ONLINE ARTICLES ABOUT ISUMA AND FILMMAKERS:

The Canadian Encyclopedia. “Zacharias Kunuk.”
This encyclopedia article offers a biography of Zacharias Kunuk, particularly his history starting Igloolik Isuma Productions. The article focuses on Kunuk’s insistence on filming in his native language and having Inuit people produce and star in their own media, thereby taking control of how their culture is represented. In order to avoid collective memory loss and to preserve the culture of his people, Kunuk wants to use modern media to preserve narrative tradition that is typically orally transmitted.
Keywords: biography, activism, Inuit storytelling and cultural preservation, media literacy, language

CBC News. “Igloolik Isuma Productions going out of business.” Jul 08, 2011,
This news article reports on the financial struggles leading up to Igloolik Isuma Productions being forced into a receivership and out of business in 2011. Isuma TV remained unaffected by Isuma Productions’ shut down. In the article, Zacharias Kunuk announces his plans to launch a smaller production company called Kingulliit. This article provides some context for the difficulties that Inuit media productions face due to lack of government support and subsidies. This could lead to interesting conversations with media production programs: what does it mean to have media production classified as Arts and Crafts? Are the challenges faced by Isuma productions unique, and why do you think that this sort of struggle exists?
Keywords: Business, hardship, insolvency, subsidies, government support for media production

CBC News. “Zacharias Kunuk set to unveil Maliglutit, or Searchers, in Toronto this fall.” August 2, 2016,
Discussing the pending release of “Maliglutit” (or “Searchers”) in both Toronto and Igloolik, the article interviews Zacharias Kunuk. The focus of the interview is a discussion of how important it is for older actors mentor new ones in order to keep talent in the community, and how important it is to have an all Inuit cast wearing traditional fur garments and speaking Inuktitut in order to keep traditions and culture alive. Students in the creative writing, media, or film production programs can consider the points raised by Kunuk, and how important it is to tell stories and represent a culture authentically.
In a Q&A with Zacharias Kunuk, the filmmaker discusses the importance of preserving his community’s history, culture, and language through filmmaking. The director recognizes the importance of filming in Inuktitut and consulting Elders during the filmmaking process to produce something that is authentic to his culture. This is also why he sets his films in the past: he wants to depict the traditional Inuit way of life and preserve it in collective memory. Teaching traditional practices such as dog-teaming is another important aspect of his filmmaking process, as it actively teaches cultural traditions to the younger generation, thereby keeping those traditions alive. He offers advice to the next generation of Inuit filmmakers, and discusses how novel filmmaking was to his community when he started Isuma 30 years ago. Kunuk also responds to the question of ethics in filmmaking, and how racist depictions of Inuit culture have been presented in other films and media; he acknowledges that filmmaking can be used for bad, but that it is a powerful tool that can also be used for good. This suggests that he sees Isuma as a way of presenting alternatives to the stereotypes, countering racist depictions. The question of filmmaking ethics and the responsibility to tell stories authentically is important to film and media production classes, as well as to students of writing and multi-platform storytelling. Students across disciplines can consider how stereotypes have formed in collective consciousness and how they can be overcome.

Keywords: Cultural preservation, traditional practices, community-based media, racism and stereotypes

Cousineau, Marie-Helene. “Isuma making history with Atanarjuat: The last scenes of Atanarjuat, the first-ever Canadian feature film to be entirely written, produced, directed and shot by Inuit, in Inuktitut, have been shot in Igloolik.” October 8, 1999, Nunatsiaq News, http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/archives/nunavut991030/nvt91001_10.html

Written as production finished on Atanarjuat, this article offers a history of the funding struggles that the filmmakers faced and how the production involved the residents of Igloolik. The film’s production halted in 1996 when Telefilm refused to supply more funding for the project; once the filmmakers received funding commitment from CBC and the National Film Board, Telefilm and Northern funding sources including the government of the Northwest Territories committed to help fund the project, allowing production to resume. It will be interesting for film production students to investigate this issue of funding and government support for filmmaking, and how essential it is for
keeping films of cultural importance alive, and supporting employment in communities such as Igloolik’s.

