessons learned from community engagements also informed the data collection. Community members were made aware of my dual role as NCC employee and PhD researcher.

2.3.1 Focus Groups

Focus groups are a useful method when social interaction contributes to knowledge generation within a social context (Kitzinger, 1995; Morgan, 1997; Breen, 2006). Focus groups were used to collect data at the individual pilot community level and by bringing all three pilot communities together to discuss a particular topic. Four focus groups were completed in total (one focus group in each pilot community and one focus group at a workshop in Happy Valley-Goose

Bay (HVGB) that brought all three pilot communities together). The focus group in Back Tickle included seven participants, two participants in Norman Bay and six participants in St. Lewis. The focus group in Happy-Valley Goose Bay included ten participants from all three pilot communities. The format of these sessions was informal, and locations were chosen that were comfortable and agreeable to the participants. The focus group in HVGB took place at the workshop location and all representatives from each of the three pilot communities gathered together around multiple tables, facing each other during conversation. The themes of the focus group centred around community strengths and challenges, including an exploration of how participants felt about the role of various levels of government and organizations in responding to community needs and priorities. See further Appendix H. Recruitment to the focus groups in each of the pilot communities was done by invitation (word of mouth, social media notice). Recruitment for the focus group in HVGB looked somewhat differed. The focus group attendees were selected to attend the workshop in HVGB as representatives of the pilot communities and they agreed to participate in the focus group. During the focus group in each of the pilot communities, detailed notes were taken, including participant questions and interests related to planning for the future in their respective communities. These sessions were not audio recorded given the small numbers of participants and the level of comfort for the participants. During the focus group session in HVGB, however, the focus group was audio recorded (with the permission and signed consent of participants) and detailed notes were also taken to reflect the conversation.

2.3.2 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews are useful as a means to illicit the perceptions and experiences of individuals around complex and sensitive matters (Barriball, 1994). This form of interviewing provides for an opportunity to clarify participant response with probing (Barriball, 1994; Galletta, 2012). One on one interviews took place given the central role of interviewing to qualitative

methodology and the importance of capturing individual experiences of life in their community. Six interviews were conducted in total-one interview with a participant from Black Tickle, two interviews with participants from St. Lewis, and one interview with a participant from Norman Bay. These interviewees were selected based on participant openness and interest in participating in the interview. Three of these four interviewees were also engaged as community sustainability coordinators on the CGSI. Three of four participants were female, and all four participants maintained a deep connection to their community and have been active in the community in the past or during the time of the interview. Interviews also took place with two non-Indigenous individuals from outside of NunatuKavut who have been participatory to NCC's research and land claim journey and hold a wealth of related knowledge that spans multiple decades. All interviews were conducted face to face, via an online system known as go to meeting or by telephone. The latter two forms of interview techniques were necessary given the vast territory of NunatuKavut, where access to pilot communities can be challenging and expensive. In the case of the two external interviews, one interviewee was located in Newfoundland and the other in Ottawa. Recruitment was done by word of mouth and email invitation. All interviews were audio recorded, with the permission and signed consent of participants. See Appendix E.

Although interviews were guided by an interview guide (based on the research questions), interviews took on a conversational style (with me as someone they now knew and could relate with). Interview question themes centred around participant connection to community, perceived community strength and challenges, role of various levels of governments and ideas about the future. See further Appendix H. Thus, the interviews reflected a semi structured style. For example, in discussing the future of their communities, community members often recalled stories of how life was in the past, connecting their present day and future ideals of community to a past and to specific people and events from that past. The interviews took place at locations deemed

comfortable by the interviewees, and some were conducted via video conferencing. Some individuals decided to participate in both the one on one interview and the focus group interview. It became apparent that the one on one interview style was not well suited to this study and I learned quickly that the richest information and knowledge came from participants when they were encouraged to reflect in storytelling form, in a setting of two or more, with other people from their community.

2.3.3 Surveys

Qualitative surveys can assist with understanding the characteristics of the individual participants (Jansen, 2010). Surveys were used in this study to collect general data about community members in two of the three study communities (Norman Bay and St. Lewis). Survey questions sought to access information related to age, gender, community, and questions geared to better understand how and why community members participated in various aspects of community and cultural life, as well as the importance of community connection to the participants. See further Appendix H. This was an important supplemental method for the researcher to better understand participants connection to community, how and why they were connected, and what this looked like. There were 26 survey respondents in St. Lewis and Norman Bay in total. The surveys were not completed in Black Tickle given the nature of the researcher relationship to that community. Given that I grew up in Black Tickle, and am related to nearly all of the community, and shared in kind a particular way of life, my understanding of community and the importance of community and culture was already adequate. I had initially sought out to complete surveys in Black Tickle, but it became obvious that this form of data collection was too impersonal given the researchers' previous relationship with and knowledge of the community and the nature of the survey questions. It was imperative to ensure that all forms of data collection also aligned with the conceptual approach of this research, including engaging with participants in ways that were locally and

culturally relevant. The invitation to participate in surveys was extended by email and word of mouth.

2.3.4 Community Gatherings

Community gatherings also took place in each of the pilot communities and were ideal for researcher observation, co-learning, knowledge sharing and storytelling with and between community members. The gatherings ranged in size, with community population size being an influencing factor. These gatherings were open ended events and open to all members of the community. In some cases, people came and attended at their own leisure-coming and going as they pleased. In Black Tickle there were 25+ participants at a full day youth and community event. Participants were engaged in discussion about the future of the community, along with a discussion of community strengths and challenges. In Norman Bay there were six people who gathered for dialogue about the future of the community, including community strengths, challenges and success. A community tour led by the community sustainability coordinator (see chapter four for more detail) included information valuable for learning about the community and the role of community members to the community over decades. The gathering in St. Lewis hosted 40+ people for a community feast and youth and family event, with the help of the community sustainability coordinator. Additionally, the event in St. Lewis resulted in written submissions by community members describing what it is they love and value most about their community. Participants were invited by social media invitation and word of mouth. These gatherings in all three pilot communities allowed opportunities for community members to ask questions about the study and share any other thoughts or reflections they have as a community member.

2.3.5 Written Submissions

This study facilitated opportunities for written submissions from community members from each of the pilot communities. Participants were asked to describe what they value most about their

community in writing or picture form. The submissions were compiled into community specific booklets and disseminated back to the communities. They can be found here:

<https://nunatukavut.ca/departments/research-education-culture/>. There were 50 submissions in total (Black Tickle=12, Norman Bay=12 and St. Lewis =26). Participants were recruited via social media invitations and word of mouth.

2.3.6 Workshops

This study facilitated workshops and data were collected from participants during focused sessions related to the Community Governance and Sustainability Initiative (CGSI). Study participants attended two multi-day workshops in Happy Valley Goose Bay with ten participants in total in each workshop from the three pilot communities. Participants were identified within the pilot communities themselves, and under the direction of each pilot community governance structure. The first workshop provided opportunities to learn, strengthen skills (e.g., proposal writing, strength-based decision making, asset mapping, visioning), that was closed to pilot community participants. A second workshop took place, again with representatives from each of the three pilot communities. This workshop built on the work and lessons learned from the first workshop, and from the work of the community sustainability coordinators in each of the pilot communities (see chapter four for more information). Pilot community representatives presented about the work of the CGSI in each of their respective communities to an audience of community members, researchers and academics, and other stakeholders (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA); Nunacor). This workshop privileged community members as experts and knowledge holders. Stakeholders and researchers were later engaged by an invitation to ask questions following each of the community presentations. Networking opportunities were provided so that the goals and visions of the pilot communities could be discussed in depth between the community representatives and other participants, directly.

2.3.7 Document Review

Document review was also used as a data collection tool given the wealth of accumulated resources over many years related to NCC organization and governance, along with more recent resources that helped to inform this study and study context. Both *episodic* and *running records* were used as a part of data collection. Episodic records refer to those that are not ongoing or consistent forms of records, and are more casual, including, but not limited to manuscripts, memoirs and autobiographies. Running records are more consistent and more likely to be systematic, produced by governments and organizations, and available for extended to long periods of time (Johnson & Reynolds, 2005). Both episodic and running records added to my wealth of knowledge about NCC and Inuit historically, and the processes they have been involved in, in pursuit of self-determination over many decades.

Many of these records were accessed through NCC archival materials and are internal to NCC, and therefore confidential. These records were utilized only with NCC permission and to increase the knowledge base of the researcher and to further assist in analysis and interpretation of study results. In addition to reports commissioned by NCC and archival records, previous studies and other reports related to the history of NunatuKavut Inuit, the long land claim journey, and matters related to sustainability and governance more generally, were amply available. Materials were chosen for review based on their relevance and applicability to informing the study. A community engagement manual, informed by the work and contributions of community sustainability coordinators and community participants as part of this study, was also developed and included as a data source.

2.3.8 Participant Observation and Reflexivity

My observations and reflections as they relate to this research began early and as a young person growing up in Black Tickle, one of the pilot communities in this research. Reflexivity is

important in this study and my commitment to reflexivity throughout the research process was integral to the decolonization of my thoughts and interpretations of story, people and place. My early days and experiences of belonging cannot be removed or separated from knowledge production today. In many respects, I have had the privilege and countless opportunities to embed myself in the social, cultural and political life of much of what we are talking about today in this research. Furthermore, given that I grew up in a fairly politicized home, with grandparents and parents involved in the social and political production of community life in Black Tickle, my interest in community justice, if you will, began early. This life and way of knowing that I was brought up in is particularly significant today as I continue this work- the work of my ancestors, parents and grandparents. In this sense, I have always been a participant, observing and making meaning of the changes and dynamics throughout the years, how it impacted my home community, and the impact upon other neighboring coastal communities as well.

My role as an NCC employee since 2014 has provided me ample opportunity to engage with and get to know most communities in NunatuKavut through various events, activities, programming etc. As such, I have met and gained knowledge of St. Lewis and Norman Bay in capacities outside of this research project. This knowledge, and the observations that have contributed to it, has been invaluable to me in my ability to assist in the identification of pilot communities for this research and other aspects of the design and implementation of the study.

As employee, opportunities for observation throughout this study were many. Multiple community visits on matters directly related to the research including community meetings, informal meetings with knowledge holders to discuss the project, workshops related to the research project, telephone calls, emails, etc. Throughout the duration of this research project I visited each pilot community on average two to 6 times. Additionally, I remained connected to these communities through my work at NCC.

Given the nature of individual participation in this research, whether through interviews, focus groups, or engagement in various aspects of community governance and sustainability work, the knowledge, expertise and guidance of participants informed much of this work. As part of the community-led process of this research, participants (along with myself as research lead), discussed opportunities and ideas to strengthen not only their participation in the research process, but in matters of community sustainability planning and governance building. For example, the strength building activities that were built into the research methods created opportunities whereby participants were better equipped to identify perceived gaps or skills building priorities that they saw as directly relevant to them as the CGSI unfolded, and in sustainability planning work. My interconnected role as researcher, NCC employee, and community member positioned me to identify interests and needs as well, allowing me to bring forth ideas about the ways that I could work with participants to help fill these gaps in communities while adhering to the need for research to be beneficial to community. Some examples of this included activities geared towards capacity strengthening in proposal writing, mentorship to increase understanding of the potential roles of various stakeholders and partners, and helping to connect the ways in which participants could visualize and articulate community goals and priorities to relevant partners, etc. In some cases, I brought communities together directly with potential funders and/or partners who could further enhance and/or contribute to some of the communities' identified sustainability priorities.

The community-led aspects of this research also resulted in gatherings that were conducive to important storytelling and knowledge sharing. These gatherings were some of the most enriching and profound experiences within the research, as they were also useful in connecting and re-connecting participants to Inuit culture and tradition. Furthermore, these gatherings were capacity strengthening and knowledge sharing opportunities for myself as research lead. These experiences were personally enriching and served to validate my connection to place and our culture as well.

I also engaged participants directly in discussions of governance with respect to their communities and I created space to discuss what was working well and not so well in their communities over time and today. In these settings, stories were shared that allowed participants to talk about governance from a place that resonated with them, based on their experiences in their respective communities. These discussions were valuable for expanding my knowledge base regarding, for example, the way that people often feel disconnected from governance in their communities and how this can translate into feeling isolated or marginalized from the decisions that are being made in the community. These discussions were also an opportunity to encourage participants to think about the role they can play, and the responsibilities they feel they have to their community.

It is noteworthy that the majority of the participants in the CGSI were female. This was an important aspect of the process as there are complex, historic realities that have effectually removed women and imposed barriers to their equal participation in representation and decision making in community. In these discussions it became evident that the marginalization of Inuit women over many generations, primarily due to colonial influences, has continued to impact the way that women perceive themselves in relation to matters of decision making in their communities. Indeed, there seemed to be a tradition whereby ‘outsiders’ or males (i.e., who have married into the community, or males from the community), occupy leadership or decision-making roles, and particularly in areas like hunting and harvesting discussions, fisheries matters, to name just a few examples. These are also important areas for community sustainability and impact food and job security in various ways. The over representation of outsiders or males in these settings often mean that the voice of Inuit women and their contributions to family and society (in these areas) go unheard or unaccounted for in decision making realms. Yet, women maintain an integral role in preserving community connectedness. The role of Inuit women in the social facets of

community life have and continue to remain pronounced, and they bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise to bear on sustainability planning and governance rebuilding in NunatuKavut. These observations were further realized in focused discussions on governance.

Overall, participant feedback and stories were necessary and helpful in informing ongoing governance and sustainability work in this study. Observations during, and reflection upon these gatherings allowed for another avenue of important data. Due to the nature of community feedback and the willingness of participants to discuss matters of importance to them related to the research study, and the way in which the researcher sought to create an environment in which feedback was welcomed, communities were open and relayed feedback that enhanced and furthered initiatives associated with governance and sustainability gatherings. Observation and reflection have added value and meaning to this study in the way that the knowledge and experiences of the participants have significantly contributed to nuanced understandings and articulations of research governance, sustainability planning and the reclamation of Inuit governance practices in NunatuKavut. The work of the CGSI appears to have been a successful endeavour in unsettling the otherwise patriarchal influences on governance systems in NunatuKavut. At the very least, these discussions and the ensuing collaborative work in this study have furthered my understanding of governance from an Inuit woman's lens-one that I look forward to expanding upon in future research. As a result, the sustainability process and work of participants in this study illustrate that governance, if it is to be carried out in ways that reflect the will of the people who belong to their lands, must be shared across diverse sectors of NunatuKavut-taking care to account for multiple sites of knowledge, experiences and expertise.

2.4 Analysis

A range of data collection strategies, employed from and integrating interdisciplinary backgrounds and Indigenous and qualitative research methodology, served to enhance the richness

of the data collected in this research project, allowing for a broad range of analysis and interpretation that was not limited by disciplinary methodological boundaries. This diverse approach was vital to data analysis. Inter-disciplinary methodology called for analysis that was cognizant of the diversity within the range of participants, as well as the importance of formal and informal interviewing, group-based methods (e.g. focus groups, workshops and gatherings), storytelling and document styles throughout each phase of this research.

Both qualitative and Indigenous methodology was employed in the interpretation and analysis of data and stories. Qualitative analysis was used in order to elicit meaning and understanding, and to develop and strengthen knowledge. In analyzing the data, I followed, in part, the guiding principles of grounded theory which offers “systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data to construct theories ‘grounded’ in the data themselves” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 1-2). The advantage of employing aspects of grounded theory is that it can assist in identifying broader themes and similarities and dissimilarities between storytellers. This method allowed the researcher to organize thoughts, keeping in mind that these thoughts, stories, reflections and data are all interconnected and cannot be analyzed or interpreted in isolation.

All interviews, focus groups, stories and conversations were transcribed from their audio format or in circumstances where audio was not used, detailed notes were taken, interpreted and analysed. The use of a storytelling approach to gathering data had implications for the way in which the data was analyzed. The stories and conversations themselves, and the knowledge and relevant expertise embedded within, largely informed the findings in relation to the objectives of this research. The voices of Inuit themselves was given ample space and credibility to inform this work. And, Inuit were revered as the experts and knowledge holders about matters impacting them on their lands.

I worked to ensure relationality and accountability by ensuring that the principles of Indigenous ontology and epistemology were at the fore throughout the analysis. Wilson (2008) maintains that an Indigenous ontology may have multiple realities, which is not unlike some other qualitative approaches, however, in the case of Indigenous ontology, “rather than being somewhere that is out there or external, reality is in the relationship that one has with the truth” (p.73). As Wilson (2008) explains: “Indigenous epistemology is our systems of knowledge in their context, or in relationship” (p.74). Of significance here is the fact that, “an object or thing is not as important as one’s relationship to it” (Wilson, 2008, p.73). Thus, relations and relationships were not separated or removed from their context in this research, including throughout the analysis. Consideration was given to both the relations of participants as they described them (as reflected in the relationships theme above) and the importance and relevance of my own relationships as simultaneously researcher, employee, community and family member. As an Indigenous research methodology must privilege relational accountability, “respect, reciprocity and responsibility” must be included and reflected upon in all phases and aspects of methodology (Wilson, 2008). Interpretation and subjective meaning making (Kovach, 2009) were employed in both the identification and analysis of themes and interpretations which derived from both the grounded theory and storytelling method. Thus, my commitment to accountability and to my relations as it relates to this work, was kept at the fore.

Both coding activities and holistic interpretation of the data assisted in the identification of key themes and values that Inuit in this study held in relation to living and remaining connected to their communities. Some of these values are interpreted and described in chapter four (place-based decision-making and community sustainability planning and table 4.4) and chapter five (related to Inuit governance interests and priorities). See table 2.1 below for a list of the key themes and values as they relate to community sustainability planning and governance that were identified and

used in iterative rounds of thematic analysis. Key themes were also disseminated back to community members and verified during community gatherings and feedback sessions. Overall the key themes demonstrate that Inuit in this study see and understand a connection between the values they hold (what is most important to them) and their vision for sustainability and governance in the future. These themes are briefly described below and further interpreted and described in chapters three, four and five.

Table 2.1

Key Themes and Values

Key Themes and Values
Community and Cultural Connection
Relationships
Education
Economic Security
Health of Humans and the Environment

2.4.1 Community and Cultural Connection

Participants described and talked about their deep and enduring connection to their home, community, ancestors, and families during all facets of data collection. Overwhelmingly, participants shared stories and commented in ways that demonstrated their connection to and desire to maintain traditional activities on their lands (i.e., hunting, harvesting, gathering, storytelling, etc.), and the importance of local knowledge and expertise in passing on these skills to the next generations, and in planning for the future. It was evident throughout the course of this study that

connection to place was central to Inuit values. This is discussed further in chapters three, four and five.

2.4.2 Relationships

Participants in this study value relationships to the lands, waters, ice, humans and animals around them. This study illustrated that multifaceted relationships are integral to the continued survival of Inuit on their lands, including the preservation of culture and rich traditions that continue to be important to them. Over the course of this study, participants described the value they saw in coming together across communities to share stories in planning and governance, for example. Both success stories and challenges associated with ensuring the survival of their communities and their ability to continue to live and raise children in their homes was discussed and emerged as priority matters. See chapters three, four and five for further information related to the significance of relationships in this study.

2.4.3 Education

Participants in this study saw the value of education in a variety of forms. They understood that a good education is necessary for their children and grandchildren to ensure their future (and this was further connected to their desire for economic stability in NunatuKavut). Additionally, many participants saw the importance of a culturally relevant education where children and youth see themselves reflected in the school curriculum. Finally, intergenerational education (e.g., from grandparent/elder to youth) was of stated importance to participants as they shared the importance of maintaining and passing on important cultural traditions through community based and experiential education both within and outside of the school system. Intergenerational education, borne from knowledge of generations past, is seen as integral to community sustainability planning in NunatuKavut. This form of education manifests in diverse ways and connects youth and community members to Inuit ways of being and knowing. These ways are seen as vital for survival

and living on the land. Therefore, education is understood as a way to pass on the tools and knowledge necessary for future generations to live on the lands of their ancestors. For example, Inuit in this region have identified that passing on traditional knowledge and skills by making seal skin clothing, komatik and snowshoe making, traditional food preparation, hunting and navigating the land, knowledge of weather patterns and ice, etc., are all important tools for connecting youth to Inuit ways of life and is necessary for the very survival of Inuit on their lands. In this study context, education is integral to community survival and cultural preservation in NunatuKavut. See chapters four and five for more information.

2.4.4 Economic Security

Participants in this study value self-sufficiency. Economic security is important for Inuit to continue to live in their communities and this is increasingly challenging for small and remote communities in NunatuKavut. Innovative and new economic development opportunities were seen as necessary for the survival of NunatuKavut communities where increasing globalization, out migration (for education and work) are creating challenges for younger adults to return home for work. Overall, participants valued economic development opportunities that integrate aspects of culture and tradition, and that respect the lands, waters and ice. See chapters four and five for more information.

2.4.5 Health of Humans and the Environment

Participants in this study highlighted health as highly important. This included the health of humans, lands, waters, ice and animal species. Participants drew a connection between health and governance. In fact, discussions around governance were overwhelmingly discussed in the context of health. Overall, the health of humans and that of the environment are important to the survival of communities and the people who live there. See chapter five for more information.

2.5 Statement of Ethical Issues

This research is connected to and has and will contribute to ongoing work with NCC. The goals and objectives of the research was reflective of NunatuKavut interests and supported by the NCC. An ethics application was submitted to the NCC research advisory committee for review and approval. Approval was received on March 21, 2017. Formal and written approval from the NCC was forwarded to Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics (ICEHR). An application to ICEHR was submitted and then approved on October 2017. Study participants were made aware of my dual role in this study.

As alluded to previously, NCC also has its own research ethics process, and it was necessary to apply for and gain approval from both NCC's ethics process and ICEHR at Memorial University. Memorial and other academic institutions have a role to playing ensuring the ethical conduct of research (per OCAP and Tri-Council policy). However, by navigating NCC's research ethics process and that of Memorial University simultaneously, a tension arose whereby the institutional ethics body surfaced as the default authority and this conflicted with my research approach and NCC's ethics decision on my research. Memorial's ethics review process required additional and, in some ways, information that appeared irrelevant to me and counterintuitive to my conceptual and methodological approach to research, supported by NCC. It is noteworthy that NCC's research ethics review application process was in the early stages of internal review (led by me as then Manager of Research, Education and Culture at NCC). This work was being done with a view towards building on the existing ethics process to develop a research governance protocol (a process to govern research in ways that extend beyond but include research ethics). Therefore, matters regarding research governance were already percolating (ultimately established as an outcome of this research study) to ensure that community priorities and interests are reflected in the what, why, how and who is participating in research in NunatuKavut. In this way, my research

study was alert to the nature of my responsibility and accountability to research in the study region, and as someone belonging to the lands and people of NunatuKavut. Therefore, in this study context, the institutional ethics protocol was not well suited to understand nor account for the responsibilities and accountabilities that I had in pursuing, leading and participating in research on my ancestral lands. By following key Inuit protocols in this study region I was tasked with ensuring that the research sought to positively impact and include the active participation of Inuit (i.e., their knowledge and experiences), in ways that aligned with the goals and priorities of NunatuKavut Inuit, and by ensuring that the research design was collaboratively developed and adapted to community needs and interests throughout the study. These protocols have since become integrated into an established research governance process at NCC.

Community limitations and gaps were identified in this research. Measures were taken to ensure that identified community gaps were not reproduced as community, collective or individual deficits by ensuring a strength-based approach to community collaboration throughout this study. Building on what works well, and privileging the knowledge and expertise of community members, was an intentional part of this work.

Participants in this project were encouraged to celebrate their communities, history and culture through the reclamation of traditional knowledge and values. Given the history of colonization in the region and the current political climate of fiscal restraints, this research bridges opportunities to reclaim one's history and knowledge and to use this knowledge to inform a sustainable future, while revitalizing Inuit governance practices in NunatuKavut.

The social and political realities of NunatuKavut Inuit have not been well documented, and when they have, these realities have often been misinterpreted and inaccurately reflected in the work of non-Indigenous academics, media, governments, etc. This research serves to counter this reality by contributing to a knowledge base that is informed by Inuit for Inuit. This knowledge is

largely lacking in the scientific and scholarly community to date.