**Keywords:** Filmmaking, subsidies, government support for media production, local employment, cultural preservation

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This news article announces the launch of Digital Indigenous Democracy (DID), the internet broadcasting project of Zacharias Kunuk and his partner Norman Cohn. The project could impact the use of Indigenous languages in digital media. Because internet is not widely available in the Arctic, many Inuit rely on text to communicate, which means having to communicate in English as oral languages require audiovisual input. Kunuk sees the threat to traditional languages posed by internet literacy, and has begun DID to cross the digital divide and bring video streaming to remote communities so that they can access and create content in their own language. DID will also broadcast content on important issues to the people in the community. This article provides an interesting starting point for students who are looking at the topic of Digital Indigenous Democracy, and can read, in Kunuk’s own voice, about the goals of the project and the powerful effect it could potentially have on preserving the stories and language of his community.

**Keywords:** Digital Indigenous Democracy, cultural preservation, language preservation, digital divide, media ownership

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In an interview with the Montreal filmmaker Marie-Helene Cousineau, who directed the film *Uvanga*, she discusses the difficulties that she faced in making her film in Igloolik. As someone who is not from the arctic, she was surprised by the social problems and poor housing in the community. Cousineau works with a collective formed by several Igloolik women, Arnait Video Productions, which helped the filmmaker to engage the community and seek their approval to make her film, as she is an outsider from the south who made her film in English. Aside from learning about the social issues in the community where she filmed, Cousineau learned that there was great potential to show the underrepresented stories of Inuit women and keep Northern heritage alive in the stories she filmed. Community Development courses could look at this issue of outsiders producing media in Inuit territory, and how it could potentially be problematic or beneficial. The issue of how women’s narratives are underrepresented in media could lead to discussions across curricula.
**Keywords:** Poverty, social problems, community development, women, outsider narratives


In this interview, Zacharias Kunuk and Norman Cohn discuss the values of Inuit culture and their objectives in making *Atanarjuat*, namely to empower Inuit and create a film that did not stereotype or dehumanize Inuit people. They discuss how certain Inuit values and cultural traditions are ignored by those outside of the community, and how their filmmaking can serve a political and cultural purpose. Community development courses could discuss these political purposes: what is it about the overlap of media and cultural values that makes filmmaking so important? Film production courses could respond to Cohn’s statement that the auteur can not exist in Inuit culture, considering why this is the case and what the important differences are between Inuit filmmaking and Hollywood productions.

**Keywords:** Empowerment, cultural values, politics, Inuit filmmaking, auteur


The photojournalist who wrote this article describes following Zacharias Kunuk as he hunts, hoping to interview the director (but becoming only moderately successful). His impressions of the Arctic are striking, and this shows how unfamiliar the landscape and way of life is to people from southern Canada. This sense of the unfamiliar is interesting to consider, as the concept of “otherness” informs the way that Inuit culture is perceived by outsiders. The author details one notable exchange with Kunuk, in which Kunuk talks about the loss of demand for animal skins as a result of the work of anti-fur lobbyists, and how this has impacted both the livelihoods of the Inuit and the overpopulation of animals such as arctic foxes. Kunuk makes clear the difference he observes between Inuit fur gatherers and unsustainable industrial-style fur gatherers: that the Inuit would not wipe out the animals that they love. This could lead to discussions in sustainability courses around the topic of traditional hunting practices and how these contrast to industrial hunting and farming practices from both a sustainable and ethical standpoint.

**Keywords:** Hunting, livelihoods, controversy, animal rights, sustainability, otherness


This article provides a short overview of Isuma TV, and how it can provide marginalized users with political and cultural objective. Isuma TV is compared to YouTube and how alternative media innovation can be revolutionary; in this case, it can provide Indigenous viewers with media from their own point of view. This is relevant to media studies and
film production courses: why is it important for Indigenous viewers to have their own point of view represented, and in what ways can this be considered revolutionary?

**Keywords:** Cultural preservation, language, alternative media revolution, innovation


Interviewing Katarina Soukup, Isuma website producer, this article looks at how the internet can connect people in the remote Arctic with the outside world, and how the outside world can learn about the Arctic and Indigenous lives. Isuma’s goals are to educate outsiders as well as their own community about traditional cultural practices and language, and to provide Inuit perspectives on historical events, as well as information on their filmmaking, the Arctic, Indigenous lives, missionization, and new ways of understanding media. This is especially relevant to community development and media studies courses.

**Keywords:** Media theory, cultural preservation, cultural education, historical perspectives


This review of Arnait Video Productions’ “Before Tomorrow” is not favourable: it focuses on how the film delivers the message that the transmission of Inuit wisdom and mythology over generations can sustain the human spirit, but it finds issue with plot gaps and sentimentality. This could lead to interesting discussions with film studies courses about the subjectivity of film reviews/analyses, and how the stories important to a culture might not translate to outsiders viewing the film who may be looking for certain stereotypes based on their preconceived notions.

**Keywords:** Film reviews, media bias, outsider interpretation, stereotypes/preconceptions, generational knowledge


This article begins by addressing the name change of the film from *Atanarjuaq* to The *Fast Runner* for English audiences, suggesting that English audiences will not see a film with a name that they can not pronounce. This opens up the possibility for discussions around media bias and how outsiders perceive or otherwise ignore Inuit culture. The filmmakers discuss how filmmaking is a powerful tool for cultural empowerment, giving them an opportunity to produce inside-out (transgressing outside-in) points of view. For the Inuit people, there is power in taking an oral tradition and presenting it on the big
screen. The article raises the interesting point that filmmaking is a form of media traditionally created outside of Inuit communities, and that the filmmakers were first exposed to it by viewing Hollywood films, which they had access to because of the colonization of their people. The filmmakers have taken filmmaking and made it their own, appropriating the process to tell their own stories, and this is empowering. This could relate to Community Development programs, and discussions around colonization and reconciliation, and how cultures exist (or cease to) after they have been colonized.

**Keywords:** Cultural dissemination, cultural preservation, empowerment, colonialism, missionization


Zacharias Kunuk writes about his life story, focusing on the separation from his family that he experienced at a young age at the hands of the government, and how he was forced into learning white culture. The story provides an excellent first-hand account of how colonialism broke apart the Inuit community and how this directly affected the young filmmaker. He describes the loss of the traditional way of life that he was born into, and how he struggled at times to adapt to the English language and to Christianity. There is much sadness in his account, but he also details how this exposure to white culture sparked his interest in filmmaking and ultimately provided him access to the tools that he would use to reclaim the history, language and culture of Inuit people. He also recounts his experience at the Cannes Film Festival and makes an interesting point: that it took international recognition and celebration of his film in order for it to finally be recognized in his own country. This article offers excellent insight into the effects and legacy of colonization to anyone who is studying the topic, and also opens up discussion around issues of cultural reclamation and preservation, and how Indigenous cultures are often ignored or dismissed by the forces that have colonized them.

**Keywords:** Colonization, missionization, loss of culture, cultural preservation


This article covers many topics related to Isuma and its mission to bring Inuit stories to their own community and to the outside world, namely the legacy of colonialism on Isuma’s filmmakers and in the stories that they tell. By telling the story of Kiviaq (profiled in *Isma’s film Kiviaq vs. Canada*), an Inuit lawyer who sued the Canadian government for the treatment of Inuit people (namely, how they are denied the privileges given to Southern Canadians while also being denied the reparations offered to other Aboriginal people in Canada), parallels are drawn to Kunuk’s own experience being assimilated
into white culture at a young age. The article discusses how the impacts of colonialism and this forced assimilation leads to cultural transition and confused identities, and how this is reflected in Isma’s films. The author suggests that Isma developed a new genre: a hybrid of filmmaking and traditional Inuit oral storytelling, which allows the filmmakers to reclaim and preserve their culture. This article will be useful to classes that are studying colonialism and the treatment of Indigenous people in Canada, and will overlap with courses studying cultural representation in media.

**Keywords**: colonialism, assimilation, cultural identity, cultural preservation, Inuit storytelling and perspectives


This article elaborates on the issues raised by the Isma film *Tungijug: What we Eat*, which was made in response to anti-seal hunting lobbying and the EU’s ban on seal products. The Inuit people have long relied on hunting for food and warmth, and have clashed with lobbying movements that have restricted their ability to trade animal products by diminishing demand. The point put forth by the film and reinforced by filmmakers and the lead actress is that the Inuit way of hunting is sustainable and necessary, and that the process of hunting is carried out with respect for the animals and with a viewpoint that animals and people are part of the same life cycle. They reject claims of animal cruelty from outsiders, and assert the necessity of hunting to preserve their survival and way of life. This relates to courses on sustainability, and broader discussions of ethics related to hunting across various courses. Fashion Arts students could also discuss the ethics around fur in fashion and where it is sourced/the industrial fur trade vs. the Indigenous fur trade.