Chapter 3: Manuscript 1

Reclaiming Inuit Knowledge in Pursuit of Self Governance:

Regulating Research Through Relationships

Hudson, A. and Bull, J. in Lough, David (ed). 2020. *Voices of Inuit Leadership and Self-Determination in Canada*. ISER Books, Memorial University, St. John's. pp.159-182.

3.1 Introduction

This chapter demonstrates the connections between Indigenous self-governance and research governance in the context of relationships between researchers, community members, and the land. Informed by the lessons learned through community-led sustainability research in three pilot communities in the Inuit territory of NunatuKavut, research experiences over time in NunatuKavut, including the 2006 research ethics review (Brunger & Bull, 2011), and ongoing research governance work that seeks to further enhance and build on research ethics protocols, this chapter explains how Inuit autonomy in research is an expression of self-governance and creates pathways for Inuit self-determination. From an Inuit governance perspective, the role of Inuit-led research in communities is a tool for community and cultural preservation. Research grounded in relationships based on respect and reciprocity further enhances community capacity and outcomes by building on the strengths, expertise, and local knowledge of Inuit in their time and place.

3.2 Background

NunatuKavut, which means “our ancient land,” refers to the homeland of approximately 6,000 Inuit belonging to southeast and central Labrador in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Labrador’s southeast coastal communities are remote, and some are fly in/out with a

seasonal ferry service during summer months only. Although there is road connection to most communities along the southeast coast due to the fairly recent Trans-Labrador Highway (TLH), the road itself is gravel (with some paved sections) without cell service or other amenities. Some NunatuKavut communities face varying degrees of water and food insecurity, and one remote community (Black Tickle) has no fuel or gas provider. Yet, NunatuKavut Inuit remain committed to life in their communities and maintain a connection to the land, sea, and ice as did their ancestors.

The NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC), an Inuit rights-based governing organization, represents the Indigenous rights for NunatuKavut Inuit. The council of elected officials representing six regions throughout NunatuKavut includes a president and vice-president. Its six departments respond to the interests, priorities, and needs of NunatuKavut communities: Office of the CEO; Research, Education and Culture; Environment and Natural Resources; Employment and Skills Development; Finance and Administration; Health and Social; and the Labrador West Indigenous Service Centre. The NCC asserts self-determination in research and governance.

In this context, it has led research initiatives that respond to community priorities, needs, and interests. One initiative builds upon Inuit governance and sustainable communities through self-determined research; this research will be referenced throughout the ensuing discussion. In sum, the NunatuKavut governance and sustainability research aims to bridge the gap between governance and political theory and practice in NunatuKavut. Further, this research assists in the translation and articulation of Inuit perspectives and worldviews that will create opportunities for resurgence and self-determination, enlightened by Inuit knowledge-holders in NunatuKavut. As the NCC continues to protect and ensure the rights of Inuit in NunatuKavut, community

expectations of NCC's governance role in NunatuKavut expands.

This chapter discusses the foundational role of relationships in regulating research in Indigenous communities generally and Inuit communities in NunatuKavut specifically. The interconnections between Inuit governance and research is supported by examples of research governance and leadership in NunatuKavut. Finally, pathways to self-determination through current community sustainability research in NunatuKavut are addressed, connecting the importance of autonomous and community-driven research to governance discussions.

3.3 Positionality of Authors

Given the importance of accountability to and in Indigenous research, as co-authors we position ourselves within this discussion. Being aware of why we do what we do and who it impacts and how is a vital consideration in our dual role as researchers belonging to Indigenous communities. As co-author, I (Hudson) have led the NunatuKavut governance and sustainability research in my capacity as NCC research manager and as part of my PhD research, while I (co-author Bull) have been integral to informing NCC's founding research policy and ethics practice. In addition, we co-lead NCC's most recent research governance and ethics work that will later be discussed in further detail later in this chapter.

3.3.1 Amy Hudson

I was born and raised in the NunatuKavut community of Black Tickle, a remote island community on Labrador's southeast coast. As an Indigenous researcher and community member it is integral that I position my approach to the governance and sustainability research that I am engaged in. My connection to homeland, people, and my Indigenous community ground my sense of relationality and responsibility in and to my work. My regard for research as a tool for community and cultural preservation is related to my knowledge of the history of Indigenous peoples and NunatuKavut Inuit specifically as it relates to this work. As a result, Indigenous ways of

knowing and being were embraced and prioritized in this research project.

Since 2014, I have been living, learning, and working among and with Inuit communities in NunatuKavut, Labrador, in diverse areas of research and have demonstrated leadership within the NCC. Throughout this time, I have been sharing, learning, relearning, and reclaiming my Inuit history, past and present, in a renewed light. I have been immersed in the idea of research as a tool for community betterment and sustainability. In many respects, my participation in research, as a community member, researcher, and knowledge-holder, among my peers and fellow community members, has informed and inspired a nuanced and intricate awareness and understanding of governance from the cultural vantage point of NunatuKavut Inuit. To share my understandings of our world and its teachings with others is both humbling and significant, as Inuit have not been immune to the narratives and falsehoods produced and reproduced by colonially rooted research practices. Further conversations with friend, colleague, and co-author Julie Bull have grounded our respective fields of work (Hudson in Indigenous governance, Bull in research ethics) as that which cannot be separated from one another.

In discussing our respective research and experiences, we became increasingly aware of the connections and interconnections between our areas of research focus. Our mutual understandings of the role of research, in Indigenous communities, along with our commitment to Indigenous resurgence and self-determination in research, found us collaborating and supporting one another in our research, building on one another's expertise, and working together to support Inuit self-determination in our homeland. I am a PhD candidate in the Interdisciplinary program, Memorial University, and lead on the aforementioned Inuit community governance and sustainability research.

3.3.2 Julie Bull

I am a researcher, educator, ethicist, and poet originally from Happy Valley-Goose Bay. I am Inuk from NunatuKavut, with familial and ancestral ties to the Sandwich Bay area on Labrador's southeast coast. A fierce advocate for Indigenous rights, I have been instrumental in building relationships between academic institutions, governments, and Indigenous communities throughout Canada. My collaborative research approaches have garnered international attention as I work diligently to ensure that Indigenous people are fairly treated and compensated and that research, education, and program development does not occur without community consent. While my area of focus is research methods and ethics, my approach crosses disciplines and sectors, which make me an excellent promoter of relational approaches to partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. As the first high school graduate in my family, I am no stranger to pioneering and forging a path on the road less travelled. I am not held back by obstacles and I find solutions to problems. My commitment and dedication to advancing my education is not just for my own benefit, as I knew that this formal education was a ticket to places and possibilities that many in my community never had and a way for me to give back to the community that supported me. For the past fifteen years, I have advanced through various roles, from Project Management in Education, to Research and Policy Management for Indigenous leadership, to teaching at the university level, and I have been called around the world to speak on Indigenous issues. Long before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action (TRC) was launched, I advised various organizations how to build relationships with Indigenous communities and how to work toward reconciliation. I am especially keen to work with other influencers and innovators who use their positions of privilege to challenge the status quo and to build meaningful and sustainable relationships with Indigenous peoples by decolonizing the systems that continue to oppress us.

3.4 Connecting Indigenous Governance to Research

Leading Indigenous scholars Jeff Corntassel and Glen Coulthard have made significant contributions to the scholarly literature relating to Indigenous rights and self-determination. Corntassel's (2008; 2012) work, in particular, provides theoretical and practical insight into how Indigenous nations can regenerate and become sustainable and self-determining nations. Coulthard (2014) questions the utility of Canada's recognition of Indigenous rights rhetoric and proposes an alternative understanding of Canada-Indigenous relations in this context, one that is critical and enlightened. These scholars point to the need for Indigenous autonomy on Indigenous homelands. The autonomy to make decisions on one's own lands and exercise good governance (in the ways described above) extend to all realms of decision making, including research.

Furthermore, numerous Indigenous scholars (Bull, 2010; Kovach, 2009; Smith, 2012; Wilson, 2008) cite the need for Indigenous autonomy and self-determination in research with and by Indigenous peoples and upon Indigenous lands. These scholars have paved the way, proposing decolonizing approaches to research that reflect Indigenous ways of knowing and being, all of which point to the important role of relationships in determining research priorities and carrying out community research. This understanding that relationships are integral to governing research is influenced by such scholars as Shawn Wilson (2008), who explains:

We are beginning to articulate our own research paradigms and to demand that research conducted in our communities follows our codes of conduct and honors our systems of knowledge and worldviews. Research by and for Indigenous peoples is a ceremony that brings relationships together (p. 8).

Understanding the interconnectedness of Indigenous and research governance requires an understanding of a colonial history of research upon Indigenous peoples and their lands. Historically, research has been conducted "on" Indigenous peoples, about Indigenous peoples, and without their consent (Bull, 2016). The western approach to research and the subsequent

production of knowledge from a western perspective has had, and continues to have, negative implications for Indigenous peoples and their communities and for their ability to self-determine. Research conducted from a western perspective, and as expressed by Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012), the resulting relationship between researcher and researched has also served to oppress Indigenous peoples as the western researcher/ scholar/academic occupies the role of knowledge-holder and decision maker, wielding power, authority, and control over those being “researched.” This power relationship is further perpetuated within academia and then within Indigenous communities themselves, as Indigenous peoples continue to experience colonization by western ways of thinking, being, seeing, and doing. Indeed, a history of research “on” Indigenous peoples has demonstrated that such research has the power and ability to displace, shame, create barriers, inflict harm, and create chaos on the lives of Indigenous peoples. Lester-Irabinna Rigney (1999) states:

The research enterprise as a vehicle for investigation has poked, prodded, measured, tested, and compared data toward understanding Indigenous cultures and human nature. Explorers, medical practitioners, intellectuals, travelers, and voyeurs who observed from a distance have all played a role in the scientific scrutiny of Indigenous peoples (p. 109).

This colonial research approach, which marginalizes and suppresses Indigenous voice and agency in the research relationship, reflects a foreign understanding of and awareness about relationships that is not conducive to Indigenous self-determination into the future.

Smith states that “research can no longer be conducted with Indigenous communities as if their views did not count or their lives did not matter” (2012, p. 10). Margaret Kovach explains that “cultural longevity depends on the ability to sustain cultural knowledge” (2009, p. 12). These Indigenous scholars point to Indigenous participation in research that is Indigenous-led and Indigenous-centred. Inuit governments and governing organizations such as Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) and NCC are moving toward regaining control of decision making and regaining autonomy on

their lands, through research. Both have clearly identified the need for Inuit autonomy and self-determination in research. Both NCC and ITK have cited their negative experiences when research priorities are developed and decisions are made by outside institutions and external researchers without Inuit and community consent. In 2018, ITK released a document entitled “National Inuit Strategy on Research” which highlights that Inuit must have autonomy in the research relationship, citing that “research is a tool for creating social equity” (ITK, 2018, p. 9) and articulating a research vision:

Inuit vision research producing new knowledge that empowers our people in meeting the needs and priorities of our families and communities. We see achieving self-determination in research as the means for ensuring that research governance bodies, policies, and practices are consistent with this vision (p. 7).

The significance of Indigenous peoples’ ability to make decisions that impact them and their communities, in research relationships, is demonstrated as many Indigenous nations, scholars, and community members deem it necessary in the pursuit of decolonizing research and research practices (Bull, 2016; Martin, 2012; Smith, 2012; Wilson, 2008).

3.5 Research in Nunatukavut

We (Bull and Hudson) have collaborated with NCC (and others) in an effort to establish robust research ethics and governance in NunatuKavut. As conversations and actions occurred regarding NCC’s governance more generally, a parallel process of advancing research governance specifically happened independently and interrelatedly (Bull & Hudson, 2018). As a governing organization with a commitment to self-determination, the NCC recognizes that the ability of Inuit to self-determine in research requires that research be guided, informed, and prioritized by Inuit. NCC staff, partners, and collaborators have worked for many years to advance opportunities for community self-determination in research in NunatuKavut, thinking many generations ahead to the youth and children of the future, and leading from the future as it

emerges in relation to research ethics oversight in their territory. This began with a formalized research review process in 2006 (with subsequent and substantial revisions between 2010 and 2013) (Brunger & Bull, 2011; Brunger & Russell, 2015; Brunger & Wall, 2016; Brunger, Bull, & Wall, 2014). As of 2020, NCC is updating its research ethics and engagement policies to reflect the evolution since 2013. Like many other governing bodies, NCC promotes and endorses research that is relational, beneficial, collaborative, and relevant.

While Canada's commitment to Indigenous reconciliation in research and education is important and welcomed, this new vision has not come without generations of Indigenous peoples' efforts and struggles for autonomy in research on their lands. For decades, Indigenous peoples have asserted their autonomy, challenging and resisting governments, institutions, and practices that continue to marginalize and oppress Indigenous peoples on their own lands. This is especially evident in the way in which research "about and on" NunatuKavut Inuit, including settler interpretations of historical evidence, continue to marginalize and oppress the role and voice of Inuit women in Inuit society and community in NunatuKavut. Indeed, approaches that use western biases to inform scholarly literature has often undermined Indigenous people's knowledge and expertise. According to Indigenous scholar Leanne Leddy (2018):

The practice of reading historical evidence without interrogating the settler biases and misunderstandings contributes to a view of Indigenous cultural systems as stagnant, unchanging, and backwards, the very historical lens that scholars, Supreme Court decisions, and most importantly, Indigenous voices have sought to change (p. 212).

In contrast, I (co-author Hudson) am co-leading anti-colonial and action-oriented research in Inuit (traditional) education and Inuit women's history in NunatuKavut. This research facilitates opportunities for NunatuKavut Inuit to share, re-learn, and reclaim culture and history through secondary education, while privileging community knowledge-holders as teachers of community youth. Through interviews and storytelling with Inuit women in NunatuKavut, we

build upon and privilege NunatuKavut Inuit cultural knowledge and identify community priorities, from the vantage of Inuit women. This research is a direct response to colonial research practices that have marginalized and oppressed the role and agency of Inuit women from NunatuKavut society.

Research that privileged the vantage of the male explorer to Labrador while ignoring Inuit agency has also perpetuated false narratives of people and place that have had, and continues to have, detrimental implications on NunatuKavut Inuit. As a result, NunatuKavut Inuit have been omitted from an array of programming and services for Inuit (e.g., federal programs and services) and have been inaccurately represented in the scholarly literature, education, and curriculum (Moore, Hudson, & Maxwell, 2018). For example, the provincial curriculum in secondary schools in Newfoundland and Labrador often marginalizes NunatuKavut Inuit history and culture or represents NunatuKavut Inuit inaccurately. Other stories told by outsiders (primarily non-Indigenous researchers, travellers, etc.) have attempted to understand and quantify the level of Inuit-ness among Inuit on the south coast of Labrador over time, without awareness or consideration of outsider bias. The consequences of research “on and about” NunatuKavut Inuit has had diverse, negative impacts on NunatuKavut Inuit and, ultimately, their ability to self-determine. Yet, the NCC, on behalf of NunatuKavut Inuit, have resisted colonial research practices, such as the above, and have reclaimed autonomy in research relationships, with increasing capacity to govern research practices and set their own research priorities (Bull & Hudson, 2018).

For Inuit-governing organizations, such as the NCC, a clear link exists between research, well-being, and Inuit self-determination. In an article by Ashlee Cunsolo and Hudson (2018) about research and relationships in northern-led research, Hudson states the following about the role of self-governance in conducting research in NunatuKavut:

Our commitment to self-determination through research, and the fundamental importance of research to our communities, exists beyond an ideal of social justice. We are committed to research for our survival. It is about reclaiming who we are and where come from and continue to belong as a people, as we continue the decolonizing work synonymous with our Indigenous resistance and cultural preservation efforts (p. 26).

Western research protocols that do not reflect Inuit ways of knowing and being have been imposed over time, and some of the noted impacts are described above. Through their very existence and socialization into society, these protocols continue to deny and/or erase Inuit agency in NunatuKavut through privileging outsider worldviews. Over time, these outside ideas fostered a particular knowledge base, supporting theories of acculturation and assimilation among Inuit. Examples of research and research practices, such as these that deny and invalidate Indigenous existence and claims to territory, are indicative of a time and culture that regarded Indigenous peoples as subjects to be known, studied, and saved by outsiders; this style of research is being challenged by leading Indigenous scholars such as Wilson, Kovach, and Smith, among others.

Despite a history of colonially rooted research practices upon Indigenous peoples that has rendered Indigenous knowledge inferior to that of western ways of thinking, Indigenous peoples in Canada have been engaged in and leading research since time immemorial (Stewart-Harawira, 2013). Indigenous peoples have worked to inform and produce their own forms of research practices that reflect Indigenous culture, history, and values (Wilson, 2008). For many Indigenous communities, and indeed for the NCC as governors of research in their territory, the ideal research relationship is one whereby research priorities are identified by the community, and any consequential research is led by the goals, values, and interests of the community itself. The NCC shares ITK's philosophy that research can be a tool for positive change and an avenue through which Inuit should, and must, exert autonomy and leadership. The NCC has committed

to furthering the establishment of its research governance policies and protocols, which reflect NunatuKavut community values and principles. The NCC, as of 2020, is leading a research governance initiative in NunatuKavut. In doing so, we are working with NunatuKavut communities and NCC departments to distinguish best practices for identifying strategic research that benefits and is of interest to communities. Further, this work will build upon existing community engagement documents and research protocols to ensure that research governance practices will meet the needs and interests of NunatuKavut Inuit. This work is indicative of the leadership role NCC has taken in research and the awareness of the role of research in community and cultural survival. The anti-colonial research described by co-author Hudson (above) exemplifies self-determining research by Inuit and demonstrates community commitment to counter colonial research practices and to seek out more beneficial research relationships that align with community priorities.

In NunatuKavut, governance and research cannot exist in isolation from each other. If we are to speak of regulating research in NunatuKavut communities, we must understand that at the core, and central to Indigenous governance, is relationships—with one another, the land, sea, ice, and all that live upon it. Borrowing from Leanne Simpson (2001), and as a matter of survival, research on and about Indigenous peoples must cease. Research governance is informed by Indigenous governance. These relationships, as noted by Indigenous scholars Wilson and Kovach, demand responsibility and accountability to all of one's relations. In the same way that Indigenous people are held accountable for their relations as a practice of good governance, so too are Indigenous peoples responsible and accountable for their relations in self-determined research.

3.6 Self-Determining a Path in Community Sustainability Research

The community governance and sustainability research which I (Hudson) led was guided by Indigenous and qualitative research methodology. While the former was used as the primary guide,

aspects of the latter that support Indigenous research methods were also employed. Indigenous methodology that privileged the voice of NunatuKavut Inuit as local experts in their respective communities set the tone for this work, largely through interactive workshopping, gatherings, and community meetings which supported collaborative and consensus-building team discussions. Other more traditional qualitative interview practices and data collection strategies were employed (i.e., one-on-one interviews, focus groups, and surveys); however, the former methods were more successful in engaging and soliciting the expert knowledge and experience of NunatuKavut Inuit in this study.

Three pilot communities were chosen for the governance and sustainability research. These communities are remote (varying degrees of remoteness in NunatuKavut) and maintain a rich cultural heritage (deep connection to land, water, and ice). However, these communities have also experienced the loss of a major industry. The goal of the research project and the anticipated role of each community was explained vis-à-vis their relevant governing community council, and their interest in participating in this project was sought. Communities were contacted by email and telephone. All three communities eagerly agreed to participate. It is anticipated that lessons learned from work led by these pilot communities will also benefit other NunatuKavut communities.

Black Tickle, with a population of approximately 115, is the northernmost of the pilot communities. On an island off the southeast coast of Labrador, the community is a year-round fly in/out community with ferry service from June to November, pending ice conditions. With the cod moratorium of the 1990s and the closure of its fish plant in 2012, the community, once the site of a vigorous cod fishery, has been without a supporting industry. Yet, it maintains strong cultural connections to the land, sea, and ice and residents are eager to work toward a sustainable and vibrant future so that they can raise their children and grandchildren, while passing on

knowledge and values that come with belonging to this wonderful place.

Norman Bay, south of Black Tickle, has approximately twenty people. Like Black Tickle, Norman Bay has no access to a highway; travel to/from the community is by helicopter or small boat. Reinvigorating a local economy, whereby residents do not leave their homes for seasonal employment, is paramount for most residents, along with transportation to/from the community. Like Black Tickle, Norman Bay has a rich cultural heritage and residents are eager to find sustainable solutions so that they can raise their children in the community, which continues to connect families to traditional knowledge and values.

St. Lewis, located south of Norman Bay, with fewer than 200 people, unlike Black Tickle and Norman Bay is connected to the TLH and maintains year-round airline service to the community (albeit, like Black Tickle, minimal airline access and costly). Like Black Tickle, St. Lewis's major industry was its fish plant, which closed in 2013. As such, the community is eager to identify opportunities for sustainability so that residents can remain in their homes, raise families, and share in tradition, history, and culture. St. Lewis, too, has a rich cultural heritage and remains connected to the land, sea, and ice.

Recruitment for the research relied heavily on community members and I (Hudson) took direction from the NCC to recruit potential participants in NunatuKavut pilot communities. Participants were recruited from the three pilot communities and others if individuals had left their ancestral community. Representatives from pilot communities (town mayors, local service district chairs, community leaders, knowledge-holders, sustainability coordinators, etc.) identified other community leaders, knowledge-holders, and Elders who were interested in participating in the research (either as interviewees or as informants throughout various phases of the governance and sustainability work during community workshops, meetings, gatherings, etc.). External partners and consultants, past and/or present, were recruited to share their role in and knowledge of

NunatuKavut's journey as well as to reflect on and discuss NunatuKavut community governance and sustainability from their experiences. Participants were recruited individually and by public means, including verbally, email, telephone, and public posters (i.e., in post office, stores, clinic, etc.). Community participants were revered as "experts" relating to matters impacting their home communities and the research topic. In order for this research to be meaningful, direction and authority came from community members themselves.

In keeping with Indigenous research methodology and in learning best practices in working with the pilot communities, other forms of data collection included community gatherings and work-shopping as well as capacity building in areas identified by residents (i.e., proposal writing, asset mapping) and individual community member submissions detailing what they love most about their community. These submissions further advanced understandings of community and cultural values and priorities about conservation and preservation of lands and resources. According to Wilson (2008), "traditional Indigenous research emphasizes learning by watching and doing" (p. 40). This is why community engagement practices (such as gatherings and capacity-building workshops) worked well as a source of knowledge-sharing and gathering, and ultimately, data collection. Pre-existing research data and traditional knowledge studies held by NCC also informed this study.

Finally, my own experiential knowledge (Hudson, as both community member and NCC research department lead), reflexive journaling, and relationships with and commitment to NunatuKavut communities, before and after this study, indicate an approach to research that is grounded in Indigenous ways of knowing.

Reclaiming and privileging Inuit knowledge and local community expertise was vital to the sustainability research in Black Tickle, Norman Bay, and St. Lewis. This research sought to

facilitate opportunities for community members, leaders, youth, Elders, and knowledge-holders, to discuss and bring to life stories of what is most important to them and the future of their communities. An approach that acknowledged that Inuit are the experts in their communities allowed for community participation in sustainability research that was both motivating and empowering. This, I (Hudson) argue, worked in multi-dimensional ways—between communities and me as researcher and community member. Indeed, as an Indigenous researcher, I have learned invaluable lessons about the role of community in informing research on their/our lands.

The sustainability research used a strength-based approach which was groundbreaking in effectively engaging the pilot communities. Often, people become consumed with things that can and do go wrong and in what is not working well. This can be especially true in regions like NunatuKavut, where communities experience population decline and a loss of employment and other economic development opportunities through provincial and federal government cutbacks in programming and services. However, this research offered an opportunity and space for communities to envision a future that reflects who they are, their priorities, and their values. By doing so, communities identified short, medium, and long-term plans for sustainability. In many cases, they identified ways they could work together and/or learn from one another in building healthy and sustainable communities. Throughout this work, communities were active and self-determining participants in visioning a future that they could be proud of while re-connecting with their culture. Of importance to pilot communities was preserving and sustaining a connection to the land, sea, and ice. Community sustainability, or development, was considered sustainable only if it had minimal impact upon their cultural values, tradition, and way of life.