**Keywords**: Sustainability, hunting, animal rights, survival, politics, fur trade


In this news article, Zacharias Kunuk is interviewed in honour of the 50th broadcast of Isma TV. As this article is 20 years old, it provides an image of what Isma TV was like before the filming and success of *Atanarjuat*, and his perspectives on the *Nunavut* series. Kunuk states that capturing and recording the Inuit lifestyle is his passion, but that he must hurry to record as much as he can before the loss of Inuit elders, who remember what the culture was like before the arrival of white settlers and the process of colonization. He wants to preserve traditional Inuit knowledge and make sure that people can see how life used to be. This article would be useful to film production students considering questions of cultural preservation through filmmaking, and touches on issues related to community development and media studies.
Keywords: cultural loss, cultural preservation, media ownership, colonization, traditions


Visiting the set of *The Journals of Knud Rasmussen*, the author reflects on his acquaintance with Zacharias Kunuk over several years, and his impression that Kunuk is, primarily, a hunter, and that filmmaking is secondary to this. The article looks at the depiction of hunting in Kunuk’s films, and how it is captured as a way of recording the Inuit way of life, or presenting Inuit people and their practices from the inside-out and to themselves, with outsiders welcome to watch. The article also touches on the introduction of Christianity to Inuit society and the effects of colonialism, particularly the loss of the traditional Inuit culture. Students in film production and related areas of study can benefit from a discussion of media ownership and self-representation, as well as how outsiders may approach this media. Students in community development, social work, or related fields can look at the topic of colonization, and how the legacy of colonialism can be felt across communities.

Keywords: hunting, cultural practices, christianity, cultural preservation, self-representation through media


Framed by the concept of time travel or “travelling through layers” (the translation of the Inuktitut word for the internet), the author of this article analyzes how media is approached by Inuit people: with a desire to share stories that are inherently rooted in traditional concepts, values, and metaphors. Digital technologies allow Inuit directors to extend the art of traditional Inuit storytelling, and preserve the past for future generations. This transcends the possibilities of oral storytelling, but the roots of the stories themselves are traditional. These technologies also allow Inuit filmmakers to transcend the idea of Inuk as Other. The importance of preserving the past is emphasized, as the traditional way of life was nearly lost in a single generation due to colonization. Isuma gives the Inuit community a tool for expressing their own culture as well as preserving it, and allows it to enter the global media discourse. In doing so, the culture is able to travel across time, space, and geography to broadcast their culture in their own community and beyond. This is an interesting point for community development students to consider, as media is a tool that allows the Inuit community to persevere. Media studies and film production students can also study these “layers” the broadcast media travels through and how this media opens new opportunities for expression and preservation.

Keywords: cultural preservation and dissemination, storytelling, colonization, digital media

In this article, Zacharias Kunuk tells the author about the knowledge that has been communicated by Inuit elders that support scientific research on climate change. The author contemplates the idea that “the Inuit landscape is Inuit Knowledge,” and how this informed the making of Qapirangajuq. Qapirangajuq was co-directed by an Environmental Science PhD, Ian Mauro, and uses elders’ accounts of the changing climate in the Arctic to give a picture of global warming; their observations often preceded those made by the scientific community. This is one powerful example of the wisdom in preserving elder stories and Inuit tradition, although the article’s author also acknowledges how Inuit wisdom and tradition can often be misinterpreted by Southerners who approach it with cultural bias. This is evident in the clash between Inuit hunters and the animal rights movement, which has condemned traditional hunting practices and, therefore, poses a threat to Inuit survival and the preservation of their traditions. As Kunuk has become responsible, through filmmaking, to tell the stories of his culture, he is tasked with presenting these stories and the lives of Inuit people with fidelity and has to advocate for the traditions that are opposed or misunderstood by Southern culture. This is one of the most important outcomes of his filmmaking, and is an interesting discussion point for students about the responsibilities that artists must adopt when they become representatives of a culture. The issues of global warming and hunting in the North are also important to courses in sustainability.

**Keywords:** global warming, hunting, sustainability, cultural preservation, Elder wisdom/generational knowledge, traditions.


The article begins with a segment of former AANDC Minister John Duncan’s official apology (2010) to the Inuit people for relocation of families that occurred in the 1950’s. It goes on to briefly describe the history and effects of Indigenous relocation in Canada, particularly the experience of High Arctic Relocation to Nunavik. The article contains hyperlinks to articles/reports offering more detail on the relocation, and recommends Zacharias Kunuk’s “Exile” as a source for education on the issue.

**Keywords:** Exile, relocation, reconciliation, colonialism


Despite the acclaim and success of Isuma’s projects, particularly Atanarjuat, the company faced financial trouble in 2011 and was forced into receivership. This article
looks at some of the problems faced by Isuma as they sought funding for their projects, including the lack of support by Inuit public agencies. As Isuma was forced to seek loans from creditors, they ended up in a position of not being able to pay the creditors back, and their irreplaceable works of great cultural value ended up in the hands of accounting firms who would not recognize the value of the archives and preserve them accordingly. This illuminates the issue of public vs. private funding, and how important works of art and media are at risk when they are funded or supported by organizations that are concerned more with profit than preservation. This also leads to an important discussion as to why public/governmental agencies might be reluctant to fund Isuma’s projects, and how this could speak to a broader tendency to ignore the voices of Indigenous creators. Cohn points out that the Nunavut government was more interested in funding mining and energy projects than it was in supporting their company, which was viewed by the government as “arts and crafts.” This is shortsighted and ultimately damaging to Inuit culture. Community development and arts administration can examine the issue of how support must come from multiple, public sources to allow projects such as Isuma to flourish. Media production classes must consider where funding for their projects can come from, and how artists struggle to survive in a culture that does not recognize the value of their contributions.

**Keywords:** funding, government support, public interest, cultural preservation, perception and reception of media


This article describes Isuma filmmaking and isuma.tv as “...vital life lines and life rafts for cultures under siege – cultures that are fighting back with media that they call their own.” By creating works such as *Kiviaq vs. Canada* and *Exile*, Kunuk is able to put a spotlight on historical injustices faced by the Inuit people, and how their culture struggles to survive following the process of colonization and missionization. Preserving Inuit culture for themselves is Isuma’s primary importance, but it also allows Inuit people to speak to outsiders in their own language and from their own perspective. This gives the Inuit people a voice and allows them to shape their present and preserve the traditions that are at risk of being lost forever. These are important points for any classes that are exploring the topics of reconciliation, colonization, and the marginalization of Indigenous people, opening discussions framed around media production and the importance self-representation.

**Keywords:** self-representation, colonization, missionization, cultural preservation, Canadian law, Indigenous human rights

**ARTICLES IN FRENCH:**

Trembley, Odile. “Zacharias Kunuk, le passeur de traditions.” *Le Devoir*, 15 Octobre 2016,
LONGER PAPERS AND BOOKS ABOUT ISUMA:

Synopsis from publisher: “In *Isuma* Michael Evans explores multiple aspects of the production company’s filmmaking, including its cultural and political stances, its embrace of folklore and respect for ancestors, and its role in the Arctic community of Igloolik. In-depth interviews with the people of Isuma and a thoughtful analysis of their films reveal how the producers combine their vision of Inuit wisdom and honour with the demands of modern filmmaking to create compelling and visually stunning films that share Inuit culture with an international audience.”

*Ebook available online through Humber Libraries*


**Abstract:** Inuit have been participating in the development of photo-reproductive media since at least the 19th century, and indeed much earlier if we continue on Michelle Raheja’s suggestion that there is much more behind Nanook’s smile than Robert Flaherty would have us believe. This paper examines how photographer Peter Pitseolak (1902-1973) and filmmaker Zacharias Kunuk have employed photography and film in relation to Raheja’s notion of “visual sovereignty” as a process of infiltrating media of representational control, altering their principles to visualize Indigenous ownership of their images. For camera-based media, this pertains as much to conceptions of time, continuity and “presence,” as to the broader dynamics of creative retellings. This paper will attempt to address such media-ontological shifts – in Pitseolak’s altered position as photographer and the effect this had on his images and the “presence” of his subjects, and in Kunuk’s staging of oral histories and, through the nature of film as an experience of “cinematic time,” composing time in a way that speaks to Inuit worldviews and life patterns – as radical renegotiations of the mediating properties of photography and film. In that they displace the Western camera’s hegemonic framing and time-based structures, repositioning Inuit “presence” and relations to land within the fundamental conditions of photo-reproduction, this paper will address these works from a position of decolonial media aesthetics, considering the effects of their works as opening up not only for more holistic, community-grounded representation models, but for expanding these relations to land and time directly into the expanded sensory field of media technologies.