In my role (Hudson) as researcher and facilitator throughout the sustainability and governance research, I was reinvigorated by communities' interest in determining their potential and

future direction. I was humbled by the wealth of cultural knowledge and the communities' expressed connection to place, as community members discussed self-determination, community governance, and sustainability. I learned quickly in this relationship that when you revere Inuit as experts and facilitate opportunities for communities to engage in matters that are of stated importance to them, community involvement is successful. As a result of the sustainability research, the pilot communities identified priority sustainability areas and are partnering in diverse research projects to that end, some of which include food security and renewable energy research, both integral to community self-determination and governance. Community expertise and knowledge, as it relates to the sustainability of these three communities, is essential to Inuit self-determination and to defining and setting the parameters of the research relationship on their lands and on their terms.

3.7 Conclusion

In linking colonial research practices to Indigenous peoples and communities, Smith (2012) explains:

It angers us when practices linked to the last century, and the centuries before that, are still employed to deny the validity of Indigenous peoples' claim to existence, to land and territories, to the right of self-determination, to the survival of our languages and forms of cultural knowledge, to our natural resources and systems for living within our environments. (p. 1)

Smith's words carry deep meaning and she cites examples of colonial research practices that deny and invalidate Indigenous claims to existence and territory: they inform a history of research that has been perpetuated on Indigenous peoples the world over, and certainly, in NunatuKavut.

The ability of Indigenous peoples to self-determine in research is impacted by their ability to self-govern. When communities engage in research relationships that respect Indigenous autonomy, self-determination is evident. Opportunities for self-determination in research occur

when research in Indigenous communities and by Indigenous peoples is informed by Indigenous knowledge and ways of being, all of which give rise to collective community priorities. Self-determined research is that which seeks to honour people, place, and culture throughout the research relationship and is governed and regulated by relationships (Cunsolo & Hudson, 2018). In discussing research and Indigenous peoples, Smith (2012) asserts that “real power lies with those who design the tools” (p. 40). In the case of NunatuKavut Inuit, who have been advancing research ethics since 2010, research is approached from the vantage point that communities are the experts in matters that impact them and their future (Bull & Hudson, 2018; Cunsolo & Hudson, 2018).

By building on the strengths of the participants in this research, Inuit have identified pathways for self-determination in research that are grounded in their ways of knowing and being. As a result, they are better equipped to exert their autonomy and impact the future of their communities on their own terms. Both research governance work (to date) and community sustainability research have set a positive tone and increased expectations for community engagement and research participation in a way that honours and privileges local community knowledge and expertise. As it is for NunatuKavut Inuit, and for many Indigenous peoples, research is about survival (Smith, 2012). It is about countering colonially embedded research relationships and impacts that have perpetuated intergenerational harm and trauma onto Indigenous peoples. While research is historically, and presently, often associated with colonially rooted power, Indigenous communities, such as those in NunatuKavut, are increasingly recognizing the power of anti-colonial research and its role in advancing self-determination and governance efforts.

3.8 Acknowledgements

We thank the communities of Black Tickle, Norman Bay, and St. Lewis for their

participation in this research and for expanding our knowledge base as it relates to doing research with and for community. Their knowledge, expertise, and commitment to home and community enlightened understandings of what it means to live sustainably. It is our hope that Inuit-led research will continue to create opportunities for community sustainability into the future. We thank the NCC for guidance and support throughout this journey and all journeys where Inuit self-determination is privileged and honoured.

Chapter 4: Manuscript 2

Decolonizing Pathways to Sustainability:

Lessons Learned from Three Inuit Communities in NunatuKavut, Canada

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4.1 Abstract

Community led planning is necessary for Inuit to self-determine on their lands and to ensure the preservation of cultural landscapes and the sustainability of social-ecological systems that they are a part of. The sustainability efforts of three Inuit communities in Labrador during a Community Governance and Sustainability Initiative were guided by a decolonized and strength-based planning framework, including the values of Inuit in this study. This paper demonstrates that Inuit led planning efforts can strengthen community sustainability planning interests and potential. We situate the experiences of NunatuKavut Inuit within, and contribute to, the existing body of scholarly decolonization and sustainability literature. For many Indigenous people, including Inuit, decolonization is connected to inherent rights to self-determination. The findings suggest that decolonizing efforts must be understood and actualized within an Indigenous led research and sustainability planning paradigm that facilitates autonomous decision making and that is place based. Further, this study illustrates five predominant results regarding Inuit in planning for community sustainability that support sustainable self-determination. These include: inter and cross community sharing; identification of community strengths; strengthened community capacity; re-connection to community and culture; and the possibility for identification of sustainability goals to begin implementation through community led governance and planning processes.

4.2 Introduction

Sustainability planning is necessary for community and cultural survival in remote Indigenous regions, like those in NunatuKavut (coastal Labrador). There is increasing recognition within the sustainability science literature of the need for place-based sustainability goals in Arctic communities that align with Arctic needs, based on the fact that these needs may in fact differ from global responses and efforts (Nilsson & Larsen, 2020). The literature reveals that both Indigenous and sustainability sciences contribute to the sustainability of “resilient landscapes” (Johnson, Howitt, Cajete, Berkes, Louis, & Klisky, 2016, p. 1), and to our understanding of them (Whyte, Brewer, & Johnson, 2016). This recognition further validates the need to work with Indigenous peoples in planning, by doing planning and sustainability scholarship differently. Sustainability science has been disconnected from Indigenous science and this has meant that Indigenous rights and knowledge have not been adequately engaged or privileged by Western scientific enquiry (Johnson et al., 2016). The participation of Indigenous peoples in planning processes have also been notably marginalized in Canada and around the world (Hibbard, Lane, & Rasmussen, 2008), with outside planning actors participating in the dispossession and marginalization of Indigenous peoples in the planning process (Ugarte, 2014). This is despite the fact that “Indigenous peoples possess deep connections to place and knowledge of the land upon which they have lived for thousands of years” (McGregor, 2013, p. 428) and that planning is a vital aspect of governance, including Indigenous forms of governance that have also endured marginalization resulting from colonization (Porter, 2017). Planners must be cognizant of this colonial history as “state-based planning has provided the conceptual and practical apparatus for institutionalizing marginalization” (Matunga, 2017, p. 643).

Sustainability work in rural and remote Indigenous communities offers important contributions to the sustainability science knowledge base. Recent collaborative, community-based

research in the area of renewable energy in Labrador, for example, demonstrates that the voice of Inuit and their active participation in decision making is an integral part of process and outcome, building on the strengths and knowledge of Inuit themselves while reinforcing their role as decision makers and experts on their lands (Mercer, Parker, Hudson, & Martin, 2020). Land-use planning in the Nunatsiavut region of Labrador offers further insight into Indigenous planning in Labrador and the North. The land use plan of the Nunatsiavut government has been designed to “respond, first and foremost, to Inuit environmental, social, cultural, and economic interest” (Proctor, & Chaulk, 2013, p. 438). Earlier research related to the process of mine development in Voisey’s Bay, Labrador cited the apparent success of agreements reached between Indigenous and non-Indigenous parties that was based on “sustainability centered decision making” (Gibson, 2005, p. 343). Yet, O’Faircheallaigh (2006) illustrates the tensions and complexities involved in the Voisey’s development. The Province of Newfoundland (at the time), committed to advancing the development of the mine as expeditiously as possible, left the Innu and Inuit (the latter group represented by the LIA) emphatic about their inclusion and participation in negotiations and reaching satisfactory agreements. The Innu were opposed to development early on but felt (along with the Inuit represented by LIA) that they had no choice but to seek inclusion as the development was set to proceed (O’Faircheallaigh, 2006). Moreover, Archibald and Crnkovich (1999) point to a lack of Inuit women’s representation and voice in the Voisey’s Bay development, adding that analysis into the differential impacts on Inuit women were lacking in this development.

Indigenous planning has been broadly defined as a process whereby Indigenous people make their own decisions on their lands, and drawing upon the knowledge, values and principles within themselves to “define and progress their present and future social, cultural, environmental and economic aspirations” (Matunga, 2017, p. 642). To date, planning in practice has yielded limited opportunities to share and exercise principles and practices of Indigenous planning,

particularly in the context of sovereign nations (Porter, 2017). Indigenous planning has been identified as an approach that respects Indigenous sovereignty and worldviews (Diggon, Butler, Heidt, Bones, Jones, & Outhet, 2019), requiring sustainability planning approaches in Indigenous communities that are cognizant of inherent and sovereign rights to land and culture.

Indigenous peoples assert jurisdiction over their lands and within their communities in various ways (e.g., land claims, advocacy, agreements with the state, planning efforts). Most Inuit groups in Canada have settled land claims agreements with the state (Hudson, 2020). Inuit in NunatuKavut have not yet settled a final land claim agreement. However, they have a long history of asserting their rights on their land. Most recently, Canada has accepted the NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC), a governing organization that represents the Indigenous rights of NunatuKavut Inuit, into a Recognition of Indigenous Rights and Self-Determination (RIRSD) process to negotiate on matters of mutual interest between NunatuKavut Inuit and Canada (Hudson, 2020). Today, NunatuKavut Inuit continue to assert their rights on their land to ensure the future of their people and communities. Community-led sustainability planning during a Community Governance and Sustainability Initiative (CGSI) in NunatuKavut should be understood within a rights-based paradigm.

The CGSI (described in more detail below), was piloted in three select Inuit communities in NunatuKavut during 2017 and 2018 to facilitate opportunities for those communities to think about the future from the perspective of sustainability, grounded in their rights as Inuit belonging to their ancestral lands, and to plan accordingly. Baxter and Purcell (2007) define Integrated Community Sustainability Planning (ICSP) as “a high-level overarching document for a community that is informed by sustainability principles and guides the community into the future” (p. 35). ICSPs are one example of a model of sustainability planning that have been employed across Canada, including the province of Newfoundland and Labrador (NL) (Vodden, Lane, & Pollett, 2016). This

paper presents an alternative Indigenous sustainability planning perspective and approach, particularly one that is grounded in the efforts of Inuit in NunatuKavut through a community led, decolonized and strength-based planning framework. This study builds upon normative ideas of community sustainability planning, like ICSP, at the same time as privileging Inuit knowledge, expertise and values that are vital to the planning process within Inuit territories.

Throughout this paper, we draw upon and situate Inuit planning within the overarching concept of decolonization, while building on the work of Indigenous scholars who have informed our analysis such as Jeff Corntassel (2008), Pam Palmater (2015), Linda Smith (2012), and Shawn Wilson (2008). In NunatuKavut, where Inuit are planning for sustainable communities and futures, planning efforts invoke a necessary and simultaneous process of self-decolonization. The decolonizing of the self is integral to a larger order of decolonization and to anti-colonial sustainability efforts that connect both theory and practice. The concept of “sustainable self-determination,” a term coined by Indigenous scholar Jeff Corntassel (2008), is useful for understanding Inuit planning in NunatuKavut as a pathway to decolonized self-determination. In the context of NunatuKavut Inuit, we argue that Inuit led, decolonized and strength-based planning, can strengthen community sustainability planning interest and overall potential. The results of this process give rise to sustainable self-determination that contribute to the preservation of cultural landscapes and the sustainability of social-ecological systems that make up Inuit society.

4.2.1 Decolonization and Sustainable Self-Determination

Community sustainability planning approaches designed and developed by and for Indigenous peoples are integral to Indigenous self-determination efforts. Indigenous governance practices and methods, including planning efforts, can be conducive to the creation of societies that are more sustainable (Jokhu & Kutay, 2020). Recent research with First Nations in Saskatchewan, for example, point to the success of Indigenous planning when the approach results in trust

relationships between the First Nation community, other participants and university researchers and community capacity is strengthened (Patrick, Grant, & Bharadwaj, 2019). The ability of communities to self-determine in ways that reflect Indigenous ways of knowing and being is in part, contingent upon Indigenous autonomy and control of decision making about the future. Yet, Indigenous community planning and approaches to planning have often been marginalized by external decision makers (Hibbard et al., 2008). Externally controlled community development and planning processes are indicative of colonial ideas and mentalities that undermine Indigenous knowledge and expertise in favor of Western European knowledge in deciding matters for the future of Inuit and their lands. Therefore, any approach to decolonized community planning must be cognizant of historic and modern impacts of colonization.

Indigenous scholar, lawyer and advocate Pamela Palmater defines colonization as a process by which “a state or colony attempts to dispossess and subjugate the original Indigenous peoples of the land,” (Palmater, 2015, p. 3) and she maintains that colonization, in this form, has not ended for Indigenous peoples. Corntassel (2012) portrays colonization as a dysfunctional force that disconnects peoples from their home, land and culture. He maintains that Indigenous resurgence is about connecting to home, land and culture, a central feature of decolonization.

Decolonization has been defined and drawn upon by academia, institutions and governments. Leading Indigenous scholars like Linda Smith (2012) and Margaret Kovach (2009) have engaged decolonization discourse, enlightening a world that resonates for many Indigenous peoples and offering insights into how to think about and do research differently. Conceptually and practically, decolonization is a necessary and integral step towards acknowledging and confronting the legacy of colonization (past and ongoing). Decolonizing work is an ever evolving, dynamic and site-specific process. Decolonization and decolonized planning can be further linked to Corntassel’s key concept of sustainable self-determination, with a view towards privileging and

bringing attention to Inuit efforts to self-determine that may otherwise go unnoticed by outside decision makers or planners.

We engage decolonization as a process that sets the foundation for everyday acts of resurgence, including Indigenous-led planning. Corntassel (2012) recalled pathways to decolonization that are and can be realized through Indigenous led self-determination efforts. Learning from Fanon (1963), we are alert to the reality that decolonization implies a commitment to embracing differing worldviews and perspectives, and the tensions that are inherent in this process. This entails moving beyond European norms and ways of thinking. Decolonization must be a unique and context specific process that includes individual and collective acts of resurgence, revitalization and determination contingent upon time and place, in Indigenous peoples' pursuit of self-determination. We argue that a decolonial approach to community sustainability planning in NunatuKavut is integral to ensuring that the sustainability goals identified and the planning process itself is embedded in a vision for the future that is self-determined by Inuit in their time and place and reflective of Inuit values and ways of knowing and being. In this way planning can, in turn, further sustainable self-determination and create the pathways to decolonization observed and called for by Corntassel and others.

4.2.2 Grounding Decolonization: Recognizing the Roles of Indigenous Peoples and Their Communities

The participation of planning actors in the “dispossession, oppression and marginalization of Indigenous peoples has implications for the field” (Ugarte, 2014, p. 403). Recognizing colonial realities allows for the challenging of western, well intentioned, and persistent assumptions imbued in planning that seek to “better the world” (Ugarte, 2014, p. 403). Indigenous claims to self-determination, land restitution, etc., make the need to challenge planning assumptions evident and timely. When Indigenous people question ongoing normative assumptions and practices by

privileging their own ways of knowing and being, opportunities arise to plan for a future that is shaped by their own worldview(s). The ability to inform planning approaches from one's own space (values, goals, etc.), as opposed to outside perceptions of what is good or necessary, is optimal for decolonizing planning processes that are Indigenous designed and led.

In many cases, Indigenous peoples, communities, nations and governments continue to work towards building a future and a path that is reflective of their values, perspectives and worldviews, despite ongoing colonial interference. Indigenous peoples have been finding opportunities to revitalize as nations, while making small movements towards reclamation—whether that be of culture, language, education, political society, etc. (Smith, 2012; Cornthassel, 2012). We contend that acts of resistance and resurgence in these forms are a necessary part of the process of decolonization and are necessarily linked to community planning, yet they often go unrecognized as a source of knowledge or expertise integral to planning work by outsiders. Additionally, these acts are rarely upheld or highlighted as integral and tangible decolonizing work, particularly by states and/or institutions who often set the standard for how reconciliation and/or decolonization is to be approached in Canada and within institutions (i.e., academia). This provides evidence that as a society we are still unwilling to really learn or accept the knowledge and expertise of Indigenous peoples in their place and as autonomous rights holders on their lands. Realities like these are well established and have been demonstrated over time as the courts have consistently failed to consider Indigenous people's perspectives in law and legal analysis (Borrow & Rotman, 1998; Napoleon & Friedland, 2016). This too has implications for the field of Indigenous sustainability planning.

The idea that the state and its government know best is an age-old way of thinking and doing and is perpetuated in relations with Indigenous peoples, and even in times of good will and positive intention. Eisenberg, Webber, Coulthard, and Boisselle (2014) maintain that Indigenous

peoples and communities themselves are the sole agents with the power to recognize and give expression to the knowledge that make up who they are. When Indigenous peoples, organizations, and communities take on the arduous tasks of reclamation through tangible and practical everyday acts on their lands and in their communities, they are in fact pursuing and leading decolonizing work that lends toward self-determination.

A strength-based approach to community sustainability planning, that rested on the values, hopes and goals of Inuit in this study, guided the approach of the CGSI. This work exists as an example of a community based and community driven approach to decolonization, grounded in and guided by connection to home, values and individual and collective determination to ensure the survival and preservation of community and culture. In what follows, we describe and interpret acts of resurgence, revitalization and sustainable self-determination in three Inuit communities within community sustainability planning efforts as part of, and emblematic of, a larger process of decolonization.

4.3 Methodology

This research was guided by Indigenous and qualitative research methodologies. Indigenous research methodology is integral to understanding and making space for sustainable self-determination in Indigenous communities. The ability to share, learn and listen through stories is fundamental to understanding Indigenous worldviews and perspectives and storytelling is an integral and valued method and approach (Lambert, 2014). This research seeks to ensure that the voice and knowledge of Inuit are privileged and drive the findings of this paper. A culturally relevant research paradigm (as employed in this research), ensures that Indigenous methods are validated and used (Wilson, 2008), contributing to decolonization and supporting the assertion of rights and sovereignty. Research within this paradigm remains cognizant of a history of colonially rooted research practices (including a tradition that privileges research practices that are value

neutral), while remaining committed to research that seeks to better the well-being of Indigenous peoples as per their ways of being and knowing (Smith, 2012). Booth and Muir (2011) understand Indigenous planning as an attempt to “recognize the unique and specific legal, political, historical, cultural and social circumstances in which the world’s Indigenous peoples find themselves” (p. 422). It can be argued that this is also the case for the Inuit of NunatuKavut and their representative governing organization the NCC, as they seek to enhance capacity and knowledge for planning that is specific to their needs, interests, and historical and modern realities and as they engage in culturally relevant planning to advance self-determination efforts. This research initiated and facilitated community capacity strengthening efforts so that community members and leaders are better equipped to effectively engage in the planning of their communities for the future and validated in doing so.

4.3.1 Community Governance and Sustainability Initiative (CGSI): A Framework for Designing and Implementing Community Led and Responsive Research and Planning Practices

There is a growing interest in planning that is adaptable to uncertain conditions and realities (Walker, Haasnoon, & Kwakkel, 2013). Adaptability is a central feature of Inuit societies. Cognizant of the social and political history of the Inuit communities in NunatuKavut, and moreover, a legacy of research on and within Indigenous communities broadly, the overall approach to this research was to work with NunatuKavut Inuit and to locate positive attributes of their communities, and to privilege Inuit worldviews and perspectives in the process. We collaboratively identified approaches and ways of doing based on what has worked well in the past, locating expertise and assets within communities themselves, all to further strengthen and benefit from the adaptive capacities required to vision and plan for a positive and vibrant future that is relevant to Inuit themselves.

We examined contributions in NunatuKavut in the areas of self-determination, decolonization, resurgence and rights that are Indigenous led and inspired, building upon scholarly literature in discussions surrounding decolonization and sustainability. The worlds of academia and Inuit community life have come together in this project to support the creation of space and opportunities for community sustainability planning. These opportunities have implications for the preservation of culture and communities in NunatuKavut, and for the methodology used in this research.

Respectful community engagement was guided by the work of leading Indigenous scholars in the field like Smith, Wilson and Kovach, along with Hudson's connection to her home community and to NunatuKavut generally. This approach to community engagement helped to ensure that the research study was informed by the community in both purpose and methods. We also drew from the expertise, knowledge and guidance of three NunatuKavut communities: Black Tickle, Norman Bay and St. Lewis (Table 4.2). This research was community led and driven and the research methods support this end. Hart (2010) writes of research that is "structured within an epistemology that includes a subjectively based process for knowledge development and a reliance on Elders and individuals who have or are developing this insight" (p. 9). Hudson's own experiences, as a result of growing up in and belonging to one of the pilot communities of this study and her work with the NCC, further embedded and ensured accountability to this research approach.

Strength-based decision making, and planning was introduced as the framework for our discussions. This assisted in situating Inuit participants as knowledge holders and experts on matters that impact them and on their lands. This strength-based approach is particularly fundamental to decolonized sustainability planning in NunatuKavut. Deficit based research has often been conducted in Indigenous communities, failing to acknowledge and respect Indigenous

knowledge and expertise (Cooper & Driedger, 2018). The use of strength-based planning allowed for Inuit worldviews, values and perspectives to lead and guide the planning process. Planning with and by Indigenous peoples in this way has elsewhere resulted in positive outcomes across a range of areas like culture, identity-building, healing, etc. (Fawcett, Walker, & Green, 2015). In this study, dialogue around strength-based thinking was integral to envisioning a sustainable future. It is noteworthy that females pre-dominantly led the sustainability work and all three community sustainability coordinators (described below) were female. In remote communities such as these, there is often a tendency to focus on what has not been working in communities, or how governments or other governing bodies are not working, without looking at the potential and individual and collective agency that already exists within communities. Strength based discussions, asset mapping and visioning exercises assisted communities in maneuvering around this paradigm to get to a place of planning without the baggage of what has gone wrong in the past, which stands in the way of planning a desired future. Planning from a place of strength that privileges local Inuit knowledge is also key to the pursuit of sustainable self-determination.

As a way to initiate the CGSI a regional workshop was held in Happy Valley-Goose Bay (HVGB) in 2017. This gathering brought together the three pilot communities, including three representatives from each of the communities. We worked with community participants and engaged in various awareness, skills and capacity building exercises. They included: (a) strength-based decision making and planning; (b) community visioning exercises; (c) community asset mapping; (d) community engagement; and (f) proposal writing.

Following the initial gathering in HVGB, pilot community participants applied and furthered the lessons that they had learned once they returned home to their community (e.g., asset mapping). As research lead, Hudson identified an external funding opportunity to further the community sustainability planning work. This allowed NCC to employ a community sustainability

coordinator in each of the three communities for a period of seven months. Throughout the scope of this work, and working directly with Hudson, community sustainability coordinators were able to solidify sustainability committees in their respective communities and then co-lead the committees in a range of activities and areas relevant and localized to each community. Hudson oversaw the work of the coordinators as NCC lead and as a part of this study. The coordinators furthered asset mapping exercises, participated in and co- led visioning exercises and activities (feast, cultural events, community games, etc.), wrote proposals, and engaged in networking opportunities with stakeholders.

4.3.2 Recruitment and Data Collection

Interactive workshops, gatherings and community meetings supported both collaboration and consensus building discussions and provided the space and environment to engage participants throughout 2017 and into 2018. These workshops, meetings and gatherings were predominantly held in the study communities, with the exception of two larger gatherings that brought together all three communities to learn and share in a larger setting in HVGB. Recruitment strategies within communities relied on local knowledge and expertise from community members and the NCC. Other NCC partners, past and present, with experience and knowledge of NCC governance and land claims, were also invited to participate. Participants were contacted in various ways depending on the data collection strategy (i.e., email, public notices, in person, email). In order to achieve the goals of the project across three communities, it was necessary to employ a multi-dimensional approach to community outreach and engagement, and the project lent itself to learning and refining best practices, in working with the three communities.

Qualitative data collection methods included one on one interviews, focus groups, and surveys. Participants were recruited by email, telephone and word of mouth for each of these methods. Four one on one interviews were conducted in the communities (one from Black Tickle,

two from St. Lewis, one from Norman Bay). Additionally, two external interviews were conducted with individuals who have been participatory to NCC's land claim and research journey over the past two decades. See Table 4.3 for a detailed list of activities undertaken with participants from each of the three pilot communities. Interviews occurred simultaneously with other forms of data collection. We chose interviews as a data collection method given the centrality of interviewing to qualitative methodology. However, it was clear that action-oriented data collection that directly engaged participants in gatherings (like those described above) and settings designed to share and learn from one another, were much more conducive to collecting rich data and in engaging participants throughout the research. In some instances, such as the two gatherings in HVGB, stakeholders were invited by email to participate, listen and respond to community interests and goals. Some of the stakeholders in attendance included representatives from funding agencies (e.g., ACOA), business advisors from Nunacor (NCC's business arm), and academics in related fields at Memorial University.