**Keywords:** visual sovereignty, decolonial media aesthetics

Available on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MCI7tEyAsVk

Transcript of lecture is available here: http://s3.amazonaws.com/isuma.attachments/ZKspry_lecture.pdf

Kunuk begins the lecture with a brief autobiography, and refers to the day that he was forced (at age 9) to attend school as his “worst day.” From that point, he was forced to assimilate into white culture, and this disrupted his dreams of following in his father’s footsteps and becoming a hunter. He reveals that the story of *Atanarjuat* was first told to him by his mother, and the tradition of Inuit storytelling is one that he wants to preserve through his filmmaking. He recounts his personal journey as a filmmaker, from being enchanted by western films as a youth to trading carvings for his first Betamax camcorder in the 1980s, to being hired by the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation and, eventually, forming Isuma and becoming the director of his own films. Important to his narrative are his descriptions of the struggle to get funded, as Inuit filmmaking was initially rejected by government funding agencies and not seen as serious or valuable. He discusses the importance of hiring people from his community and keeping the stories authentic, and how the process of filmmaking taught the people of Igloolik their own traditions and how to keep them alive.

**Keywords:** funding, government support, self-representation, traditional storytelling, media ownership

**PUBLISHED BY ISUMA:**


- This book contains the script for *Atanarjuat* in both English and Inuktitut, with stills from the film and behind-the-scenes photos
- Contains artists’ statements by Paul Apak Angilirq, Zacharias Kunuk, and Norman Kohn
- Contains cultural commentaries by noted anthropologist Bernard Saladin d’Anglure on the legend of *Atanarjuat* and Inuit Shamanism, providing context to those who are studying the film

**Keywords:** Inuit legends, Shamanism, filmmaking, film script


The press kit for the film *Kiviak vs. Canada* provides a biography of both Kiviak and Zacharias Kunuk, as well as an overview of the film and the issues it explores. Context is given to Kiviak’s legal battles with the Canadian government over the recognition of Inuit people, and the demand for reparations as acknowledgement of the historical injustices
faced by Inuit people at the hands of the government. Kiviaq’s life story is an example of how colonization threatened the Inuit way of life and caused emotional harm to the Inuit people, and there are some parallels between Kiviaq’s life story and Kunuk’s. Kiviaq achieved success as Canada’s first Inuit lawyer, and he uses his position to advocate for the rights of Inuit people, who are not afforded the same privileges given to other Indigenous people of Canada. This limits Inuit people in their pursuit of higher education, and causes them to face challenges if they leave Nunavut (for example, in obtaining health care). This press kit serves as an excellent companion to *Kiviaq vs. Canada* for classes that are screening the film, and offers background for discussion of the key issues in the film.

**Keywords:** colonialism, assimilation, cultural preservation, reparation, Canadian law


- Lesson plans accompanying *Isuma Inuit Studies Reader*
- Lesson plans on Inuit Culture:
  - Nunavut Flag and Coat of Arms
  - Seasons and the Arctic
  - Weather and Climate
  - Understanding Inuit Quajimajatuqangit (IQ)
  - Inuktituk
  - Animals of the Arctic
  - Traditional Foods of the Inuit
  - Inuit Art and Music
  - Inuit Style of Filmmaking
  - Traditional Inuit Games
- Goal of the curriculum (aimed primarily at 12-15 year olds, but can be adapted for college-level courses by individual instructors), is to teach students about Inuit people and Nunavut through a culture’s own eyes (rather than through the eyes of outsiders). It offers a comprehensive multi-media unit of study for exploring Inuit people and Nunavut, recognizing that there is a gap in quality, in-depth educational materials available.
- Several of these teaching resources are publicly available on Isuma.tv, as well as some additional resources on Shamanism and Knud Rasumussen: [http://www.isuma.tv/inuit-culture-education/multimedia-lesson-plans](http://www.isuma.tv/inuit-culture-education/multimedia-lesson-plans)


- Excellent survey of readings related to Inuit culture
- Overview of Nunavut, Igloolik, the meaning of “isuma”, 1800s contact, 1900s contact, the film *Atanarjuat*
- Interviews by Jayson Kunuk with elders and creators like Atuat Akkitirq, Micheline Ammaq, Pauloosie Quilitalik, Rachel Uyarasuk, Samueli Amaa
- Private journal entries of Captains Lyon, Parry, Hall etc. as well as a letter of complaint from Peter Tulugajuak about the behaviour of Qallunat (primary source documents from the time of colonization)
- Drawings, illustrations, maps, and photos included
- Lengthy and powerful description of Aua (Avva, Awa), angakoq and his wife Orulu with recorded quotes from Aua used in *The Journals of Knud Rasmussen*
- Stories from the lives of three Inuit women
- Glossary, bibliography, and notes on drawings