The two larger, centralized gatherings, also referred to as workshops, were held in HVGB and brought representatives from all three study communities together. Recruitment for these two gatherings was done by contacting the local governing structure by telephone and email in each of the study communities (municipality, local service district, recreation committee). It was appropriate to work with the local governing boards to not only seek their interest in the project, but to identify recruits to attend the gatherings in HVGB. The second gathering, recruited in much the same manner, also hosted a focus group discussion with participants from all three communities. The dynamics of these gatherings were comfortable, supportive, open and transparent. Existing best practices in engagement by NCC in the past also assisted in implementing spaces that were conducive to sharing and dialogue. Community gatherings ranged in size and were influenced by community population size, with 25+ people attending in Black

Tickle at a full day youth and community event, approximately six people in Norman Bay and 40+ people in St Lewis at a community feast and youth/family event. The community feast in St. Lewis resulted in 43 written submissions by community members detailing what they value most about life in St. Lewis.

There were four focus groups in total (one in each individual pilot community and one collective focus group at the second sustainability gathering in HVGB-described above). There were seven participants in the focus group in Black Tickle, two in Norman Bay, six in St. Lewis and ten in the HVGB workshop. Participants attended and engaged in two workshops in Happy Valley Goose Bay with ten participants in each workshop. Survey respondents totaled 26 in Norman Bay and St. Lewis. The surveys sought to elicit information about the age, gender, and connection community members felt towards their home. The surveys were not initiated or completed in Black Tickle as the community is all of Hudson's relations. While surveys assist in gathering relevant information for analysis, in this context the use of a survey in Hudson's home community felt too impersonal. Hudson knows each individual personally and shares ancestral ties and modern-day kinship and social networks with them.

Further data were collected through collaborative community development efforts (planning and ideas sharing), and a manual to guide community planners/coordinators was compiled by the sustainability coordinators in this study. The development of this manual was informed by work in each of the pilot communities through a process of reflection and community engagement. In addition, written submissions from individual community members about what they value most about their community were collected and compiled separately into community booklets. There were 12, 12 and 26 individual submissions respectively, numbering 50 submissions in total. Participants were recruited by advertisement, telephone and word of mouth.

4.3.3 Data Analysis

One on one interviews and focus groups were audio recorded and transcribed. Notes were taken and reflected upon in instances where audio recording did not take place. Prominent themes from all sources of data were identified and interpreted. Due to the Indigenous storytelling nature of data collection, the interpretation of data sets was validated during conversations, focus groups, and gatherings with participants. This ensured that participants had ample opportunity to reflect, discuss, share what they meant, and what they saw as important for the future. The community led and driven approach of this research meant that participant stories (i.e., submissions on what they love about community, asset mapping, visioning), reflect the voices of communities in this study and explicitly reinforce connection to community. Thus, community voice and direction underscore the results and discussion that follows and will be central to any future efforts that result from planning for sustainability in NunatuKavut.

4.4 Results: Planning for Sustainability in NunatuKavut

Five predominant results regarding Inuit planning, through the CGSI, materialized from this study, identified in table 4.1 below. A discussion of each of these key results follows. These results illustrate how Inuit led community planning materialized in this study. These results offer an alternative approach to conducting Inuit community led sustainability planning that is guided by a decolonized and strength-based framework. In doing so, we respond to the above described call by Johnson et al. (2016), Ugarte (2014), McGregor (2013) and others to engage and privilege Indigenous rights and knowledge and participation by Indigenous peoples in planning processes.

Table 4.1

Key results

-
1. Inter and cross community sharing integral to community planning
 2. Community strengths identified
 3. Strengthened community capacity
 4. Re-connection to community and culture during the planning process
 5. Sustainability goals identified and implementation begun
-

The results reflect the multifaceted engagement of participants, and their contributions to this study, and are embedded and interpreted from a place of strength, autonomy and Inuit rights. In sum, the results point to a reality whereby commitment and connection to community is paramount and where knowledge and expertise has been borne from generations of living on and with the land and this knowledge is paramount to continued community planning and ultimately survival.

4.4.1 Inter and Cross Community Sharing Integral to Community Planning

Storytelling and knowledge passed down through generations are integral to the continuity and survival of Inuit societies, and in community sustainability planning efforts. The exchange of knowledge and expertise between Inuit and as it relates to their collective and individual experiences living on and with the land, within their respective communities and in the region as a whole, is an integral method within a decolonized and strength-based planning framework. This is particularly relevant given the many accounts of how Indigenous peoples have been marginalized by external planners in planning processes on Indigenous lands (Hibbard, Lane, & Rasmussen, 2008). Therefore, this approach seeks to privilege the voice of Inuit in planning a future on their own terms, and from their own perspectives. This also assists in motivating and empowering community members to reject a history of outsider knows best, inherent in mainstream Western

sustainability planning, and to reclaim agency on their lands. Previous in-depth research with NunatuKavut Inuit demonstrates the important role storytelling plays in community life. Storytelling, local knowledge and expertise is important to family and community survival (Hart, 2010). Participant feedback about participation in the sustainability workshops revealed that participants saw value in coming together, across communities, to share and learn from one another. Community members gained encouragement to move forward in their own communities as a result of this co-learning and sharing. Community participants thought deeply about the values, assets, and overall strengths of their respective communities and how their communities were similar and dissimilar in NunatuKavut, as well as how they could support one another and learn from one another moving forward. One of the participants commented:

During these workshops I've learned with my community how to try and embrace the negative in our community and turn it into a positive. I've experienced other communities address issues that are similar to ours that I didn't know existed ... Just overall this experience have been amazing and so insightful.

Demonstrating further the importance of relationship building to this work, another community participant described the key benefits she gained from participating in the process. She stated: "The connections and relationships/bonds I made. The confidence to return to my community with knowledge I didn't know before".

Sharing and co-learning was key to the success of this work. While communities often work alone to achieve their goals (lack of resources and time to collaborate and remote geography, contribute to this reality), the CGSI allowed for opportunities for cross community knowledge sharing and engagement to take place in non-competitive and open spaces that also sought to strengthen community skills. This helped to reduce participant feelings of isolation and alienation in visioning and community planning.

4.4.2 Identification of Community Strengths

In an effort to build on the positive momentum gained from inter and cross community knowledge sharing and strength based dialogue, facilitated discussions around community strengths created and directed opportunities for community members in each of the pilot communities to submit (in writing or in picture form) their own thoughts and ideas about what it is that they value about their community. This method acknowledged and validated the strengths inherent in community connection. As Inuit continue to evolve and adapt to a changing world that impacts their environment, they are well positioned to identify the strengths that are integral to the continuation of their societies. NunatuKavut Inuit are deeply connected to the lands, waters, ice and kinship ties that make up their society and communities. Yet, they are often excluded from aspects of planning and decision-making on their lands. The identification of strengths by Inuit themselves has ensured that all sectors of society that are regarded as significant, have been included in the planning process and was an important part of ensuring a decolonized approach to community planning-one that acknowledges the various sources and sites of knowledge common to Inuit.

Submissions varied in length and individual participants described their connection to place and homeland. These submissions were compiled and integrated into three booklets. They are as follows: Why I love Black Tickle, Why I love Norman Bay, and Why I love St. Lewis. These stories were integral to deepening our understanding of community values in NunatuKavut. Below are two examples from the submissions that were compiled.

The peacefulness. The beauty of the land. I love all what BT is. The way the bog smells in the spring when everything is starting to thaw, sitting out on the point and watching flock after flock of birds flying by. The smell of wetness in the air as you go in over the land berrypicking. The beautiful colours of bright green grass as you climb the hills in July, the sound of seagulls going crazy for a feed of fish when the fishermen come in with their catch. The way the lights dance on the water on a beautiful calm summers night. The way the town looks after its first snowfall. Seeing the kiddies going from pond to pond to check the depth of the ice for skating time and the memories come racing in of when you were a child and the amount of hours you spent on them same ponds growing up.

Norman Bay gave my husband and I a quiet, peaceful, and safe place to raise our children. Everybody's children played together. If you knew where one child was, you knew where the whole bunch was. I can honestly say I was never bored. The isolation from other communities never bothered me and still don't. I have always felt safe here. People would always be there to give help when it was needed, no matter what and it's still that way today. We don't have far to go for our wild foods and berries or wood for our heat.

The success of this strength-based exercise demonstrated the deep and enduring connection that individuals have to their homeland. In addition, by eliciting positive and strength-based versions of home and community, we strengthened and situated our collective understanding about what is most important to community members as they prepare and plan for the future. Community members became re-focused around what is most important to them during this process as well. Simultaneously, community sustainability coordinators were building on asset mapping skills they had learned during the workshops in HVGB and they each worked in their respective communities to identify assets in diverse areas like culture, social, human, financial, to name a few. Asset mapping, focused on community strengths, and served to reinforce that knowledge and expertise already exists within the communities. Participants began to see themselves reflected in this way and this furthered their ability to think about what they could achieve in their respective communities. This method further ensured the active inclusion of Inuit in the planning process and that Inuit values were reflected in the planning process. For example, we learned from participants that maintaining traditional skills, local knowledge of the land, including the use of knowledge passed down through generations, are key strengths and important considerations in sustainability planning work.

4.4.3 Strengthened Community Capacity

Through decolonized community engagement that used a strength-based approach, participant awareness, skillsets and capacity were strengthened in areas of interest and relevance to

community members in pursuit of community planning. This further enabled the active participation and engagement of community sustainability coordinators in leading sustainability planning in their hometowns. Capacity strengthening exercises were conducted with the sustainability coordinators in the following areas: (a) community engagement, (b) community strengths and, (c) sustainability goals and visioning. This method has had positive implications for community, and it ensured that capacity strengthening efforts directly benefited the communities themselves. These measures were taken to avoid the pitfalls common to Western scientific research whereby external researchers enter a community, conduct the research, and then leave with the knowledge (gained through dialogue with Indigenous participants), and then analyze and use this knowledge outside of the community itself. By ensuring that capacity strengthening efforts focused directly on furthering the leadership of community members, we sought to avoid such colonial research practices.

Conversations and capacity strengthening opportunities took place with community sustainability coordinators and other participants from the three pilot communities. We talked about why participants were engaged in community sustainability work, why it was important for them, and for other community members, to be a part of change for the future in their respective communities. These conversations allowed us to better understand collectively why people remain connected to their community, and the values surrounding this connection. Together, we were better able to think of relevant and meaningful ways to engage communities in important conversations about the future, and in community planning projects. In reflecting on one of the workshops a participant stated: “What a strong group of community leaders. I’m so impressed by the ideas and the hard work that’s going to propel these communities forward”. As a result of these dialogue and working group efforts, community engagement ideas were compiled by sustainability

coordinators to assist NCC and others who may seek to engage and work with communities in NunatuKavut.

The community sustainability coordinators furthered community asset mapping (a new skill learned during workshops in HVGB) within their respective communities. This allowed them to capture broad and insightful responses while expanding community vision through the identification of community strengths and opportunities. Working from a place of strength was integral to this study and facilitated discussions around strength-based approaches to community planning were successful.

During the workshops (in group and as a whole) sustainability goals were identified and then further verified and expanded upon within each community through visioning exercises. During the workshops in HVGB, visioning exercises were employed where representative community members in attendance worked in community groups to map out an ideal vision for their respective communities. In doing so, community members articulated (through drawings) their hopes for the future. Early discussions about strength-based planning aided participants in creating visions that were positive, realistic and hopeful. Overall, these early visions were well thought out and discussed in detail. They created opportunities for in-depth participant discussion about what worked well in the community in the past and present, and participants identified the skills, knowledge and expertise the community already has and that they deem relevant to pursuing sustainable community development. Participants identified practical goals like infrastructure and water security projects, to name a few (See Table 4.4 for detailed community goals). These goals are fundamental to economic development opportunities. In addition, participants identified economic development opportunities like bakeapple harvesting and processing, the fishery, sealing, and tourism in resource and culture rich areas (see result five). The practicality of these goals was further supported by the participants' ability to locate existing assets in the community that could

assist with achieving the goals. For example, abandoned structures, buildings, empty homes, and materials and skills that already exist in the community were identified as spaces and opportunities to further the economic development ideas. Visions for sustainable economic development like berry and seal harvesting and tourism development in Black Tickle, the construction of a multi-purpose building in St. Lewis that could accommodate a cultural Centre and growing tourism opportunities, and tourism growth potential in Norman Bay, all point to sustainability planning that seeks to incorporate aspects of community and cultural life that are relevant and meaningful to Inuit themselves.

4.4.4 Re-Connection to Community and Culture During the Planning Process

Strength based exercises that encouraged positive thinking and reflection also aided in the re-connection to and validation of home and culture. Strength based dialogue facilitated opportunities for participants to re-connect to those aspects of home and community life that are most valuable to them. Borrowing from Cornthassel's (2012) work related to the interconnections between Indigenous people's connection to land and resurgence, these re-connections described by participants are also interpreted as acts of resurgence by Inuit. For example, one community member wrote:

I love St. Lewis because it's a place I call home. I can teach our children traditional ways of living like hunting, fishing and trapping. Things I learned growing up as a kid and stuff I can pass on to them ... don't think they would learn these things if we lived in a city.

There were ample stories (written and shared in discussions) that pointed to a high degree of pride in home across all three communities. It was obvious that by validating community and culture, people re-connected and became more engaged and responsive to thinking about the future from a place of strength and saw themselves as having a role in creating this vision for the future. Participants discussed some of the challenges and barriers that they continue to face in their

communities, in a way that was solution oriented, as opposed to from a place of defeat and hopelessness, (a way of thinking apparent early on). For example, some community participants spoke about how policy and programming opportunities, or funding calls from provincial and federal governments, are often done without regard for the interests and goals of the communities. Some expressed how they felt invalidated over the years in their communities by provincial or federal governments and marginalized from funding and other crucial opportunities to pursue planning efforts that were important to them. Others felt that some government officials simply did not care about them or their communities and felt as though it was the tactic of government to have people relocate from their homes to lessen financial burden and responsibility of government. Yet by re-connecting to community and culture, participants were able to think outside of a pre-scripted box where programs and services are outlined by external actors and were able to come up with ideas and goals that were directly related to the interests of the communities. We learned that community interests are integral to planning as many participants talked about, for example, the importance of ensuring the survival of tradition and life ways learned from their ancestors.

The strength-based exercises in this study were successful in validating the potential, expertise, and knowledge that exists in the study communities. This form of validation proved crucial to strengthening capacity and awareness for those involved in planning, and in overcoming feelings of defeat and isolation. Furthermore, the importance of community and cultural validation is a feature of sustainable self-determination that seek to counter colonial wrongdoings that deny people and communities their very Indigeneity. It appears that by re-connecting to community and culture in the planning process, participants become more engaged and take on a greater sense of responsibility for the future.

4.4.5 Sustainability Goals Identified, and Implementation Begun

The three pilot communities identified a range of community sustainability goals and

priorities and they began to work towards design and implementation during the course of this study. (See Table 4.4 for more detail). The community goals and priorities identified illustrate that community members are aware of the need to provide for basic necessities in addition to priorities that impact holistic health and well-being. While these goals represent the voice and participation of Inuit, it is important to be alert to the ever-evolving realities that impact Inuit communities and the need for Inuit to evolve and adapt to these realities. This means that goals may change and evolve as well, and planning actors must be cognizant of this and capable of attending to the varying nature of planning in these communities. Participant work on the CGSI demonstrates a commitment to community and to ensuring the survival of communities. The sustainability work of the CGSI offered a dedicated space for community members to focus on key areas of interests as they relate to community survival. As a result, a community craft group was formalized, proposals for infrastructure development identified and furthered, proposals related to water security, as well as community craft and feast events, took place. Other long-term goals were identified and discussed including the diversification of industry for economic growth. Economic development ideas reflected the resources available to community, and the skills and knowledge of community members. For example, seal processing, berry processing and a range of tourism opportunities, were identified.

These goals and priorities came out of and were furthered through the asset mapping, visioning and engagement exercises. Further priorities and sustainability goals specifically included improvements to roads and transportation, water and sewer infrastructure (two of three communities lack water and sewer infrastructure entirely and the third, partially), infrastructure to support community development and growth (i.e., multipurpose community centre/fire hall), economic security, food and heat security initiatives, and culturally relevant education. Additionally, access to clean drinking water was identified as a goal across all three communities

and the degree of urgency of this goal varied across communities, with the most urgent and priority need in Black Tickle. Each of these priority areas were considered important for community sustainability now and into the future.

Communities also identified initiatives that they felt could be undertaken immediately such as community gatherings and feasts to celebrate community (St. Lewis), art and craft sessions for communities and activities for youth (Norman Bay and Black Tickle). Community members identified these as opportunities to assist in sustaining the momentum around sustainability discussions that had been ongoing in their communities throughout the research. Community centred initiatives like these were also thought to positively impact collective well-being and promote togetherness, in turn reinforcing and further validating Inuit values. In this context, it is clear that community planning and development opportunities must adhere to principles that ensure the survival of community and culture in ways that respect and ensure the survival of the natural environment and all who live with it.

4.5 Limitations

The study faced some limitations and challenges such as geography. NunatuKavut spans a vast territory and the three pilot communities are not easily accessible to each other, nor for the research team. As a result, time in individual communities was limited due to costs associated with travel to remote coastal Labrador and in order to ensure that quality time was had in each community. Inadequate funding to support community sustainability coordinators beyond the life of this study due to the external funding opportunity being short term and project based was also a challenge for the longevity of continuing this work in communities.

4.6 Discussion and Conclusions

Topics of governance and sustainability, including community sustainability planning, are receiving increasing attention in Canada and across the globe. Yet, conflicts and tensions related to

land and resources between Indigenous peoples and the state continue and often undermine Indigenous political autonomy (Lane & Hibbard, 2005). When Indigenous political autonomy is undermined, so too are the sustainability of cultural landscapes and the social-ecological systems that Inuit are a part of. Booth and Muir (2011) recognize that Indigenous planning is necessary in order for Indigenous peoples to effectively navigate their own terrain and to navigate federal and provincial forces on their land. Yet, these authors observe that little attention has been paid (in the literature, policy or practice) to this area. An Indigenous planning perspective is new and to some extent unrealized, though it remains necessary in overcoming some of the barriers and obstacles that face Indigenous peoples in planning for the future (Booth & Muir, 2011) and sustaining their communities and cultures.

This study illustrates decolonized and community led sustainability planning in action. Collaborative work with NunatuKavut Inuit has given rise to ‘grounded decolonization’ which refers to an approach that seeks to respect and honour the values, history and culture of those who belong to their homeland, in their place and time. It refers to decolonization that must take place in the context of people who live and are connected through generations. Simply put, it means that decolonizing efforts must be acutely aware, and cognizant of, the history and present of the people in their context-and on their own terms. From this vantage point, decolonization or decolonizing efforts must be designed, shaped and implemented in locally and context specific ways. Thus, grounding decolonization refers to the act of designing and implementing decolonizing efforts that have gained consensus and agreement from communities leading their own efforts. In the context of sustainability planning, decolonization can manifest as Indigenous consent and recognition of Indigenous priorities and expertise which are integral to the creation of sustainable communities.

Corntassel’s concept of place further enlightens this study (Corntassel, 2012). The community sustainability planning and capacity strengthening efforts of Inuit in NunatuKavut

throughout the CGSI reflect the capacity and strength of Inuit to make decisions that impact them on their lands and informed by their own values and perspectives. The autonomy to make decisions that impact the future of Inuit communities in NunatuKavut, in a way that is indicative of Inuit values, world views and perspectives, is integral to decolonizing and self-determination efforts that are sustainable into the future. By building on the work of Corntassel in this area and applying key concepts and ideas to the work in NunatuKavut, we were able to assist communities in identifying short and long-term sustainability goals that positively impact community. Expertise and knowledge of generations past, of tradition, moving and living with changing seasons, all point to a reality in which people live in relation with the natural environment, not against it (Hibbard, Lane, & Rasmussen, 2008).

Study participants were active in achieving a number of the goals and objectives set out in their communities through the CGSI and it was clear that the health of people and communities, of lands and waters, was and is a stated priority. The priorities and goals set out by the communities in this study are meaningful, relevant and urgent. While they are not necessarily elaborate, it is important to understand these goals in context. In many ways, they reflect a desire for the basic and fundamental rights and privileges that most Canadians' already enjoy freely, including basic necessities necessary to support the planning and development of goals driven by the global economy (e.g., access to clean drinking water). Sustainability goals and priorities in this study point to inequalities and inequities that plague NunatuKavut Inuit in these areas, but these issues are not unique to them as Indigenous peoples. Water and food insecurity disproportionately impact Indigenous communities in Canada, and in particular, Northern Indigenous communities (Hanrahan, Sarkar, & Hudson, 2014). Thus, Indigenous led self-determination efforts that are locally driven and context specific are necessary for the planning of sustainable futures that promote equality and equity for Inuit.

Community asset mapping, engagement strategies, visioning exercises, and capacity strengthening initiatives provided spaces and environments for participants and communities to envision, for themselves, a future for their community. The idea behind capacity strengthening and thought-provoking exercises such as these was not to transport knowledge from one authoritative body onto community, but rather to open safe and meaningful spaces for communities to connect with, think about, and reflect upon what is possible in a way that positions community members as experts and knowledge holders in their own right. Following from the work of Eisenberg et al. (2014), this research and the processes described in this study demonstrate that Indigenous peoples and communities are experts on their lands and their knowledge of place position them to make decisions to inform a future that is compatible with their own goals, ways of knowing and of being.

Overall, the work of the sustainability committees in communities set the stage for discussions whereby community people began to talk about governance and community planning from a community centered and value-based perspective. Several participants spoke to the way in which the sustainability committee in their community had allowed them to think about and move initiatives forward in a way that had not been possible before. Participants from all of the pilot communities spoke to the necessity of community involvement and leadership in decisions that impact them directly, emphasizing the importance of grounded, decolonizing approaches to community planning and visions for the future informed by Inuit goals and values, and shaped by their connection to people, place and history, rooted in their environment and culture.

Community knowledge, values and traditions, enlightened by communities themselves, has set an important expectation in motion-that in order to plan for a sustainable future, we must think about and reconnect with what it is that we value most about our communities. This approach allows community members to reflect and to think about positive aspects of a community (i.e., culture, values etc.), and to ensure that those facets of community are protected and considered in

planning for the future. What is valued within and about community became the prominent factor in considering and determining community sustainability goals in these three pilot communities. This work situates grounded decolonization as that which creates, supports and fosters environments that allow communities and people to connect and re-connect to their communities in ways that are most meaningful to them. Decolonizing paths that seek to respond to the interests, priorities and values of people in their place and time, and not those ideals or values that come from outside the community, are particularly relevant. Grounded decolonization implies that these values about community should lead the community planning approach for the future.

Decolonized planning efforts are a necessary step to sustainable self-determination in NunatuKavut so as to ensure that community sustainability planning efforts come from a rights-based perspective. As a concept and point of discussion in modern day discourse and building on the work of Smith (2012), decolonization can assist us in unpacking sites of colonial control (and even colonial relationships that have endured and continue to marginalize Indigenous governance systems). While Indigenous governance systems have much to contribute to the development of sustainable communities and societies, Indigenous communities are often faced with barriers due to a lack of interest in collaboration from dominant systems of control within society (Jokhu & Kutay, 2020). The implications of this work are that community sustainability for Indigenous communities under Indigenous led decolonization, as it is for the NunatuKavut Inuit, means that capacity is being strengthened, knowledge and awareness of Indigenous rights are becoming more prevalent, the desire and will to reclaim traditional aspects of culture and political society are more paramount, and the willingness to own, author and share one's story is becoming commonplace. This research study has been a witness to the power of culture, tradition and connection to community that has come as a result of decolonizing work, all of which are integral to beginning and maintaining decolonized community sustainability.

4.7 Author Contributions

A.H.: Supported by the NCC, I designed and led the CGSI, with the NCC and three NunatuKavut communities. I held a dual role as NCC employee, working with and for the communities, observing and reflecting on this process as a PhD student. The multiple roles of community member, researcher and employee of NCC held me accountable but also connected me with the communities and people who participated in this research. K.V.: My contributions to this paper are as a scholar in community sustainability, governance and development. As supervisor I provided guidance throughout the research, including the writing of this article and the related PhD dissertation, as well as specific input on the construction and content of this paper, as outlined below. Conceptualization, A.H.; methodology, A.H.; investigation, A.H.; resources, K.V.; writing—original draft preparation, A.H.; writing—review and editing, A.H., and K.V.; supervision, K.V. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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4.7.3 Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

4.7.4 Supplementary Information: Community Characteristics

Black Tickle, Norman Bay, and St. Lewis were selected as pilot communities to pursue community sustainability planning with a vision towards identifying collective community goals, building on what is and has already been working well in the communities, in order to envision a future from a place of strength, Inuit values and perspectives. This process demonstrated that residents in the three communities are proud and eager to reclaim and strengthen a future that is bright and sustainable for their families for the years to come. The communities were selected based on remote geography in NunatuKavut, their vulnerability around economic development, food and water security concerns (although to varying degrees in each community), and rate of population decline, all of which affect community and cultural preservation. These communities are also rich in Inuit culture and their remoteness and lack of basic amenities give rise to continued subsistence living in a way that persistently demonstrates Inuit adaptation in the face of globalization. In sum, this research is driven by an approach to equity. Table 4.2 provides an overview of the remoteness of all three communities, highlighting the lack accessibility in and out of each community and a lack of primary industry that was once the economic driver in the communities.

Table 4.2

Community Characteristics

	Black Tickle	Norman Bay	St. Lewis
Population ¹	110	20	185
Transportation	Fly-in/out, seasonal ferry (limited), small boat	Seasonal fly-in/out (helicopter), small boat	Road (TransLabrador Highway, TLH), fly-in/out
Major Industry	Fishery (local plant closed)	Fishery (travel to neighboring plant by boat for employment, no local plant)	Fishery (local plant closed)

¹ Population source: Community Town Council, Recreation Committee and Local Service District respectively. Other information in Table 1 reflects knowledge from study participants.

Table 4.3

Data Collection Activities (All Communities)

Activity Type	Participants (n)	Rationale	Impact
Focus group	Black Tickle: 7 Norman Bay: 2 St. Lewis: 6	Participant knowledge sharing and storytelling	Participant voices privileged. Increased understanding around community vision, goals and limitations.
Interviews	Black Tickle: 1 Norman Bay: 1 St. Lewis: 2 Other: 2	Standard data collection method	Less effective in accessing rich data. Not conducive to storytelling.
Survey	Black Tickle: n/a Norman Bay: 6 St. Lewis: 20	Baseline data collection	No surveys conducted in Black Tickle given the nature of researcher and community relationship (see methods). For others, increased researcher understanding of participant belonging to community (age, years in community, etc).
Community gathering	Black Tickle: 25 Norman Bay: 6 St. Lewis: 43	Appropriate Indigenous research method	Designed to enable researcher learning from participants.
Written submissions	Black Tickle: 12 Norman Bay: 12 St. Lewis: 26	Create space for positive and strength-based thinking around community	Re-connected community to positive attributes of community and culture. Increased understanding of participant values in relation to community and culture.

<p>HVGB workshop 1 (strength-based planning, visioning, asset mapping, community engagement, proposal writing)</p>	<p>Black Tickle, Norman Bay and St. Lewis: 10</p>	<p>Engage participants in positive and strength-based planning and visioning, identify range of community assets and engagement strategies, and highlight tips and best practices in proposal writing</p>	<p>Participants increasingly saw themselves as active agents and better identified positive attributes of communities integral to successful planning, identified planning opportunities and goals that were realistic and integral to core values around community life and culture, and identified and reflected on the many assets that already exist in communities. Strengthened community capacity and researcher learned best practices in engagement from communities.</p>
<p>HVGB workshop 2 (pilot community and NCC presentations, Q&A, networking and focus group)</p>	<p>Black Tickle, Norman Bay and St.Lewis: 10 Other: Approx 5</p>	<p>Privilege community participants as leaders, experts and knowledge holders expressing vision for their community, strengthen participant capacity and presentation skills, identify opportunities to advance goals, connect community participants with stakeholders, knowledge sharing and storytelling</p>	<p>Conversations revolved around stated community interests and needs, participants supported in efforts to pursue planning activities, centred feedback and opportunities around community planning interests and goals, provided opportunities to connect with potential funders, researchers, etc., increased researcher understanding around community planning goals and associated community values.</p>

Table 4.4

4.4.1 Black Tickle Community Goals and Progress; 4.4.2 Norman Bay Community Goals and Progress; 4.4.3 St. Lewis Community Goals and Progress.

4.4.1 Black Tickle Community Goals and Progress		
Goal	Rationale and Benefits	Progress
<p>Short-term: Local garden integrated with healthy eating program for children. Medium to long term: Enhanced food security and child development</p>	<p>- Will provide fresh source of local food. - Address local grocery store issues regarding fresh produce by providing local source of vegetables for purchase and sale. - Benefits for youth education and health.</p>	<p>- School aged children/youth have begun participation in small scale gardening at school. - Community members continue to express interest in this goal.</p>
<p>Short-term: Community social events Medium to long-term: Intergenerational community engagement, holistic health, pride in culture and tradition.</p>	<p>- Events like winter carnivals and come home year celebrations provide opportunities to connect families to community and culture with lasting positive impacts for morale and health of community members.</p>	<p>- Local craft group formalized with the assistance of the CGSI, applying for funds to host social events regularly (e.g., Christmas and Easter events).</p>

	- Develops community planning skills.	
Short-term: Education programs related to traditional knowledge and life skills Medium to long term: youth and elder engagement, preservation of culture	- Educate children and youth in areas of traditional knowledge and life skills (e.g., traditional food preparation). - Ensure valued skills and knowledge are passed on will be important to community survival.	- Local craft group has begun partnering with NCC to deliver programs through NCC's Inuit Education Program and Community Grants Funding.
Short-term: Further investigate alternatives for water and sewer Infrastructure Medium to long term: Ensure reliable access to clean drinking water to community residents	- Benefits to overall health (mentally, physically, emotionally, etc.). - Access to clean drinking water is a right.	- Local Service District (LSD), with help from the CGSI, has developed and submitted a proposal and accessed funding to do feasibility work around water security options.

4.4.2 Norman Bay Community Goals and Progress

Goal	Rationale and Benefits	Progress
Short-term: Identify opportunities to upgrade and build needed infrastructure Medium to long-term: Infrastructure opportunities and upgrades to community centre, helicopter pad, winter snowmobile trail, garbage disposal site,	- Expand contact list and connections for partnerships. - Enhance community centre to meet community needs; - Enhance transportation means, enhance safety for travel and transportation of goods.	- Volunteer labour has sustained the centre to date. Community looks forward to additional developments. - Discussions around funding opportunities have taken place.
Short-term: Community garden and Greenhouse development Medium to long-term: Communal access to local source of fresh foods	- Promote community connectedness, self-sufficiency and access to nutritious food. - Access to healthy food in light of need to travel for store bought goods. - Increase self-sufficiency.	- Small community garden infrastructure purchased through successful funding proposal.
Short-term: Potable Water Drinking Unit (PWDU) Medium to long-term: Reliable source of clean drinking water	- Access to clean drinking water is a right. - Increase access to clean water and particularly for aging population who otherwise rely on retrieving water with buckets from a brook.	- No known progress to date.
Short-term: Equipment for Fire Fighting Medium to long-term: Increased capacity to respond to community crisis.	- Health and safety concern. - Increased self-sufficiency and response efforts during crisis.	- No known progress to date.

4.4.3 St. Lewis Community Goals and Progress

Goal	Rationale and Benefits	Progress
Short-term: Crafting Workshops and social events Medium to long-term: Increase community	- Enhance community activity and skills building - Increase community cohesion and improve social and mental wellness across generations	- Ongoing.

participation in culturally relevant activities		
Short-term: Host community Feasts	- Respond to community interests in like events.	- Ongoing.
Medium to long-term: Provide opportunities to come together and share traditional foods	- Bring community together and support most vulnerable.	
Short-term Work towards necessary Infrastructure Upgrades	- Enhance basic and necessary infrastructure for community planning and development.	- Ongoing discussions and identification of opportunities.
Medium to long-term: Upgrades to museum and new build (fire hall)	- To address health and safety concerns of community members.	
Short-term: Identify solutions to address gaps in water security	- To address outstanding water insecurity in some parts of the community.	- Discussions ongoing.
Medium to long-term: Water and Sewer Infrastructure expanded	- Provide access to clean drinking water to all community members.	

Chapter 5: Manuscript 3

Re-claiming Inuit Governance and Revitalizing Autonomy in NunatuKavut

This paper has been accepted as a chapter to *The Inuit World*, Routledge Publication.

5.1 Abstract

The following chapter highlights the determination of Inuit in NunatuKavut, Labrador to reclaim and strengthen self-governance in their homeland. A history of encroachment and imposition by the Canadian state has long impacted self-governance in NunatuKavut, but Inuit are working to revitalize governance practices that are guided by Inuit perspectives, values, and ways of being. In this chapter, I report on collaborative research with Inuit communities in NunatuKavut on community governance and sustainability planning. This research drew attention to the strong desire of NunatuKavut Inuit to return to governance practices that privilege local, place-based decision-making rooted in a sense of belonging to ancestral lands. Drawing upon the insights, experiences, and knowledge shared by Inuit in NunatuKavut, the results of this study illustrate the critical role of Inuit in planning and leading a future that is practical, relevant to their communities, and on their own terms.

5.2 Introduction and Background

Indigenous peoples were self-governing long before the arrival of European and British assertions of sovereignty on Indigenous lands. Traditional forms of Indigenous governance were often associated with land and family, and multiple spheres were understood as interconnected, such as the familial, political, spiritual, economic, and environmental (Borrows & Rotman, 1998, p. 673). Indigenous women were often integral to these forms of governance, wielding authority, voice, and vital knowledge. Inuit adhered to principles that ensured their own survival. Traditional knowledge documented from Inuit elders illustrates traditional governing practices, or “what had to be followed, done or not done” in Inuit culture (Oosten, Laugrand, & Rasing, 2017, p.1).

Colonial imposition threatened to destroy Indigenous autonomy (Borrows & Rotman, 1998). The impact of colonial imposition on Indigenous sovereignty and power was destructive to Indigenous forms of governance and over time, Indigenous peoples' "powers were annexed by the Crown" (Nikolakis et al., 2019, p.57). As they did throughout the world, colonial governments in what is now Canada consistently disempowered Indigenous women, disregarding Indigenous forms of governance and refusing to include women in negotiations (Lawrence & Anderson, 2005). As Huhndorf and Suzack (2010, p.5) argue, "colonization has reordered gender relations to subordinate women, regardless of their pre-contact status."

Despite centuries of colonial rule, Indigenous nations have survived and maintained their own governance systems and processes and have fought to have their political rights recognized (Borrows & Rotman, 1998). Aboriginal Rights and Title are communal rights that are inherent to being an Indigenous person in Canada, connected to collectives of people that have occupied lands in what is now known as Canada prior to European colonization (McNeil, 2016). Under the Constitutional framework of Canada, "Aboriginal peoples have rights to continue to exist as peoples with the right to self-determination" (Olthius et al., 2012, p.1). These rights were never extinguished, despite British and French assertions of sovereignty and the establishment of governmental authority in what is now Canada (Borrows & Rotman, 1998). Indigenous peoples' inherent rights of self-government have been affirmed in the Constitution Act of 1982, section 35, but Canadian courts have consistently failed to include the perspectives of Indigenous peoples in law and analysis (Napoleon & Friedland, 2016). Today, Canada observes self-government negotiations between Indigenous peoples and Canada as opportunities to work with Indigenous nations towards self-determination (Crown Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, 2019). Yet, modern self-government negotiations between Canada and Indigenous peoples continues to reinforce colonial rule of law and Euro-Western forms of dominance. In response, this

chapter presents an approach to governance that is Inuit-centred, based on values and perspectives that challenge the hierarchy, gender inequities, and power dynamics inherent in State-led governance in Canada.

5.3 Situating the Inuit of NunatuKavut Today

Approximately 6000 Inuit, who live in Labrador and elsewhere, are descended from generations of Inuit belonging to south and central Labrador. Today, over half of this population resides on the traditional lands of our ancestors, now referred to as NunatuKavut. Translated from Inuttitut, NunatuKavut means “Our ancient land.” Inuit in southeast Labrador have practiced seasonal migration from time immemorial (Stopp, 2002). Traditionally, Inuit from this region shifted between seasonal homes (headlands in the summer and fall months, and interior bay areas in the winter and spring) (Procter 2020b; Martin, 2012). This seasonal shifting allowed Inuit to hunt and harvest, sustaining themselves and their families, through the seasons. Inuit did not live in permanent settlements until the 1960s when the church and government sought the permanent settlement of southeast Labrador for the purposes of schooling and other service delivery (Mercer & Hanrahan, 2017). Many Inuit from this region, like other Inuit to the north, attended residential schools in Cartwright, Northwest River and St. Anthony (Procter, 2020b). These forms of outside interference brought many changes to Inuit life in southeast Labrador (i.e., provincial laws and regulations, western education, wage labour economy, etc.). Yet, Inuit continued to practice their culture and traditions and today they remain deeply connected to the lands of their ancestors. Many, if not most Inuit families in this region, still maintain seasonal homes and they continue to occupy those homes on a seasonal basis, continuing their tradition of hunting, harvesting, fishing, trapping and educating children in the ways of their ancestors. Maintaining strong connections to traditional lands is integral to Inuit society today.

The rights of NunatuKavut Inuit are represented by the NunatuKavut Community Council

(NCC), an organizational governing body. Although the political mobilization of Inuit in relationship with colonists in this part of Labrador can be traced back to the 18th century (i.e., British-Inuit Treaty of 1765), this Inuit collective has been working in a modern context since the early 1990s to have their rights formally recognized with the filing of a comprehensive land claim (CLC) submission to the Federal government. In 2015, the federal government began moving beyond the CLC process, working with Indigenous peoples through Recognition of Indigenous Rights and Self-Determination (RIRSD) processes. On February 14, 2018, Canada announced that it would work towards developing a “Recognition and Implementation of Indigenous Rights Framework consisting of legislation and policy” as part of its commitment to recognition and reconciliation (Government of Canada, 2018). In 2018, Canada accepted NunatuKavut Inuit (represented by the NCC) into the RIRSD process, and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) guiding the relationship was formalized between the Canadian government and the NCC in September 2019. Through this process, Canada and NCC will negotiate self-government agreements for NunatuKavut Inuit.

This chapter illustrates the active role that Inuit continue to play in advancing their future. To assist Inuit on their path to self-government and self-determination, I led a collaborative research study with NunatuKavut Inuit that seeks to reclaim and reconstitute modern Inuit governance practices for the future, derived from the values and perspectives of Inuit from this region. This research has also created space for Inuit to share their knowledge while identifying key areas of interest to them as the NCC looks toward self-government and self-determination in a modern era.

I am from NunatuKavut and maintain a strong connection specifically to my home community of Black Tickle and to NunatuKavut generally. This study reflects my approach to research as extending beyond social justice to include community and cultural preservation.

Borrowing from the work of Indigenous scholar Shawn Wilson (2008), I undertake research that is both context-specific and accountable to the communities participatory to this study. Wilson contends that relational research is an essential form of respect for participants. I have sought to enact these principles by representing Inuit in NunatuKavut from a place of strength and autonomy, while recognizing their Inuit rights, and highlighting the social, cultural, and economic contributions of Inuit women. The following is part of my doctoral research, which included a Community Governance and Sustainability (CGSI) initiative¹ in three pilot communities which I led in collaboration with NunatuKavut Inuit. The pilot communities are Black Tickle, Norman Bay and St. Lewis and they are indicated on the map below (figure 5.1).

I employed qualitative and Indigenous research methods such as individual and group interviews, storytelling sessions, surveys, and community gatherings to engage Inuit in discussions about their interests, perspectives, and visions for self-governance. Many of these formats provided opportunities for networking, sharing, relationship-building, and learning, consistent with Indigenous methodologies. Additional data came from written submissions (storytelling and poetry) from 50 individual participants from the CGSI pilot communities of Black Tickle, Norman Bay, and St. Lewis. In the submissions, participants described their most valued aspects of home and community. This approach encouraged positive thinking, connection, and reflexivity among participants. These submissions also provided in-depth insight into the values and priorities of participants that are integral to discussions about governance. Relevant secondary data sources (i.e., NCC reports, archival documents, community engagement notes, etc.) were analyzed and

¹ The CGSI refers to a community driven research study (part of Hudson's doctoral research). The CGSI used a strength-based approach while working collaboratively with Inuit in three pilot communities in NunatuKavut (Black Tickle, Norman Bay and St. Lewis). The CGSI identified culturally relevant pathways for sustainability planning that privilege the knowledge and expertise of Inuit. In addition, community sustainability goals across all three pilot communities were identified. This study helped to inform best practices in inclusive and culturally relevant community engagement that continue to be used by NCC in their consultations with Inuit throughout NunatuKavut. More information can be found about this study and the three pilot communities in Hudson and Vodden, 2020.

used to support and enrich the study findings. I also used participant observation over a three-year period. Detailed notes and journaling, as well as my own experiences and knowledge as a result of my belonging to one of the study communities inform my findings.

Figure 5.1

NunatuKavut CGSI Pilot Communities



"NunatuKavut CGSI Pilot Communities" Map produced by Bryn Wood, NunatuKavut Community Council, 2020.

Overall, the data collection activities resulted in a compilation of rich knowledge and expertise from Inuit in this study. I organized this knowledge into four themes and two principles of Inuit governance. I present them after a review of modern treaty making in Canada. This review helps to situate a history of colonially rooted governance practices in Canada generally and its

impact on the potential of Inuit self-determination in NunatuKavut today, followed by a discussion that illustrates the importance of Inuit-centred governance.

5.4 Modern Treaty-Making in Canada

Early relations between the British Crown and Indigenous peoples in northeastern North America must be understood in their particular time and place. From “commercial compacts” to the Peace and Friendship Treaties of the seventeenth century and onwards, early agreements were largely borne out of commercial relations and the colonial desire for land and resources (Miller, 2009). In NunatuKavut territory in southern Labrador, the British Crown made early attempts to seize control of coastal riches, negotiating with Inuit in order to exclude other competitor European nations.

Along the Labrador coast, Inuit had violently resisted the growing numbers of European whalers, traders, and fishers who sought to exploit the region's rich marine resources each summer from the 15th century onwards (Pope, 2015). When Britain assumed colonial jurisdiction of Labrador from the French in 1763, the violence continued. The British Crown tried to pacify the coast by making a “peace and friendship” style treaty with Inuit in southern Labrador in 1765. The Crown also invited Moravian missionaries to establish trading posts and mission stations in northern Labrador in an attempt to draw Inuit to the north, away from lucrative fishing grounds along the south coast (Hiller, 1971). Despite the missionaries' efforts to limit their territory, however, Inuit continued to live along the entire Labrador coast. In the 21st century, the historical divide between the Moravian-influenced territory to the north and the non-Moravian territory to the south is reflected in the modern Inuit territories of Nunatsiavut along the north coast and NunatuKavut along the south coast (Procter, 2020a).

The British-Inuit treaty of 1765 promised that “Inuit would have the protection of the British Crown and would have treaty rights, including those of self-government, harvest of wildlife

and natural resources and a commercial right to trade” (Hanrahan, 2014, p.7). However, these treaty promises were not kept. The violence between Europeans and Inuit continued in the years following the treaty and generations of colonization in subsequent years resulted in exploitative colonial policies and practices that undermined Inuit political, social and economic society in southern Labrador. Labrador remained a British colony until 1949, when Newfoundland and Labrador joined Canada. Even after that, the federal government did not immediately recognize its Constitutional responsibility towards Indigenous peoples in Labrador (Hanrahan, 2003).

While these earlier treaties were made to reflect Indigenous sovereignty, autonomy, and self-governance, in practice, the interpretation of treaties have not always supported this end. In Canada, the courts have a history of reducing the importance of treaties, especially in circumstances where treaty promises conflict with federal and provincial legislation (Borrows & Coyle, 2017). Even though the Crown began entering into treaty relationships over two centuries ago, “Canadian law governing these treaties remains in its infancy” (Borrows & Coyle, 2017, p.41). Ivison, Patton, and Sanders' (2000) critical analysis of the legitimacy of modern treaty relationships between Indigenous nations and the state argues that the very practice of modern treaty-making rests on the premise that Indigenous peoples were sovereign, as did the earlier treaties. In 1982, Aboriginal treaty rights were entrenched in Canada’s constitution (Borrows & Coyle, 2017). Yet, Ivison et al. explain that problems in treaty interpretation still arise as states often use the treaties themselves as grounds to acquire state sovereignty (Ivison et al., 2000).

The CLC policy was introduced in 1973 to “negotiate settlements with Indigenous groups in those areas of Canada where Indigenous rights based on traditional use and occupancy of the land had not been dealt with by treaty or superseded by law” (Crowe, 2019). Therefore, the CLC process became a way for the Crown to reach agreements with Indigenous peoples so that Canada could settle land matters and disputes with Indigenous peoples (Alcantara, 2013). During this time

period, Indigenous claims to self-determination were also becoming heightened in their response to the White Paper of 1969 (Coulthard, 2014). The CLC process for reaching agreements became the state's vehicle through which *some* Indigenous peoples could negotiate with Canada on matters related to land.

Alcantara (2013) argues that the CLC process became a way for Indigenous peoples to once again assert power and authority over their lands and resources by formalizing a relationship with the State that recognized their jurisdiction on their lands. Thus, acceptance into CLC processes can also be seen as a vehicle to the recognition of Indigenous peoples by the State. However, some Indigenous scholars describe the practice of recognition politics (of Indigenous groups) by the State as problematic, serving as another form of colonialism. Coulthard (2014, p.3) states:

The politics of recognition in its contemporary liberal form promises to reproduce the very configurations of colonialist, racist, patriarchal state power that Indigenous people's demands for recognition have historically sought to transcend.

To date, CLC agreements have been criticized as failing to materialize into fulsome agreements with broad and encompassing understandings of Indigenous self-government (Dalton, 2006).

Alcantara (2013) paints a picture whereby power and control in the modern treaty making process is largely held by the State. This is consistent with the analysis of modern treaties that implicates the state in efforts to acquire sovereignty through modern treaties (Iverson et al., 2000), and with the assessment that recognition politics is another form of colonialism (Coulthard, 2014).

While CLC agreements have recognized and permitted some Indigenous groups to reassert control over portions of their traditional territories and lives, they have been criticized in that they have been unable to fully restore governance to Indigenous communities. The CLC is a process designed by the state to achieve the goals of the state, such as the dispossession of Aboriginal peoples (Samson, 2016). Following research with a First Nation in the Yukon, Nadasdy (2002)

explains that land claims negotiations are designed from a property theory perspective, which is often foreign to the way that Indigenous peoples express their relationship with the land. Canada maintains authority in guiding land claim negotiations, which has implications for decision-making about acceptable participation in negotiations. Even arguing for inclusion is a financially expensive and time-consuming process for many Indigenous groups. A relationship with the State requires that Indigenous peoples engage in complex and often foreign processes, in order to exercise inherent rights to land and resources (Coombes, Johnson, & Howitt, 2012).

The federal government recently implemented a new process to recognize and negotiate Indigenous self-determination (RIRSD). However, the CLC policy continues as the policy on treaty-making. For NunatuKavut Inuit specifically, for whom a self-government agreement has not been finalized and who have experienced many frustrations with the CLC policy, their land use and occupancy in their homeland is extensive and longstanding (Hanrahan, 2014). The CLC policy has not been updated since 1986, and this outdated policy continues to influence the new RIRSD process. However, NunatuKavut Inuit continue to assert their rights through the RIRSD process. It is critical that the RIRSD process be guided by Inuit governance principles and aspirations if NunatuKavut Inuit are to achieve a satisfactory result. For this to occur, the RIRSD process set forth by Canada must operate by the principles it purports to enshrine-reconciliation and the recognition of rights and self-determination, rather than the denial of Indigenous rights.