**Themes include:** artistic creation, shamanism, whaling, the impact of first contact, Inuit qualities like hospitality and honesty, customs of birth and death, family life

- Contains screenplays for the film in both English and Inuktitut
- The book also contains stills from the film
- Written reflections from Inuit, Native, and non-Native writers
- Essays on the media of cultural identity and how filmmaking brings new meaning to identities in the 21st Century
- The *Journals of Knud Rasmussen* explores the loss of culture and collective memory through the introduction of foreign thought, and the essays collected in the book further explore this issue, and examine how the medium of film can return culture to collective memory and preserve stories and identities for future generations
- There is a poignant quote from Zacharias Kunuk in the introduction to the book, which nicely frames the essays contained within: “It seems that when our elders stopped talking, our children began killing themselves. Four thousand years of oral history silenced by fifty years of priests, schools, and cable TV? This death of history is happening in my lifetime...we want to show how new ways of storytelling can help our community survive” (page 9).

**Keywords:** collective memory loss, cultural preservation, cultural identity, colonization, film script


This article provides an overview of the politics of Indigenous media in Canada: how it has emerged historically, the factors that make it possible, and how and why it is a vulnerable media. The article offers a summary of Isuma’s history and impact on the community of Igloolik, and how it contributes to the visibility of Indigenous media, history and culture through its success in mobilizing Aboriginal cultural knowledge in all its forms. This resource is extremely valuable to media studies students, as it looks at the importance of Indigenous media and self-representation, while also looking at the factors that put Indigenous media at risk or serve as barriers to Indigenous media production.

**Keywords:** alternative media, Indigenous media, cultural visibility, cultural knowledge

ARTICLES AND RESOURCES ABOUT CONTEMPORARY INUIT CULTURE


The Inuit have experienced colonization and the resulting disregard for the societal systems, beliefs and support structures foundational to Inuit culture for generations. While much research has articulated the impacts of colonization and recognized that Indigenous cultures and worldviews are central to the well-being of Indigenous peoples and communities, little work has been done to preserve Inuit culture. Unfortunately, most people have a very limited understanding of Inuit culture, and often apply only a few trappings of culture — past practices, artifacts and catchwords — to projects to justify cultural relevance. Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit — meaning all the extensive knowledge and experience passed from generation to generation — is a collection of contributions by well-known and respected Inuit Elders. The book functions as a way of preserving important knowledge and tradition, contextualizing that knowledge within Canada’s colonial legacy, and providing an Inuit perspective on how we relate to each other, to other living beings and to the environment.

**Keywords:** colonization, Qaujimajatuqangit, traditional knowledge, cultural preservation


This article discusses the problems that Inuit people are facing as a result of global warming: changes to their natural environment, and conflict with outsiders who are
developing mining projects in the area now that summer ice is no longer a barrier and, more urgently, restricting Inuit hunting as a measure to protect declining numbers of arctic species. Recent years have seen a decline in the animals that the Inuit population depend on for food, and this is further troubled by interference from environmentalists, who want to restrict the hunting of these declining food sources. While some Inuit welcome development in the area as it could help mitigate vast unemployment, most Inuit see outsiders as interfering with and threatening their livelihoods. For scientists, developers, and others who wish to map a future for the Arctic, it is clear that they can not do so without meaningful consultation with the Inuit people, or else the conflict will intensify. This could open up meaningful discussions around sustainability and the ethics and challenges posed by outsider development, which can be relevant across curricula.

**Keywords:** hunting, mining, environmentalism, sustainability

“Inuit Culture: Modern Inuit.” virtualmuseum.ca Teachers’ Centre, last updated 2000, accessed February 26, 2018,
http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/edu/ViewLoitLo.do?method=preview&lang=EN&id=10641

This learning resource was written by Inuit people to give a brief overview of their land, and how the most recent generation interacts with it. Although it is an older resource, it contains a simplified overview of Inuit culture that will be useful as an introduction to courses that are studying Inuit life, and it provides a helpful map of Inuit territory. There is also a section that discusses the new roles and responsibilities that modern Inuit have identified, notably “to maintain tradition by accommodating change.”