5.5 What we Learned

NunatuKavut Inuit have been deeply engaged in discussions about collective and community priorities, with a view towards advancing self-governance and self-determination on their lands. Extensive community engagement about Inuit governance and sustainability planning resulted in knowledge sharing and priority setting. Four key themes emerged from the focused discussions, writing and visioning exercises, as well as from informal conversations. These themes

are as follows: 1) *Place-based decision-making*; 2) *Health and governance are interconnected*; 3) *Self-determined education*; 4) *Relationships to each other, land, waters, and ice inform our future*. These four themes highlight how Inuit can be a part of (and are) reclaiming and reconstituting their own governance practices as pathways to self-determination. The discourse illustrates that there is an intensely felt need for individual and collective responsibility and accountability in reclaiming and re-constituting governance practices relevant to Inuit. These themes intersect and overlap, highlighting the holistic nature of Inuit society in NunatuKavut. The discussion of findings that follows provide insight into the determination of Inuit to govern themselves through values and practices that are grounded in their own perspectives and worldviews.

Overwhelmingly, NunatuKavut Inuit expressed their values in relation to their right to live freely, safely, healthily, and happily upon the lands of ancestors and according to their own vision for the future, rooted in their traditional way of life. Furthermore, participants emphasized the importance of values associated with home and community, kinship, education, economic security, and health (of humans and environment). These ideas came up repeatedly throughout conversations and in written submissions. The key themes below are imbued with core values that are integral to rebuilding and reconstituting modern Inuit governance practices in NunatuKavut. As a whole, they reflect the need for a holistic and Inuit-centred approach to governance that is grounded in the place, histories, culture and realities of Inuit themselves.

5.5.1 Theme 1: Place-Based Decision-Making

In this study, place-based decision-making refers to the autonomy to make decisions that are rooted in the core values, interests and goals of the people who live on their lands. This concept is paramount to Inuit ways of knowing and being and is evidenced across all themes. Many Inuit maintained the importance of this form of decision making as a result of the rights they hold (Indigenous) and the multifaceted connections (social, familial, economic, spiritual, physical,

political) they maintain to their ancestral homeland. In this context, place-based decision-making is derived from people who live in and remain connected to their place and ancestors over many generations. This form of decision making is informed from a place of strength, that privileges the knowledge and values that communities deem central to the survival of communities and culture into the future. As one community member stated: “We should be able to make the decisions about our own community that will impact us.” This process does not necessarily ensure that decisions or actions will always be ‘right.’ However, when informed by a commitment to the interests and priorities of the people, place-based decision-making may help to ensure that decision-making will be just and relevant to Inuit themselves.

During a community engagement exercise that brought Inuit from across NunatuKavut together, some participants connected autonomy and community survival to a land claim with Canada. Inuit in this region feel strongly that they have a right to their lands and resources (connected to generations and ancestors before them) and that the freedom to exercise their rights (through a land claim) would equip them with additional resources to sustain their communities into the future (i.e., job opportunities, control over resources, good environmental decision-making, etc.). One participant stated that “We should have control of our resources. It is the right thing to do. It is our right.” Another participant stated that “there are many reasons why we should have rights and title [recognized and affirmed by colonial governments] ...right now it means the very essence and survival of our small communities. Absolutely necessary for their survival.”

Place-based decision-making can also be understood through Inuit values associated with community connections. Participants discussed openly the importance of one’s connection to place and how the knowledge and expertise gained through these connections are vital for community and cultural life. One participant stated that “my family are linked through a desire to live off the land and sea...passed on through generations.” Some participants talked about how they have often

felt as though outsiders have made decisions for them and about their community, without their consent or knowledge. Many people still feel the impact of residential schools in their lives. As young children, they or their relatives were forced to leave their family and community to attend a distant and foreign school, under the strict discipline of outside authorities (Procter, 2020b).

Participants talked about how outsider decision-making has often negatively impacted communities through policies, programming, and regulations that do not align with community interests and realities, or they noted the absence of programs and other opportunities altogether. Participants were clear that they are best positioned to know what works for their respective communities because they are the ones who continue to live on their lands, and who hold the relevant knowledge.

Inuit determination for place-based decision-making is also driven by participants' many experiences with imposed barriers that they continue to face on their path to self-government and self-determination. Focused discussions on governance were useful for learning from participants as they expressed their concerns for the future of their communities due to declining populations, lack of/loss of industry, health and infrastructure concerns, as examples. Many of these participants, majority of whom were women, perceived that they have had little autonomy or influence over effecting change. Participants saw that power and control over their communities was largely held by outside actors, mainly the federal and provincial governments.

In this study, and as a way to navigate the barriers, participants engaged sustainability as a concept to help them think about and plan for the future from their own ways of knowing and being and as a method to achieving place-based decision-making (Hudson & Vodden, 2020). To Inuit in this study, sustainability means the preservation and survival of community and culture, whereby Inuit are leading decision-making on their lands, informed by their own values, knowledge, and expertise (Hudson & Vodden, 2020). One participant explained that she has a role to play in

community sustainability as things continue to evolve and change. Her concern for the future is directly connected to her interests in the continuation of an Inuit way of life and the continued survival of her community.

This is the lifestyle I wanted. I can't imagine being somewhere else now. I've seen so many changes and I want to be a part of creating sustainable communities. Want to be a part of keeping the communities for future generations.

While communities currently have some vested apparatus for control and decision-making in their communities, municipalities, or volunteer governance structures (local service districts or other committees), these municipal governments tend to mirror colonial forms of governance structures. Volunteer governance committees also often lack the necessary capacity in funding, resources, time, or training to participate in governance in a meaningful way. Place-based decision-making is vital to the rebuilding and reconstitution of Inuit governance today, including in priority areas identified by Inuit.

5.5.2 Theme 2: Intersection of Health and Governance

Participants identified health as a matter of immediate urgency and priority across NunatuKavut. Inuit in this region understand health and governance as interconnected. Place-based decision-making is necessary for positive health outcomes in NunatuKavut. Yet, many participants explained that existing health services in the region often fail to respond to their needs and interests, including in ways that are culturally relevant. While the regional health authority in Labrador aims to build its internal capacity to deliver more culturally aware and sensitive care and services, this work is in its infancy and it does not translate into actual programming for NunatuKavut Inuit in areas that are virtually absent.

Place-based decision-making is useful for understanding the connections between health and governance. Participants prioritized a range of health needs including mental health, broader

health access, and specialized care, including culturally relevant community-based health supports.

In a conversation about the importance of self-governance and self-determination to Inuit,

President Russell (personal communication, 2019) stated:

Well-being and governance are connected. If we are to be healthy, if our communities are to be healthy, we must make decisions for ourselves and from our own place.

Participants explained that they lacked access to vital programming such as Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB), which they feel would alleviate extreme costs associated with medications and improve overall health care access and outcomes. Such programming is afforded to other Inuit in Canada due to settled land claim agreements. Responsive health care and supports for elders and seniors in NunatuKavut were also identified as areas needing immediate attention. Participants maintained that health initiatives should be community-based and locally driven and they maintain that NCC should be a part of leading health programming with and for communities.

Many NunatuKavut communities face inequities in access to health services and programming. Travel to other regions of the province or country is often necessary to access vital health supports. For example, the nearest shelter for women to access relevant supports is located hundreds of kilometres away, and accessible only by air from some communities. The same is true for hospital access and specialized care which may require travel to Newfoundland or to another province entirely. Participants, and in particular women, described how this is challenging for them as they are primary caregivers for children and other relatives. In addition, participants also explained how travelling to an urban region for health care can cause anxiety, and this can be further exacerbated as there are many who have not travelled outside of their home region or province. Additionally, the costs associated with medical travel can be unrealistic for many given a lack of access to resources (i.e., NIHB). One participant (although there are countless other examples almost weekly) described having to travel from her home community in Labrador to a

Labrador community further south and then to Newfoundland, spending time away from home due to her diagnosis.

I was diagnosed with an illness 5 years ago, and I had to go to Forteau. Had to go to Corner Brook for a long time. Lobbied Labrador Grenfell Health to have the nurses in our clinic to be trained so I didn't have to go away for it. Who else can fight best for us other than ourselves?

In some cases, individuals simply do not receive the care they need because the barriers to access in costs, time, or transportation are too much for them to incur (Wall, Personal communications, 2020). Overall, NunatuKavut Inuit see a leadership role for the NCC in collaborating with various levels of government to ensure increased health access (i.e. NIHB) and by leading the development of culturally relevant community health programming and supports in NunatuKavut that respond to community needs and interests. Currently, NCC is leading a research project to inform the development of culturally appropriate mental health programming in NunatuKavut. NCC continues to pursue federal and other opportunities for health programming supports through its relationship with the federal and provincial governments.

5.5.3 Theme 3: Self-Determined Education

Participants' priorities around education were multifaceted. Overall, participants described education as a way to further self-determination efforts. They understood that education can be a tool to re-connect to culture through culturally relevant curriculum and land-based learning opportunities, creating opportunities to acquire skills and credentials, and strengthening community capacity as post-secondary graduates return home to live and work. And, of equal importance, through privileging traditional forms of education in NunatuKavut (role of grandparents and storytelling in Inuit education). All of this is understood to contribute to community and cultural sustainability.

Discussions around education led to conversations about culture, autonomy and

community-strengthening. People are seeking to rebuild and re-institute Inuit language and life ways that have been stolen or marginalized, while revitalizing and privileging life ways that still remain today. Inuit in this region value their culture and tradition in their communities, and they see education as an opportunity to ensure that culture and tradition are preserved and shared amongst future generations. Traditions like survival skills, hunting and harvesting, knowledge of the land, waters and ice, language, and crafting are valued forms of education and knowledge and are important to the sustainability of culture and community life.

Participants talked about how the secondary school system should be more inclusive of Inuit culture and heritage as well. They cited the need for developing curriculum that reflects Inuit culture, history and values. One participant stated:

If we do not teach our children/grandchildren about our past and culture then this is a huge loss or failure. I think we can look to other Aboriginal groups and see how the loss of culture affected their lives. Everyone needs to know where they came from and keeping our culture alive is very important.

Participants also saw the need for locally trained and educated teachers within the community, so that knowledge can continue to be passed on in ways that reflect and validate culture and history. Participants identified the importance of an education that connected youth and children to their culture. One participant stated, "People from the outside have a role, too. But for influencing children, it's important to have local people [teaching our children in our schools]." This was further illustrated while I (as NCC Director of Research, Education and Culture) collaborated with communities during the development and early roll-out of an Inuit Education Program (IEP), led by NCC and carried out in seven schools across NunatuKavut. The program responded directly to community interest in culturally relevant curriculum by teaching skills and strengthening capacity in areas like preparing traditional foods, working with seal skin, and learning Inuttitut, among others. Community members were eager to support the inclusion of knowledge holders and elders

from within the community as instructors in this program, and explained that where possible, IEP students should be taught by people from their respective community.

Currently, the provincial curriculum does not accurately reflect the history and culture of NunatuKavut (Moore, Hudson, & Maxwell, 2018), instead perpetuating colonial narratives about Inuit in this region. Inadequate curriculum materials and lack of cultural awareness training for teachers have resulted in Inuit in NunatuKavut not seeing themselves reflected in what they are learning about Indigenous peoples. Teachers are also often ill-equipped to supplant the existing curriculum materials with content that is culturally relevant. Lessons learned from the collaborative development of the IEP indicate that parents and caregivers want to see their children educated in areas that advance skills, knowledge of, and pride in culture. To date, the IEP has responded to community interests in culturally relevant education by providing opportunities for youth to learn how to make snowshoes, Kamutet, sew seal skins and make clothing, and prepare and preserve traditional foods, as notable examples. In discussing the importance of culture to education, one participant stated that “when I have kids, it will be very important. They will need to know about their past and how their culture links us all.”

Inuit women illustrate the central role storytelling plays in education, knowledge exchange, and connectivity. In this region, Inuit value connecting with each other through stories, ensuring that youth learn from stories passed down through generations, and in sharing and knowledge exchange to keep stories alive (Hudson, Moore, & Procter, 2015). One participant stated (with agreement from others) that “grandparents are the best education.” Another participant explained how passing on knowledge like traditional cooking (bread, pies, jams) can be used to teach patience and is a form of stress reduction. There was a concern that the loss of elders could result in the loss of stories if storytelling was not prioritized by future generations. One participant stated: “once we’re gone the stories will be gone.” Storytelling was also seen as important to strengthening

survival skills. Survival was identified as an important area of education for children. Some participants explained that without storytelling, youth will not learn how to survive out on the land, navigate in stormy weather, or hunt and harvest. Overall, the participants described a sense of loss that they would feel if stories were not passed down through generations, impacting the interconnectedness of community members.

In NunatuKavut, education is seen as a pathway to both community and cultural survival. These lessons are vital to NCC leadership as they both pursue and inform Inuit education in NunatuKavut as a matter of self-government and self-determination.

5.5.4 Theme 4: Relationships to Each Other, Land, Waters, and Ice Inform Our Future

The participants described a strong connection to the land, waters, and ice around them and they expressed how this connection continues to sustain a balanced life in NunatuKavut. In discussions around governance, participants connected the importance of local control, knowledge and autonomous decision-making to the following: developments on their lands, marine species and wildlife harvesting regulations, monitoring, conservation, and youth involvement in the fisheries, to name a few predominant topics. Furthermore, people's sense of health, freedom, safety, and economic security are interconnected in the way they continue to live in relation with the natural environment and those around them. There is a deeply rooted sense of respect and concern for the health and well-being not only of people, but of all life forms, including land, waters, ice, and animals. The ability of Inuit to survive over generations is highly valued, as hunting, trapping, harvesting and other land-based forms of survival have been central to Inuit life ways throughout history in NunatuKavut. Not only are these life ways indicative of Inuit survival and adaptability, but in a modern context, they provide a continued connection to ancestors and values associated with intergenerational knowledge.

The factors that connect peoples and communities both historically and today are embedded in peoples' relationship to the land, waters, and ice around them. When asked about what she values about her community, one participant demonstrated a deep connection to land. She said:

I love how the ground thaws, in the spring of the year. When you get to go for that first ride on bike [all-terrain vehicle or ATV] so far in over the land. The sea, land and snow mixes together in the air and creates a scent that is like no other. I take big breaths in and sometimes I try to eat it.

Living on and with the land is still a large part of life in the study communities. Participants further understand that their knowledge and observations are vital to ensure the survival and renewal of the natural environment. Overall, participants described their connection to the lands, waters and animals around them in ways that demonstrate a deep emotional and personal attachment. For example, one participant stated:

The way the bog smells in the spring when everything is starting to thaw, sitting out on the point and watching flock after flock of birds flying by. The smell of sweetness in the air as you go in over the land berry picking. The beautiful colours of bright green grass has [as] you climb the hills in July, the sound of seagulls going crazy for a feed of fish when the fishermen come in with their catch. The way the lights dance on the water on a beautiful calm summers night....

Another participant (whose family had to recently move to a larger community in Labrador) explained her enduring connection to her community. She stated:

I can still smell the saltwater and seaweed from around the coves and, whenever I close my eyes, I can picture the northern lights or the bright stars. There's so much I miss about home. I'd love to see everyone playing soccer ball or tag in the middle of the night and I want to hear the crackling sounds of the wood burning during bonfire night.

The values and importance that participants placed on home, culture, and community are integral to conversations of Inuit governance, including matters around hunting and harvesting regulations, fishery, conservation of species, economic development opportunities, etc. These same values and intergenerational knowledge are also vital to informing policy and regulations from Inuit

worldviews, as they impact the way that Inuit live in relation with the lands, waters, ice, and animals around them. The following principles (discussed below) connect the importance of Inuit life ways, values, and perspectives to the reclamation of Inuit governance.

5.6 Discussion: Exploring Value-based Principles of Inuit Governance in NunatuKavut

The key themes described above illustrate Inuit priorities and associated values as they pertain to self-governance matters. These priorities and values are integral to the reclamation and reconstitution of Inuit governance practices in NunatuKavut today. In analyzing the key themes and relevant secondary data, I have identified two emergent principles of Inuit governance that are derived from the expressed values, priorities, and perspectives of Inuit in this study. They are: (1) Relational governance: accountability to past, present and future and (2) Governance is intergenerational, gender-balanced and shared.

5.6.1 Relational Governance: Accountability to Past, Present, and Future

Throughout Canada, traditional forms of Indigenous governance have often been supplanted by colonial governance structures that privilege Euro-Western perspectives (Borrows & Rotman 1992; Lawrence & Anderson, 2005). In NunatuKavut, the interference of colonists has meant the imposition of foreign governance processes that are antithetical to Inuit perspectives and values. Despite this, Inuit from this region are asserting their right to self-government and self-determination, in ways that are culturally meaningful. The four themes described above help us understand a culturally relevant approach to governance that is Inuit centred. An approach that is relational and accountable to the past, present and future translates into an approach that is informed by the voices, values and priorities of Inuit (identified in the themes above) and are further interpreted and elaborated upon below.

An Inuit centred approach to governance in NunatuKavut that is both relational and accountable fundamentally differs from state-centred governance. This approach seeks to imbue

governance processes with the knowledge, expertise perspectives and values of Inuit themselves, including the knowledge that has been passed down over generations, (i.e., through storytelling). Participants in this study see the need for relational accountability in making decisions that respect and honour their ancestors, youth, elders, lands, waters, and ice. Building on the work of Borrows (2010), my conversations and collaborative work with Inuit in NunatuKavut demonstrate that they privilege connections between governance and land, waters, and family. They also recognize that a respect for the past, the present, and a future that is accountable to all facets of life is important for advancing good governance on their lands. Inuit understand that deep and enduring relationships with place is central to decision-making, informed with the knowledge and expertise of all who live on their lands, including those who have come before them. Additionally, Inuit understand that good governance can only derive from an approach that seeks to strengthen the health of communities and people themselves.

Relational governance in an Inuit context seeks to dismantle the hierarchy and power relations that persist in state forms of governance and that impede Inuit self-government and self-determination. Relational governance does this by exercising inclusivity, fairness and transparency (i.e., multiple sites of knowledge and expertise, by valuing the roles and contributions of community members, including Inuit women as experts, knowledge holders as educators and leaders) and by embracing the values and knowledge that continue to ground and connect people with the lands, waters, ice, and animals around them. For example, Inuit described their interest in education that reflects their culture and traditions, including those that privilege their relationship with the land. Storytelling is central to achieving these efforts and reflects how Inuit see themselves as responsible and accountable in the education of children and youth. Learning from the past (i.e., education through storytelling) equips Inuit with the skills and knowledge to navigate the present, imbued with values that continue to encourage knowledge dissemination to future generations (i.e.,

storytelling to teach survival and hunting skills, maintain connections to previous generations, etc.). These qualities are central to relational governance in NunatuKavut.

Relational governance is also committed to a future that is informed and led by those who will be most impacted by it and this approach requires that knowledge and wisdom from previous generations are available and drawn upon. This approach responds directly to the desire of Inuit in this study to make decisions about matters that impact them and their communities directly (see theme one). Borrowing from Wilson (2008), a relational approach in this study context respects those who hold the knowledge in their place and time, as the experts and knowledge holders. Accountability is an integral and related function of responsibility in this governance context. Inuit-informed and led accountability measures, developed in collaboration with Inuit (given the central role of Inuit knowledge and connection to place discussed in the themes above), and decided upon by consensus, will aid in maintaining good governance practices and just decision-making that is considerate of the past, present and future.

5.6.2 Governance is Intergenerational, Gender Balanced and Shared

Prior to the influence of State governance on the lives of Inuit in NunatuKavut, Inuit were self-governing, adapted to their world, and made decisions that supported their survival (NCC, 2020). Today, Inuit from this region maintain a deeply rooted connection to their home and territory (NCC, 2020; Hudson & Vodden, 2020). Inuit describe how their connection to place best situate them to make decisions on their lands (see above “what we learned”). In this study, place-based decision-making is borne from generations past, and includes individual and collective life experiences that come from one’s place, and that privileges the primary role of Inuit women to everyday life. For example, as described in theme two above, health is a community wide issue connected to governance, and women play a key role in caring for both family and community. Inuit women are demonstrated leaders and healers in advancing community well-being and

sustainability. Women have also been integral to ensuring that traditional knowledge, skills, and stories are passed on, and they continue to identify intergenerational knowledge-sharing as a priority (Hudson, Moore, & Procter, 2015). Inuit women were also key and majority participants in this study. A history of marginalization and colonial oppression in Inuit society in NunatuKavut has silenced women's voices and rendered women virtually absent in the historical record. Some participants felt that although women shared the same stories as the men, they weren't the ones telling the stories. One participant said, "it was almost a little bit like they were seen and not heard." Women were also originally excluded from Crown negotiations with Indigenous peoples (Lawrence & Anderson, 2005). Yet the resilience, determination, and expertise that Inuit women continue to demonstrate in NunatuKavut communities is central to the revitalization of place-based decision-making.

Throughout this research, the commitment of Inuit women to their community and culture was pronounced (see themes two and three). Women play a major and key role in leading and organizing social facets of community life in NunatuKavut. These activities promote togetherness, storytelling and sharing. Collaborative work and dialogue with Inuit women created opportunities for women to have their voices heard in discussions about governance from Inuit perspectives. Western European structures do not always privilege or highlight the work of women in Inuit communities and thus, they are not always apparent in observations drawn from Western European ways of knowing and being. Therefore, a perspective that is gender balanced in this context does not intend to dismiss the important role or place of men in Inuit society. Rather, an enduring history of oppression and marginalization faced by Indigenous women broadly, and Inuit women specifically in NunatuKavut, means that we must be cognizant of these colonial legacies in reclaiming and reconstituting Inuit governance today.

The role of storytelling in knowledge-sharing across generations in NunatuKavut is a fundamental form of place-based knowledge and is key to place-based decision making (see theme three above for more information). Inuit describe the central role of storytelling in shaping the way that Inuit live and as a tool for community and cultural survival. Inuit shared that storytelling is valued for the way it can assist in the physical, social, and mental well-being of Inuit families in harsh geographic and isolated areas of Labrador where survival itself depends on local knowledge and expertise. As described above, Inuit in this region are committed to ensuring that their children and grandchildren learn from the past and seek to pass on knowledge from ancestors. Intergenerational knowledge-sharing is a priority and has important implications for the consideration of revitalized Inuit governance in the territory.

By focusing on the values, interests, and perspectives of Inuit, this study demonstrated the influential and significant role of women in governance in NunatuKavut. This perspective can assist in bringing back a balance to Inuit life whereby all individuals are valued for their knowledge and expertise. Inuit identified values and priorities that point to the importance of intergenerational relationships (including those with the lands, waters and ice), and communal sharing of governance. Leadership in governance, in this context, is not about the knowledge, power, or charisma demonstrated by a single leader (female nor male). Rather, leadership can perhaps be best defined or recognized in those who are committed to shared knowledge and community and cultural preservation.

5.7 Summary Conclusion

As many Indigenous scholars have illustrated (Borrows, Napoleon), Indigenous governance has been invariably influenced by Western European forms of governance. In order to reclaim and reconstitute Inuit governance practices, NunatuKavut Inuit need to develop Inuit centred governance practices and processes that contain measures of responsibility and accountability that

are culturally relevant, and that are responsive to Inuit priorities and reflect Inuit principles of governance (as described earlier). As inherent rights holders belonging to the land, waters, and ice of their ancestors, Inuit have the legitimate and unwavering jurisdiction and autonomy to make decisions that impact them directly. Governance, in this place, should be upheld and legitimated by and for those who are responsible and accountable to all of their relations.

The key themes identified and discussed above, while by no means an exhaustive nor a complete expression of Inuit interests, serve to inform areas of life that are of significant importance to Inuit in NunatuKavut today. We must remember however, that as society changes and evolves, Inuit adapt and plan for a changing world around them. As a result, governance priorities must be flexible and adaptable to change. Inuit in NunatuKavut share with other Inuit groups in Canada concerns and interests around self-governance in areas such as environment, education, health, and well-being. NunatuKavut Inuit differ in their ability to exercise self-governance, however, as they do not have a settled land claim. Given the complex history of state-Indigenous relations in Canada, from early treaties and assimilation policies, to modern land claims, NunatuKavut Inuit have faced many obstacles on their road to self-government. But they do now have a formal relationship with the state that will guide self-government interests and discussions into the future. As this study has demonstrated, NunatuKavut Inuit determination to self-govern is strong.

In reflecting on the future in NunatuKavut, this study offers an understanding of Inuit governance that challenges hierarchy and power relations inherent in the colonial practices and worldview of the Canadian state. Inuit perspectives on governance rest with autonomy and authority that originate from people connected to and belonging to their place, and not from the dispossession of Indigenous peoples from their place. Coulthard (2014) and Cardinal (1999) contend that the dispossession of Indigenous peoples from their place is emblematic of colonial

governance structures. McGregor et al. (2020) maintain that global and national forms of Western European governance have consistently failed Indigenous peoples around the world. State governance in Canada tends to reflect a Western style of dominance by governments characterized by “formal, hierarchical, and state centred policy processes” (Alcantara & Nelles, 2014, p.188). This approach to governance is often rigid, unchanging and unable to efficiently adapt to growing and evolving societies.

By contrast, evolving discussions in NunatuKavut make clear that concerns and interests around Inuit governance relate to the social, political, and cultural preservation of communities and people that include all facets of society regarded as important by Inuit, including family, waters, animals, and lands. Governance must rest on a foundation that is compatible with the worldviews and perspectives of the people who live in NunatuKavut. This study illustrates the multifaceted role of Inuit in informing decision-making on their lands. Individuals in positions of western authority and those who express a commitment to reconciliation need to take a step back to assess and critically analyze concepts of leadership and governance. Diverging worldviews and perspectives about the impetus and potential of governance bring attention to an alternative reality in Canada whereby governance (as understood by western European perspectives), or place-based decision-making (informed by Inuit perspectives and worldviews), can be negotiated in relations between the state and Inuit territories in ways that support and create space for autonomy and self-determination for all Inuit.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This research study set out to accomplish a number of goals and objectives such as informing Inuit governance practices from a strength-based perspective, creating opportunities for self-determination in NunatuKavut, reclaiming Inuit knowledge and contributing to academic scholarship in the area of Indigenous research methodology, community sustainability planning and Inuit governance. I worked to ensure that the research design and methods were conducive to achieving these goals and objectives throughout the collaborative research process with Inuit in the study region. As a result, these efforts resulted in both conceptual and practical contributions in the area of sustainable self-determination in NunatuKavut. Inuit knowledge and expertise, active listening, learning and growing, along with supportive and leading Indigenous scholarship, all assisted in helping to accomplish the stated goals of this research study. As a result, sustainable self-determination in this study context has manifested itself as Inuit led research, community-led sustainability planning and the reclamation and rebuilding of Inuit governance priorities and practices. The research process and cumulative results have furthered my interest in and connection to this study area, and I believe, has uncovered further opportunities to explore and build on this work, and to further these goals.

This study also sought out to respond to the evolving needs and interests of NunatuKavut Inuit as they continue to adapt and plan for a sustainable future, grounded in the values and perspectives of Inuit themselves. This is key to strength-based reclamation work. Overall, the goals of this study have contributed to the scholarly literature and to Inuit community life in NunatuKavut, across a range of areas. This study helped to highlight the interconnections between research and Inuit governance and as an important pathway to self-determination. These connections were key to informing a research process that rested on the rights and interests of Inuit themselves. This is described in depth in chapter three. The collaborative and strength-based

research approach assisted in creating further opportunities for self-determination by privileging the reclamation of knowledge, values and culture to Inuit in this study. This was accomplished through designing and implementing a Community Governance and Sustainability Initiative (CGSI) which was led by the researcher as PhD student at Memorial University, and as Research, Education and Culture (REC) Manager (then, Director) at NCC. This initiative was designed in collaboration with the communities of Black Tickle, Norman Bay and St. Lewis and implemented in each. This initiative sought to respond directly and practically to the interests of communities and the NCC as it related to sustainability planning for the future. This was described in-depth in chapter four. This collaborative study has also helped to articulate Inuit governance practices that come from Inuit perspectives, worldviews and values in NunatuKavut. In addition, key themes of stated importance to Inuit self-government were identified and elaborated upon. This was described in depth in chapter five. Both the research process and results contribute to academic scholarship in the area of Inuit research practices, community led sustainability planning and Inuit governance-all of which are currently lacking in existing literature. These goals are further summarized below.

6.1 Conclusion, Reflections and Future Directions

This research study and the resulting dissertation demonstrates that as a tool for community and cultural preservation, research can be useful to Inuit as they pursue sustainable self-determination on their lands. Despite the colonial role of research in the past and ever present today (Kovach, 2009; Smith, 2012), there can be a role for research on Indigenous lands that is Indigenous led and driven. As detailed in chapters two and three, and evidenced throughout the dissertation, this research study further demonstrates that Inuit approaches to research is conducive to autonomous, Inuit led research that is reflective of the goals, values and priorities of the people.

This study interwove lessons learned from Indigenous scholarship in the area of Indigenous research and ways of knowing and being, including the expertise and intergenerational knowledge

of Inuit living in and belonging to NunatuKavut. This has helped in creating stories and scholarship that not only counters colonial ideologies, but that is transformative in the way that Inuit communities and people are regarded and celebrated on their lands and as a part of this study. In chapters three, four and five, theory to practice is evident as the research is designed to ensure that key and emerging concepts and ideas from leading Indigenous scholars (Kovach, 2009; Smith, 2012; Corntassel, 2012; Green, 2014) are integrated and built upon throughout the various phases of this research.

This research sought to explore the intersections of Inuit governance and research governance detailed further in chapter three. The approach to research in the context of NunatuKavut Inuit illustrates the way that research ought to be used as a tool for community and cultural preservation and survival in NunatuKavut. This research explored and centred conversations around research in the context of sovereignty and was integral to contributing to the advancements of Inuit research governance practices that are strength based and leading the way in autonomous decision making.

After setting the tone for how Indigenous led research can be achieved in chapter three, chapter four went on to demonstrate that an Inuit led research design that is grounded in the values, perspectives and knowledge of Inuit on their lands is a key part of sustainable self-determination. Building on key concepts from Indigenous scholars like Jeff Corntassel (2008; 2012) was particularly valuable to pursuing decolonized sustainability planning with Inuit in this study. Corntassel's conceptual approach to sustainable self-determination, which necessitates not only the actions of state in reconciliation, but the responsibility and accountability of Indigenous peoples to their place, was relevant to this work and reinforced the role of Inuit as active agents and leaders in the pursuit of change on their lands in NunatuKavut broadly, and in this study specifically. This

study clearly illustrated what decolonized and self-determined sustainability planning can look like when it is led from a place of strength and reverence for a connection to homeland.

An approach to research led by Inuit, cognizant of the values, worldviews and perspectives of Inuit, along with autonomous community visioning and planning for the future, all reinforced and illustrated the need and desire for autonomous decision making to lead the future. Building upon the scholarly literature, and lessons learned through a history of colonial occupation on Inuit lands, this dissertation (particularly chapter five) illustrates the way in which governance is conceived and situated through Inuit worldviews and perspectives. In this research, Inuit worldviews and perspectives are realized and guide the study. The study results point to the need to ground decision making in Inuit worldviews and perspectives into the future. In privileging Inuit voice and knowledge, this study sought to reclaim and articulate Inuit governance practices and traditions. Furthermore, this study produces new and emerging scholarly literature in the area of Inuit governance and sustainability, from the vantage point and experiences of NunatuKavut Inuit, which is currently lacking in academia.

As a whole, this research sought the contributions, engagement, knowledge and expertise of many people, individually and collectively from across NunatuKavut and beyond. The research was initiated in response to concerns from communities in the area of social and economic development, economic security and growth for the future. These concerns and interests, shared by the NunatuKavut Community Council (NCC), also sought to re-centre and privilege culturally enriched community decision-making in planning for the future.

6.2 Reflections

It can be difficult to separate oneself from the political reality in which individuals are born into as Indigenous peoples. The idea that Indigenous lives are inherently tied up in the political is echoed in the works of Indigenous scholars like Smith (2012) and Corntassel (2008). My

observations and reflections as they relate to this research began early growing up in Black Tickle, one of the pilot communities in this research. My early days and experiences of belonging cannot be removed or separated from knowledge production today. For me, Indigenous research is about challenging dominant systems of control and enhancing the socio-political reality of Indigenous communities, grounded in their own forms of governance. By sharing in the common principles and ideas conveyed by Indigenous scholars like Smith (2012) and Corntassel (2008), this study has been transformative in the way it has created and dedicated space for Inuit governance and sustainability science research in NunatuKavut, Labrador that is led by Inuit themselves. From the vantage point from which I write, Indigenous led research and methodologies are necessary for community and cultural preservation. Storytelling, a well-known and established tradition within Indigenous society, was integral to this study. When we privilege stories, we privilege knowledge and expertise that has been passed down over generations. The use of and respect for this very knowledge and expertise is fundamental to confronting western systems of domination in research and knowledge building efforts. In borrowing from the work of Smith, King and others, it is clear that storytelling has the power to connect researchers to the real priorities of people and communities, and in this study, stories of community, relationships and governance are prevalent. The sharing and acceptance of stories into our lives, as a valid and credible form of knowledge, can help to break down power structures that often deny autonomy to those otherwise being researched.

Indigenous author Thomas King (2003) shares an amazing journey in his writing that brought me into further reflection about my own experiences with stories and their impact on my life over time. His work helped me strengthen my appreciation and respect for story as a valid form of knowledge in its time and place. In doing so, I became profoundly aware and critical of the ways in which stories are often told about Indigenous societies. Often, these stories are informed by white males who derive their observations from their own cultural perspective of sexuality and

gender (Smith, 2012). Observations and interpretations of Indigenous women have often been informed from Eurocentric ideas of culture, religion and race (Smith, 2012). Indeed, we see this trend in mainstream research practices today as we continue to rely and depend on the narratives produced by researchers who exist outside of the storytellers themselves. The time for renewed, revitalized and strengthened Indigenous led research is now. The support and knowledge of those allies within academia, as well as Indigenous scholars, ought to be a source of strength as we re-assert our own stories, from within ourselves, thereby determining our way forward in ways that are relevant and meaningful.

Kovach (2009) writes that a lens that is critical, reflexive, and seeks to acknowledge “politics of representation in research” is required. My commitment to reflexivity throughout the research process was integral to the decolonization of my thoughts and interpretations of story, people and place. Ultimately, the ability of our people and communities to be healthy is contingent upon our ability to govern ourselves and to lead our communities into the future. My primary role in this research was to create spaces for this dialogue and action to happen. I hope I have contributed to this end, at least in some small way.

6.3 Future Direction

The impact of this research study has already helped to inform and shape future direction at NCC in some ways. I have been in receipt of positive feedback from NCC as a result of this research. This research has added value and insight into community engagement best practices in NunatuKavut; informed (continues to inform) research governance measures led by NCC and the Research, Education and Culture Department, positively impacted NCC’s RIRSD table, will assist in informing a NunatuKavut Inuit research strategy, among other notable impacts. I look forward to continuing this work and co-leading new and innovative

initiatives as they relate, and in ways deemed relevant and meaningful to NunatuKavut communities.

This study has had a notable impact on me personally and professionally as well, and these impacts will no doubt inform my future directions. I remain committed to discussions and writing surrounding Indigenous led research governance, Indigenous led governance and Indigenous-led community sustainability planning, all of which are marginal in existing scholarly literature. In addition, this work has opened up my mind, reinforced and expanded areas of interests for me respecting Inuit governance-not the least of which includes the importance of Indigenous feminism(s) and Inuit laws to this work and to the scholarly literature. The reclamation of Inuit knowledge in this study, and the appetite for the revitalization of Inuit governance practices, leave me eager to pursue further research into Indigenous governance and Indigenous/Inuit legal traditions. I look forward to delving deeper into this field and hope that others will do the same.

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Appendix A: Ethical Approval Documents



**Interdisciplinary Committee on
Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR)**

St. John's, NL Canada A1C 5S7
Tel: 709 864-2561 icehr@mun.ca
www.mun.ca/research/ethics/humans/icehr

ICEHR Number:	20171977-IO
Approval Period:	October 11, 2017 – October 31, 2019
Funding Agency:	Not Funded
Responsible Faculty:	Dr. Kelly Vodden Environmental Policy Institute, Grenfell Campus
Title of Project:	<i>How reclaiming Inuit knowledge can create opportunities for a self-determined future amongst Southern Inuit in NunatuKavut: Building Inuit governance and planning for sustainability in NunatuKavut</i>
Amendment #:	02

October 12, 2018

Ms. Amy Hudson
Interdisciplinary PhD Program
Memorial University of Newfoundland

Dear Ms. Hudson:

The Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) has reviewed the proposed modifications to the above referenced project, as outlined in your amendment request dated October 8, 2018, and is pleased to give approval to the addition of a transcriptionist, as requested, provided all previously approved protocols are followed and the noted confidentiality agreement is signed.

If you need to make any other changes during the conduct of the research that may affect ethical relations with human participants, please submit an amendment request, with a description of these changes, via your Researcher Portal account for the Committee's consideration.

Your ethics clearance for this project expires October 31, 2019, before which time you must submit an annual update to ICEHR. If you plan to continue the project, you need to request renewal of your ethics clearance, and include a brief summary on the progress of your research. When the project no longer requires contact with human participants, is completed and/or terminated, you need to provide an annual update with a brief final summary, and your file will be closed.

Annual updates and amendment requests can be submitted from your Researcher Portal account by clicking the *Applications: Post-Review* link on your Portal homepage.

The Committee would like to thank you for the update on your proposal and we wish you well with your research.

Yours sincerely,

Kelly Blidook, Ph.D.
Vice-Chair, Interdisciplinary Committee on
Ethics in Human Research

KB/lw

cc: Supervisor – Dr. Kelly Vodden, Environmental Policy Institute, Grenfell Campus



March 21, 2017

Amy Hudson
P. O. Box 1965, Station B
Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL
AOP 1E0

Dear Amy,

RE: NunatuKavut Research Review Application

NunatuKavut Community Council Inc. (known as NunatuKavut) Research Review Advisory Committee has received your application for the project, ***"How reclaiming Inuit knowledge can create opportunities for a self-determined future amongst Southern Inuit in NunatuKavut: Building Inuit governance and planning for sustainability in NunatuKavut."*** Your submitted application, including supporting documents, has been reviewed and receives our recommendation to proceed.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for submitting your application to the NunatuKavut Research Review Committee and look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Darlene Wall
Social Sector Manager
NunatuKavut Research Review Committee

200 Kelland Drive
P. O. Box 460, Station C
Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL AOP 1C0
Tel: 1 (709) 896-0592, Ext. 238
Fax: 1 (709) 896-0594
Email: dwall@nunatukavut.ca

Appendix B: Informed Consent Form, Focus Group-Oral Consent

Title: *How reclaiming Inuit knowledge can create opportunities for a self-determined future amongst Southern Inuit in NunatuKavut: Building Inuit governance and planning for sustainability in NunatuKavut.*

Researcher: Amy Hudson, Interdisciplinary PhD Program, Memorial University
ahudson@mun.ca

Supervisor: Dr. Kelly Vodden, Environmental Policy Institute, Grenfell Campus,
Memorial

You are invited to take part in a research project entitled:

“How reclaiming Inuit knowledge can create opportunities for a self-determined future amongst Southern Inuit in NunatuKavut: Building Inuit governance and planning for sustainability in NunatuKavut.”

This form is part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. It also describes your right to withdraw from the study. In order to decide whether you wish to participate in this research study, you should understand enough about its risks and benefits to be able to make an informed decision. This is the informed consent process. Take time to read and/or listen to this carefully and to understand the information given to you.

Please contact the researcher, Amy Hudson, if you have any questions about the study or would like more information before you consent.

Introduction:

I am a PhD student in the Interdisciplinary PhD Program at Memorial University. As part of my Doctoral thesis I am conducting research under the supervision of Dr. Kelly Vodden. I am also an NCC employee and the project lead on the community governance and sustainability project. I am originally from Black Tickle in NunatuKavut.

Purpose of Study:

This project aims to engage NunatuKavut community members and partners, and to build community governance and sustainability plans through valuing and prioritizing Southern Inuit knowledge and expertise. Through collaboration, NCC communities will begin plans to revitalize their communities by connecting with their past and culture.

What You Will Do in this Study:

You are invited to participate in a focus group to share your knowledge, expertise and stories about your community.

You will also be asked to complete a demographic survey. This is completely voluntary and you may skip any questions you wish. The survey will NOT be reported to NCC.

Length of Time:

The focus group will last for approximately 1-2 hours.

Withdrawal from the Study:

You will be informed of your right to withdraw from the project during the initial discussion about consent. It will be clear that you are free to withdraw from the research at any point in time, up until December 15, 2018. There are no consequences to your withdrawal from the study. You can decide how to proceed with your data in the event you choose to withdraw. For example, if you no longer have the time/desire to continue with the focus group interview but you are comfortable with the use of the information provided to the researcher thus far, then the data up to that point will be included in the final report and in future publications. If you wish to withdraw and retract a statement and/or disclosure that was made during the focus group interview, the researcher will do everything reasonably possible to ensure that such data is not reflected in research publications. You have until December 15, 2018 to withdraw from the study.

Possible Benefits:

You are encouraged to celebrate your communities, history and culture through the reclamation of traditional knowledge and values. Given the regions history of colonization and the current political climate of fiscal restraints, this research bridges opportunities to reclaim one's history and knowledge and to use this knowledge to inform a sustainable future, while revitalizing Southern Inuit governance practices.

The social and political reality of Southern Inuit has not been well documented, and when it has, it has often been misinterpreted and inaccurately reflected in the work of non-Indigenous academics, primarily male. This research serves to fill this gap by contributing to a knowledge base that is informed by Southern Inuit for Southern Inuit, which is also lacking in the scientific and scholarly community.

Possible Risks:

There is minimal risk of loss of privacy or feeling uncomfortable due to the nature of focus groups which encourage you to openly share amongst other community members. There is also minimal risk that you may feel some level of discomfort in discussing matters related to their community that is deemed sensitive.

Your participation in the focus group does not mean that you have to respond to all questions posed by the researcher, if you do not want to. The researcher will not pursue topics that clearly create discomfort for you. If you do feel upset during or after the focus group, please contact your local community health centre or the NL *Mental Health Crisis Line, 24 hour Toll Free: 1-888-737-4668*

Confidentiality:

Your privacy is important to this research and every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that personally identifying information (such as name, appearance) will not be used in this research, or in future projects and reports, without your clear permission to do so. Although the researcher will safeguard the confidentiality of the discussion to the best of her ability, the nature of focus groups prevents the researcher from guaranteeing that other members of the group will do so. Please respect the confidentiality of the other members of the group by not repeating what is said in the focus group to others, and be aware that other members of the group may not respect your confidentiality.

Anonymity:

Your privacy is important to this research and every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that personally identifying information (such as name, appearance) will not be used in this research, or in future projects and reports, without your clear permission to do so. Because the participants for this research project have been selected from small communities, many of whom are known to each other, it is possible that you may be identifiable to other people on the basis of what you have said. Although the data from this research project will be published and presented at conferences, the data from the surveys will be reported in aggregate form, so that it will be difficult to identify individuals. Moreover, the consent forms will be stored separately from the data, so that it will not be possible to associate a name with any given set of responses. Please do not put your name or other identifying information on the survey.

Recording of Data:

With your permission, the focus group interview will be audio-recorded.

Storage of Data:

All research material will be stored by the researcher, Amy Hudson, in locked cabinets and password-protected computers in my office at the NCC, and only I will have access to them. Consent forms and other data will be kept separate. Data will be kept for a minimum of five years, as required by Memorial University's policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research. If you give your permission on the informed consent form, the data will also be given to the NCC's archive at the end of the project, and it will be kept anonymous, unless you indicate that you would like your name to be associated with it.

Reporting of Results:

Research results may be publicly disseminated through presentations at NCC community gatherings, in the draft of governance and sustainability documents, and through other various means as determined necessary by the community. Results will also be used to inform academic and other publications (articles, book/book chapter, etc), and shared at academic conferences.

Upon completion, my *dissertation* will be available at Memorial University's Queen Elizabeth II library, and can be accessed online at: <http://collections.mun.ca/cdm/search/collection/theses>.

Sharing of Results with Participants:

Upon completion of the project, the results will be summarized in the form of a report for the NCC and will be shared with participants if they choose.

Questions:

You are welcome to ask questions before, during, or after your participation in this research. If you would like more information about this study, please contact: *Amy Hudson* at ahudson@mun.ca Or, my Supervisor: Dr. Kelly Vodden at kvodden@grenfell.mun.ca

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Consent:

Your agreement means that this research has been explained to you:

- You understand information about the research.
- You have been able to ask questions about this study.
- You are satisfied with the answers to all your questions.
- You understand what the study is about and what you will be doing.
- You understand that you are free to withdraw participation in the study without having to give a reason, and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future.

Regarding withdrawal during data collection:

- You understand that if you choose to end participation **during** data collection, any data collected from you up to that point **will be retained by the researcher, unless you indicate otherwise**.

Regarding withdrawal after data collection:

- You understand that if you choose to withdraw **after** data collection has ended, your data can be removed from the study up to December 15, 2018.

I agree to be audio-recorded	Yes	No
I agree to the use of direct quotations	Yes	No
I allow my name to be identified in any publications resulting from this study	Yes	No
I allow data collected from me to be archived in the NunatuKavut Community Council archive.	Yes	No

X Consent was obtained orally

Researcher's Signature:

I have explained this study to the best of my ability. I invited questions and gave answers. I believe that the participant fully understands what is involved in being in the study, any potential risks of the study and that he or she has freely chosen to be in the study.

Signature of Principal Investigator

Appendix C: Informed Consent Form, Focus Group-Written Consent

Title: *How reclaiming Inuit knowledge can create opportunities for a self-determined future amongst Southern Inuit in NunatuKavut: Building Inuit governance and planning for sustainability in NunatuKavut*

Researcher: Amy Hudson, Interdisciplinary PhD Program, Memorial University
ahudson@mun.ca

Supervisor: Dr. Kelly Vodden, Environmental Policy Institute, Grenfell Campus,
Memorial

You are invited to take part in a research project entitled:

How reclaiming Inuit knowledge can create opportunities for a self-determined future amongst Southern Inuit in NunatuKavut: Building Inuit governance and planning for sustainability in NunatuKavut

This form is part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. It also describes your right to withdraw from the study. In order to decide whether you wish to participate in this research study, you should understand enough about its risks and benefits to be able to make an informed decision. This is the informed consent process. Take time to read this carefully and to understand the information given to you. Please contact the researcher, Amy Hudson, if you have any questions about the study or would like more information before you consent.

Introduction:

I am a PhD student in the Interdisciplinary PhD Program at Memorial University. As part of my Doctoral thesis I am conducting research under the supervision of Dr. Kelly Vodden. I am also an NCC employee and the project lead on the community governance and sustainability project. I am originally from Black Tickle in NunatuKavut.

Purpose of Study:

This project aims to engage NunatuKavut community members and partners, and to build community governance and sustainability plans through valuing and prioritizing Southern Inuit knowledge and expertise. Through collaboration, NCC communities will begin plans to revitalize their communities by connecting with their past and culture.

What You Will Do in this Study:

You are invited to participate in a focus group to share your knowledge, expertise and stories about your community.

You will also be asked to complete a demographic survey. This is completely voluntary and you may skip any questions you wish. The survey will NOT be reported to NCC.

Length of Time:

The focus group interview will last for approximately 1-2 hours.

Withdrawal from the Study:

You will be informed of your right to withdraw from the project during the initial discussion about consent. It will be clear that you are free to withdraw from the research at any point in time, up until December 15, 2018. There are no consequences to your withdrawal from the study. You can decide how to proceed with your data in the event you choose to withdraw. For example, if you no longer have the time/desire to continue with the focus group interview but you are comfortable with the use of the information provided to the researcher thus far, then the data up to that point will be included in the final report and in future publications. If you wish to withdraw and retract a statement and/or disclosure that was made during the focus group interview, the researcher will do everything reasonably possible to ensure that such data is not reflected in research publications. You have until December 15, 2018 to withdraw from the study.