**Keywords:** modern Inuit, territory, roles and responsibilities, tradition, self-identification

“Modern VS Traditional Life.” Inuit Cultural Online Resource, accessed February 26, 2018,
http://icor.ottawainuitchildrens.com/node/48

This learning resource contains helpful tables to compare information about the similarities and differences of the lifestyles of a traditional Inuit family and that of a modern urban Inuit family. This could serve as a helpful introduction to curriculum about Inuit life, and can supplement discussions of colonialism and how Inuit culture has changed in response. Inuit culture has experienced great change over the past century as a result of contact with Europeans and the interference in their life from the Canadian government, and this article outlines key changes to their culture as well as the traditions that they have upheld (even if they are no longer practiced in their daily lives).

**Keywords:** tradition, assimilation, colonialism, adaptation, cultural survival
ARTICLES, LECTURES AND BOOKS ABOUT RESURGENCE


The author of this paper explores Indigenous pathways to decolonization and resurgence with an emphasis on identifying everyday practices of renewal and responsibility within native communities today. The article compares examples of Indigenous resurgence across various cultures, providing insights to contemporary decolonization movements. The politics of distraction is operationalized here as a potential threat to Indigenous homelands, cultures and communities, and the harmful aspects of the rights discourse, reconciliation, and resource extraction are identified, discussed, and countered with Indigenous approaches centered on responsibilities, resurgence and relationships. Overall, findings from this research offer theoretical and applied understandings for regenerating Indigenous nationhood and restoring sustainable relationships with Indigenous homelands. (Quoted from the author’s abstract)

Keywords: decolonization, resurgence, politics of distraction, reconciliation


Coulthard challenges recognition as a method of organizing difference and identity in liberal politics, questioning the assumption that contemporary difference and past histories of destructive colonialism between the state and Indigenous peoples can be reconciled through a process of acknowledgment. He examines an alternative politics, seeking to revalue, reconstruct, and redeploy Indigenous cultural practices based on self-recognition.

Keywords: resurgence, colonialism, reconciliation, idle no more


This interview with #Resistance150 founder Christi Belcourt focuses on the origins of the #Resistance150 movement, and how Indigenous Resurgence in Canada started long before the movement began. Belcourt explains her reasons for resisting Canada 150 celebrations, and why Indigenous resurgence is, and will continue to be, so important. Belcourt also asserts that she believes reconciliation in Canada will not be possible, as the entire premise of Canada rests on the dispossession of Indigenous people of their lands. Belcourt asserts that the resistance will keep on growing.

Keywords: resurgence, resistance, Canada 150, dispossession, rebellion

Publisher’s summary: “Many promote Reconciliation as a "new" way for Canada to relate to Indigenous Peoples. In *Dancing on Our Turtle’s Back: Stories of Nishnaabeg Re-Creation, Resurgence, and a New Emergence* activist, editor, and educator Leanne Simpson asserts reconciliation must be grounded in political resurgence and must support the regeneration of Indigenous languages, oral cultures, and traditions of governance...Simpson explores philosophies and pathways of regeneration, resurgence, and a new emergence through the Nishnaabeg language, Creation Stories, walks with Elders and children, celebrations and protests, and meditations on these experiences. She stresses the importance of illuminating Indigenous intellectual traditions to transform their relationship to the Canadian state.”


This blog post (by a professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Alberta) reflects on the 2nd Building Reconciliation Forum, which happened at the university in 2016. She discusses the future of academic institutions in the wake of the TRC (Truth and Reconciliation Commission) Calls to Action, and how institutions can move towards real change. The author points out that the challenge of the Calls to Action are to face the racist and colonial concepts and beliefs academic institutions are founded upon and continue to enact, which goes beyond simply adding Indigenous Studies courses or a few more Indigenous faculty members to a university. The author posits that, rather than focusing on reconciliation, universities should focus on conciliation: not a rebuilding of the past, but a building towards a new future in a new image, which requires dismantling the structures of our institutions. Universities must face truth: how they have studied Indigenous bodies and cultures to further their own research, and then act to change the institutions. One of the ways of doing this is to accept the knowledge of Indigenous people as being equal to western knowledge systems in order to overcome academic supremacy and open learning to many different perspectives. She cites the wisdom of conference speaker Piita Irniq, who spoke of compassion, forgiveness and healing, and the transformative power of suffering. This serves as an excellent introduction to studying the teachings of Piita Irniq, and can be a foundational reading for discussing the roles and responsibilities of academic institutions in allowing for Indigenous Resurgence.

**Keywords:** resurgence, decolonization, re/conciliation, knowledge, academic institutions