Possible Benefits:

You are encouraged to celebrate your communities, history and culture through the reclamation of traditional knowledge and values. Given the regions history of colonization and the current political climate of fiscal restraints, this research bridges opportunities to reclaim one's history and knowledge and to use this knowledge to inform a sustainable future, while revitalizing Southern Inuit governance practices.

The social and political reality of Southern Inuit has not been well documented, and when it has, it has often been misinterpreted and inaccurately reflected in the work of non-Indigenous academics, primarily male. This research serves to fill this gap by contributing to a knowledge base that is informed by Southern Inuit for Southern Inuit, which is also lacking in the scientific and scholarly community.

Possible Risks:

There is minimal risk of loss of privacy or feeling uncomfortable due to the nature of focus groups which encourage you to openly share amongst other community members. There is also minimal risk that you may feel some level of discomfort in discussing matters related to your community that is deemed sensitive.

Your participation in the focus group does not mean that you have to respond to all questions posed by the researcher, if you do not want to. The researcher will not pursue topics that clearly create discomfort for you. If you feel upset during or after the focus group, please contact your local community health clinic or the NL *Mental Health Crisis Line, 24 hour Toll Free -- 1-888-737-4668*.

Confidentiality:

Your privacy is important to this research and every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that personally identifying information (such as name, appearance) will not be used in this research, or in future projects and reports, without your clear permission to do so. Although the researcher will safeguard the confidentiality of the discussion to the best of her ability, the nature of focus groups prevents the researcher from guaranteeing that other members of the group will do so. Please respect the confidentiality of the other members of the group by not repeating what is said in the focus group to others, and be aware that other members of the group may not respect your confidentiality.

Anonymity:

Your privacy is important to this research and every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that personally identifying information (such as name, appearance) will not be used in this research, or in future projects and reports, without your clear permission to do so. Because the participants for this research project have been selected from small communities, many of whom are known to each other, it is possible that you may be identifiable to other people on the basis of what you have said. Although the data from this research project will be published and presented at conferences, the data from the surveys will be reported in aggregate form, so that it will be difficult to identify individuals. Moreover, the consent forms will be stored separately from the data, so that it will not be possible to associate a name with any given set of responses. Please do not put your name or other identifying information on the survey.

Recording of Data:

With your permission, the interview will be audio-recorded.

Storage of Data:

All research material will be stored by the researcher, Amy Hudson, in locked cabinets and password-protected computers in my office at the NCC, and only I will have access to them. Consent forms and other data will be kept separate. Data will be kept for a minimum of five years, as required by Memorial University's policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research. If you give your permission on the informed consent form, the data will also be given to the NCC's archive at the end of the project, and it will be kept anonymous, unless you indicate that you would like your name to be associated with it.

Reporting of Results:

Research results may be publicly disseminated through presentations at NCC community gatherings, in the draft of governance and sustainability documents, and through other various means as determined necessary by the community. Results will also be used to inform academic and other publications (articles, book/book chapter, etc), and shared at academic conferences.

Upon completion, my *dissertation* will be available at Memorial University's Queen Elizabeth II library, and can be accessed online at: <http://collections.mun.ca/cdm/search/collection/theses>.

Sharing of Results with Participants:

Upon completion of the project, the results will be summarized in the form of a report for the NCC and will be shared with you if you choose.

Questions:

You are welcome to ask questions before, during, or after your participation in this research. If you would like more information about this study, please contact: *Amy Hudson* at ahudson@mun.ca Or, my Supervisor: Dr. Kelly Vodden at kvodden@grenfell.mun.ca

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Consent:

Your signature means that:

- You have read the information about the research.
- You have been able to ask questions about this study.
- You are satisfied with the answers to all your questions.
- You understand what the study is about and what you will be doing.
- You understand that you are free to withdraw participation in the study without having to give a reason, and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future.

Regarding withdrawal during data collection:

- You understand that if you choose to end participation **during** data collection, any data collected from you up to that point **will be retained by the researcher, unless you indicate otherwise**.

Regarding withdrawal after data collection:

- You understand that if you choose to withdraw **after** data collection has ended, your data can be removed from the study up to December 15, 2018.

I agree to be audio-recorded	Yes	No
I agree to the use of direct quotations	Yes	No
I allow my name to be identified in any publications resulting from this study	Yes	No
I allow data collected from me to be archived in the NunatuKavut Community Council archive.	Yes	No

By signing this form, you do not give up your legal rights and do not release the researchers from their professional responsibilities.

Your Signature Confirms:

I have read what this study is about and understood the risks and benefits. I have had adequate time to think about this and had the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered.

I agree to participate in the research project understanding the risks and contributions of my participation, that my participation is voluntary, and that I may end my participation.

A copy of this Informed Consent Form has been given to me for my records.

Signature of Participant

Date

Researcher's Signature:

I have explained this study to the best of my ability. I invited questions and gave answers. I believe that the participant fully understands what is involved in being in the study, any potential risks of the study and that he or she has freely chosen to be in the study.

Signature of Principal Investigator

Appendix D: Informed Consent Form, Interview-Oral Consent

Title: *How reclaiming Inuit knowledge can create opportunities for a self-determined future amongst Southern Inuit in NunatuKavut: Building Inuit governance and planning for sustainability in NunatuKavut*

Researcher: Amy Hudson, Interdisciplinary PhD Program, Memorial University
ahudson@mun.ca

Supervisor: *Kelly Vodden, Environmental Policy Institute, Grenfell Campus, Memorial.*

You are invited to take part in a research project entitled:

“How reclaiming Inuit knowledge can create opportunities for a self-determined future amongst Southern Inuit in NunatuKavut: Building Inuit governance and planning for sustainability in NunatuKavut.”

This form is part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. It also describes your right to withdraw from the study. In order to decide whether you wish to participate in this research study, you should understand enough about its risks and benefits to be able to make an informed decision. This is the informed consent process. Take time to read/listen to this carefully and to understand the information given to you. Please contact the researcher, Amy Hudson, if you have any questions about the study or would like more information before you consent.

Introduction:

I am a PhD student in the Interdisciplinary PhD Program at Memorial University. As part of my Doctoral thesis I am conducting research under the supervision of Dr. Kelly Vodden. I am also an NCC employee and the project lead on the community governance and sustainability project. I am originally from Black Tickle in NunatuKavut.

Purpose of Study:

This project aims to engage NunatuKavut community members and partners, and to build community governance and sustainability plans through valuing and prioritizing Southern Inuit knowledge and expertise. Through collaboration, NCC communities will begin plans to revitalize their communities by connecting with their past and culture.

What You Will Do in this Study:

You are invited to participate in an interview to share your knowledge, expertise and stories about your community.

You will also be asked to complete a demographic survey. This is completely voluntary and you may skip any questions you wish. The survey will NOT be reported to NCC.

Length of Time:

The interview will last for approximately 1-2 hours.

Withdrawal from the Study:

You will be informed of your right to withdraw from the project during the initial discussion about consent. It will be clear that you are free to withdraw from the research at any point in time, up until December 15, 2018. There are no consequences to your withdrawal from the study. You can decide how to proceed with your data in the event you choose to withdraw. For example, if you no longer have the time/desire to continue with the interview but you are comfortable with the use of the information provided to the researcher thus far, then the data up to that point will be included in the final report and in future publications. If you wish to withdraw and retract a statement and/or disclosure that was made during the interview, the researcher will do everything reasonably possible to ensure that such data is not reflected in research publications. The participants have until December 15, 2018 to withdraw from the study.

Possible Benefits:

You are encouraged to celebrate your communities, history and culture through the reclamation of traditional knowledge and values. Given the regions history of colonization and the current political climate of fiscal restraints, this research bridges opportunities to reclaim one's history and knowledge and to use this knowledge to inform a sustainable future, while revitalizing Southern Inuit governance practices.

The social and political reality of Southern Inuit has not been well documented, and when it has, it has often been misinterpreted and inaccurately reflected in the work of non-Indigenous academics, primarily male. This research serves to fill this gap by contributing to a knowledge base that is informed by Southern Inuit for Southern Inuit, which is also lacking in the scientific and scholarly community.

Possible Risks:

There is minimal risk associated with participation in this research, including of loss of privacy or feeling uncomfortable due to the nature of interviews which encourage participants to openly share. There is also minimal risk that you may feel some level of discomfort in discussing matters related to your community that is deemed sensitive.

Your participation in the interview does not mean that you have to respond to all questions posed by the researcher, if you do not want to. The researcher will not pursue topics that clearly create discomfort for you. If you feel upset during or after the interview please contact your local community health centre or the NL Mental Health Crisis Line, 24 hours toll free: 1 888 737 4668.

Confidentiality:

Your privacy is important to this research and every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that personally identifying information (such as name, appearance) will not be used in this research, or in future projects and reports, without your clear permission to do so (as indicated on this form).

Anonymity:

Your privacy is important to this research and every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that personally identifying information (such as name, appearance) will not be used in this research, or in future projects and reports, without your clear permission to do so.

Recording of Data:

With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded.

Storage of Data:

All research material will be stored by the researcher, Amy Hudson, in locked cabinets and password-protected computers in my office at the NCC, and only I will have access to them. Consent forms and other data will be kept separate. Data will be kept for a minimum of five years, as required by Memorial University's policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research. If you give your permission on the informed consent form, the data will also be given to the NCC's archive at the end of the project, and it will be kept anonymous, unless you indicate that you would like your name to be associated with it.

Reporting of Results:

Research results may be publicly disseminated through presentations at NCC community gatherings, in the draft of governance and sustainability documents, and through other various means as determined necessary by the community. Results will also be used to inform academic and other publications (articles, book/book chapter, etc), and shared at academic conferences. Upon completion, my *dissertation* will be available at Memorial University's Queen Elizabeth II library, and can be accessed online at: <http://collections.mun.ca/cdm/search/collection/theses>.

Sharing of Results with Participants:

Upon completion of the project, the results will be summarized in the form of a report for the NCC and will be shared with you if you choose.

Questions:

You are welcome to ask questions before, during, or after your participation in this research. If you would like more information about this study, please contact: *Amy Hudson* at ahudson@mun.ca or, my Supervisor: *Dr. Kelly Vodden* at kvodden@grenfell.mun.ca

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Consent:

Your agreement means that the research has been explained to you:

- You understand the information read to you.
- You have been able to ask questions about this study.
- You are satisfied with the answers to all your questions.
- You understand what the study is about and what you will be doing.
- You understand that you are free to withdraw participation in the study without having to give a reason, and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future.

Regarding withdrawal during data collection:

- You understand that if you choose to end participation **during** data collection, any data collected from you up to that point **will be retained by the researcher, unless you indicate otherwise.**

Regarding withdrawal after data collection:

- You understand that if you choose to withdraw **after** data collection has ended, your data can be removed from the study up to December 15, 2018.

I agree to be audio-recorded	Yes	No
I agree to the use of direct quotations	Yes	No

Appendix E: Informed Consent Form, Interview-Written Consent

Title: *How reclaiming Inuit knowledge can create opportunities for a self-determined future amongst Southern Inuit in NunatuKavut: Building Inuit governance and planning for sustainability in NunatuKavut*

Researcher: Amy Hudson, Interdisciplinary PhD Program, Memorial University
ahudson@mun.ca

Supervisor: *Kelly Vodden, Environmental Policy Institute, Grenfell Campus, Memorial.*

You are invited to take part in a research project entitled:

“How reclaiming Inuit knowledge can create opportunities for a self-determined future amongst Southern Inuit in NunatuKavut: Building Inuit governance and planning for sustainability in NunatuKavut.”

This form is part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. It also describes your right to withdraw from the study. In order to decide whether you wish to participate in this research study, you should understand enough about its risks and benefits to be able to make an informed decision. This is the informed consent process. Take time to read this carefully and to understand the information given to you. Please contact the researcher, Amy Hudson, if you have any questions about the study or would like more information before you consent.

Introduction:

I am a PhD student in the Interdisciplinary PhD Program at Memorial University. As part of my Doctoral thesis I am conducting research under the supervision of Dr. Kelly Vodden. I am also an NCC employee and the project lead on the community governance and sustainability project. I am originally from Black Tickle in NunatuKavut.

Purpose of Study:

This project aims to engage NunatuKavut community members and partners, and to build community governance and sustainability plans through valuing and prioritizing Southern Inuit knowledge and expertise. Through collaboration, NCC communities will begin plans to revitalize their communities by connecting with their past and culture.

What You Will Do in this Study:

You are invited to participate in an interview to share your knowledge, expertise and stories about

one or all of the pilot communities and/or the NunatuKavut Community Council more generally.

Length of Time:

The interview will last for approximately 1-2 hours.

Withdrawal from the Study:

You will be informed of their right to withdraw from the project during the initial discussion about consent, and on the written consent form. It will be clear that you are free to withdraw from the research at any point in time, up until December 15, 2018. There are no consequences to your withdrawal from the study. You can decide how to proceed with your data in the event you choose to withdraw. For example, if you no longer have the time/desire to continue with the interview, but feel comfortable with the use of the information provided to the researcher thus far, then the data up to that point will be included in the final report and in future publications. If you wish to withdraw and retract a statement and/or disclosure that was made during the focus group or interview, the researcher will do everything reasonably possible to ensure that such data is not reflected in research publications. The participants have until December 15, 2018 to withdraw.

Possible Benefits:

You are encouraged to celebrate your connection to NunatuKavut communities and your work with communities and the NCC. Given the regions history of colonization and the current political climate of fiscal restraints, this research bridges opportunities to reclaim one's history and knowledge and to use this knowledge to inform a sustainable future, while revitalizing Southern Inuit governance practices.

The social and political reality of Southern Inuit has not been well documented, and when it has, it has often been misinterpreted and inaccurately reflected in the work of non-Indigenous academics, primarily male. This research serves to fill this gap by contributing to a knowledge base that is informed by Southern Inuit for Southern Inuit, which is also lacking in the scientific and scholarly community.

Possible Risks:

There is minimal risk of loss of privacy or feeling uncomfortable in discussing matters that are deemed sensitive. Your participation in the interview does not mean that you have to respond to all questions posed by the researcher(s), if you do not want to. The researcher will not pursue topics that clearly create discomfort for you.

Confidentiality:

Your privacy is important to this research and every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that personally identifying information (such as name, appearance) will not be used in this research, or in future projects and reports, without your clear permission to do so.

Anonymity:

Your privacy is important to this research and every reasonable effort will be made to ensure that personally identifying information (such as name, appearance) will not be used in this research, or in future projects and reports, without your clear permission to do so. Because the participants for this research project have been selected from a small group of people, many of whom are known to each other, it is possible that you may be identifiable to other people on the basis of what you have said.

Recording of Data:

With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded.

Storage of Data:

All research material will be stored by the researcher, Amy Hudson, in locked cabinets and password-protected computers in my office at the NCC, and only I will have access to them. Consent forms and other data will be kept separate. Data will be kept for a minimum of five years, as required by Memorial University's policy on Integrity in Scholarly Research. If you give your permission on the informed consent form, the data will also be given to the NCC's archive at the end of the project, and it will be kept anonymous, unless you indicate that you would like your name to be associated with it.

Reporting of Results:

Research results may be publicly disseminated through presentations at NCC community gatherings, in the draft of governance and sustainability documents, and through other various means as determined necessary by the community. Results will also be used to inform academic and other publications (articles, book/book chapter, etc), and shared at academic conferences. Upon completion, my *dissertation* will be available at Memorial University's Queen Elizabeth II library, and can be accessed online at: <http://collections.mun.ca/cdm/search/collection/theses>.

Sharing of Results with Participants:

Upon completion of the project, the results will be summarized in the form of a report for the NCC and will be shared with participants if they choose.

Questions:

You are welcome to ask questions before, during, or after your participation in this research. If you would like more information about this study, please contact: *Amy Hudson* at ahudson@mun.ca or, *my Supervisor: Dr. Kelly Vodden* at kvodden@grenfell.mun.ca

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you

have ethical concerns about the research, such as the way you have been treated or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

Consent:

Your signature on this form means that:

- You have read the information about the research.
- You have been able to ask questions about this study.
- You are satisfied with the answers to all your questions.
- You understand what the study is about and what you will be doing.
- You understand that you are free to withdraw participation in the study without having to give a reason, and that doing so will not affect you now or in the future.

Regarding withdrawal during data collection:

- You understand that if you choose to end participation **during** data collection, any data collected from you up to that point **will be retained by the researcher, unless you indicate otherwise.**

Regarding withdrawal after data collection:

- You understand that if you choose to withdraw **after** data collection has ended, your data can be removed from the study up to December 15, 2018.

I agree to be audio-recorded	Yes	No
I agree to the use of direct quotations	Yes	No
I allow my name to be identified in any publications resulting from this study	Yes	No
I allow data collected from me to be archived the NunatuKavut Community Council archive.	Yes	No

By signing this form, you do not give up your legal rights and do not release the researchers from their professional responsibilities.

Your Signature Confirms:

I have read what this study is about and understood the risks and benefits. I have had adequate time to think about this and had the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered.

I agree to participate in the research project understanding the risks and contributions of my

participation, that my participation is voluntary, and that I may end my participation.

A copy of this Informed Consent Form has been given to me for my records.

Signature of Participant

Date

Researcher's Signature:

I have explained this study to the best of my ability. I invited questions and gave answers. I believe that the participant fully understands what is involved in being in the study, any potential risks of the study and that he or she has freely chosen to be in the study.

Signature of Principal Investigator

Date

Appendix F: Email Recruitment

You are invited to take part in a research project entitled: *How reclaiming Inuit knowledge can create opportunities for a self-determined future amongst Southern Inuit in NunatuKavut: Building Inuit governance and sustainability in NunatuKavut.*

This research project aims to engage NunatuKavut community members and/or external partners, and to build community governance and sustainability plans. The goal is to assist NCC communities with community planning, revitalizing communities by connecting the past to the present.

I am originally from Black Tickle, and I am doing this research as part of my PhD thesis. I would appreciate talking with you about your community to learn from you and your experiences. If you are interested, you can participate in an interview and/or a focus group discussion that will last 1-2 hours. Please let me know if you're available for either!

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr.chair@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

If you require more information or have any questions, please connect with me at the following:

Amy Hudson
709 217 0088
ahudson@mun.ca

Appendix G: Recruitment Poster Text

Poster text:

You are invited to take part in a research project entitled: *How reclaiming Inuit knowledge can create opportunities for a self-determined future amongst Southern Inuit in NunatuKavut: Building Inuit governance and sustainability in NunatuKavut.*

This research project aims to engage NunatuKavut community members and/or external partners, and to build community governance and sustainability plans. The goal is to assist NCC communities with community planning, revitalizing communities by connecting the past to the present.

I am originally from Black Tickle, and I am doing this research as part of my PhD thesis.

I would appreciate talking with you about your community to learn from you and your experiences. If you are interested, you can participate in an interview and/or a focus group discussion that will last 1-2 hours. Please let me know if you're available for either!

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr.chair@mun.ca or by telephone at 709-864-2861.

If you require more information or have any questions, please connect with me at the following:

Amy Hudson
709 217 0088 ahudson@mun.ca

Appendix H: Data Collection Tools

Interview guiding thoughts for community members, knowledge holders and elders

The following themes/points serve as guiding points of discussion with individual participants. The interview will not be strictly structured, question by question, but rather, these questions will serve to engage participants and encourage discussion around themes pertaining to pride in community, cultural connection, Indigenous knowledge and community vision for the future. The guiding questions also serve to ensure that engagements with participants is informed from a place of strength.

- What community do you come from/connected to? (Your ancestral community).
- Where do you currently live?
- If living outside of ancestral community:
 - When did you move?
 - Why did you move?
 - Do you visit your home community?
 - Are you still connected, through family/friends/other kinship networks, to your ancestral community?
- When reflecting upon your life in your community, what comes to your mind? (probing questions related to the significance of the relationship to the land sea).
- Connection to the land and sea (probing questions around land use). Stories about growing up on the land and the influence of family and kinship networks. Discuss the importance of these connections, the lessons learned, to you and to future generations.
- Community strengths
- Vision for community in the future (5 years, 10 years). And, your role in this.
- What is necessary for community longevity/sustainability? (probing questions related to resources, governance, community leadership capacity, etc).
- Identify the role of federal and provincial governments and the NCC in making decisions that impact the community. The role of community (now and in the future).
- Examples of the community working together to achieve a common goal. Why was/is this important?
- Role of Indigenous Knowledge (IK) in community planning and decision making.
- Role of IK in the future (I.e., around management of resources, living on the land, education, community, etc).

- What role do you see the NCC playing in the future of your community?

Interview guiding thoughts for external partners (academia, consultants, legal, government, etc).

- Nature of relationship to the NunatuKavut community council.
- Special connections to particular NCC communities.
- NCC's comprehensive land claim journey: A) Role B) Length of time you have been engaged on this matter. Thoughts about a future relationship between NCC and Canada.
- From your experience/opinion, key challenges facing the NCC in their comprehensive land claim endeavors (historically and presently)? (Probing questions related to systemic discrimination, gender bias, eurocentrism, etc).
- What do you think are some of the key strengths of the NCC in their pursuit of a comprehensive land claim/reconciliation with Canada?
- NCC and NCC communities in the future.

Focus group guiding questions (community governance and sustainability).

The following questions serve as guiding points of discussion with focus group participants. The focus group will not be strictly structured, question by question, but rather, these questions will serve to engage participants and encourage discussion around themes pertaining to pride in community, cultural connection, and Indigenous knowledge. The guiding questions also serve to ensure that engagements with participants is informed from a place of strength.

- What has been the role of the provincial and federal government in your community? What role would you like to see the provincial and federal government take in your community?
- What has been the role of the NCC, over the years, in your community? What role would you like to see the NCC take in your community?
- What role do you think the community has played in overcoming challenges in your community?
- Key challenges facing your community? A) How has the community overcome them/some of them? B) How have they impacted the community (both historically and presently).
- Remaining challenges (urgent/immediate).
- Community strengths and weakness in relation to these challenges, including your ability to adapt to or address these challenges.

- Describe relationship to the land and sea, now and in the future.
- What role do you think the community should play in the future of your community?
- Community governance today. What it looks like and who is involved.
- Looking ahead at future governance structures.

Survey

You are invited to take part in a research project entitled:

“How reclaiming Inuit knowledge can create opportunities for a self-determined future amongst Southern Inuit in NunatuKavut: Building Inuit governance and planning for sustainability in NunatuKavut.”

I am a PhD student in the Interdisciplinary PhD Program at Memorial University. As part of my Doctoral thesis I am conducting research under the supervision of Dr. Kelly Vodden. I am also an NCC employee and the project lead on the community governance and sustainability project. I am originally from Black Tickle in NunatuKavut.

Purpose of Study:

This project aims to engage NunatuKavut community members and partners, and to build community governance and sustainability plans through valuing and prioritizing Southern Inuit knowledge and expertise. Through collaboration, NCC communities will begin plans to revitalize their communities by connecting with their past and culture. The information you provide will only be used for the purpose of this research and will not be shared with NCC or others.

Please note: To ensure your privacy, do NOT sign your name to the survey. After you fill out the survey, you may mail it back in the pre-stamped envelope provided or have it picked up or delivered to the community sustainability coordinator in your community.

- What community are you from / identify with?
- Gender:

Age (please circle one):

18-25 26-35 36-45 46+

- How long have you lived in this community?
- Do you live there now?
- What family members have lived there before you?
- How important is it to you to continue living in your community?
- How important is it for you to maintain a connection to your community?
- Have you been involved in leadership roles in your community?

Yes____ No____

If yes, please explain

- How satisfied are you with current governance (leadership capacity) in your community?
- How important is access to the land and sea for the following:

a. Food?

Very important__ Somewhat important__ Not important__

b. Well-being (physical, social, emotional spiritual):

Very important__ Somewhat important__ Not important__

c. Recreation/leisure:

Very important__ Somewhat important__ Not important__

d. Harvesting/hunting/gathering (as part of your Aboriginal rights):

Very important__ Somewhat important__ Not important__

e. Other (please explain):

- How important is it to you to raise your children / grandchildren in your community?

- How important is it to you that your children / grandchildren maintain a connection to your community / land / sea?
- How important is it to you that your children/grandchildren learn about their past and culture?

Thank you for participating!

