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# Smithsonian at the Poles

Contributions to  
International Polar Year Science

*Igor Krupnik, Michael A. Lang,  
and Scott E. Miller  
Editors*

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# From Tent to Trading Post and Back Again: Smithsonian Anthropology in Nunavut, Nunavik, Nitassinan, and Nunatsiavut— The Changing IPY Agenda, 1882–2007

*Stephen Loring*

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**ABSTRACT.** As part of the First International Polar Year, the Smithsonian Institution established a meteorological and astronomical observatory at Ft. Chimo (Kuujjuaq) in Ungava Bay in 1881–1883. Sent to man the post was the Smithsonian’s most prominent northern naturalist, Lucien Turner. Turner developed a close rapport with Inuit and Innu families from whom he acquired an extraordinary array of scientific specimens and ethnological materials. While intrepid and inspired, the work of the Smithsonian’s pioneering Arctic scientists reflects the biases of western scientific tradition. Northern Native peoples were viewed as part of the arctic ecosystem to be observed, cataloged, and described. For the most part, the intellectual landscape of Innu and Inuit groups was overlooked and ignored. The Smithsonian collections are a powerful talisman for evoking knowledge, appreciation, and pride in Innu and Inuit heritage and serve as one point of departure for research during the Fourth IPY in 2007–2008. Recognition that northern Natives have a mandate to participate in and inform northern research is an important change in the production of northern scientific research.

## INTRODUCTION

This essay considers the changes in the practices of museum anthropology and archaeology at the Smithsonian Institution between the First IPY in 1882–1883 and the current IPY of 2007–2008. To know a place is to name it. The place we call the *Arctic* means different things to different people. A cultural construct defined by different eyes and different ways of knowing, it is both real and intangible. Archaeologist Robert McGhee (2007) calls it “the last imaginary place.” It is only in the twentieth century that the technologies and the insatiable appetites of the developed world have been able to overcome environmental and logistical constraints to establish a permanent presence throughout the north. There are libraries and research institutes devoted to the complexity and variety of human experiences at high latitudes. For visitors, the Arctic is as much a cultural construct as it is a physical one, with perceptions repeatedly shaped and reshaped by time and circumstance.

One has only to consider the transformation of Arctic landscapes from the fantastic fairy-tale visions—gothic cathedrals of ice—of the early-nineteenth-century explorers, subsequently morphed by suffering and danger into the grim

and foreboding visions of the ubiquitous and relentless ice of the post-Franklin era (Figure 1), to the modern era with its coffee-table books of stunning photography of polar bears and vast unpopulated expanses (Loomis, 1977; 1986; Grant, 1998). But the Arctic is also a homeland, and has been for thousands of years. Arctic inhabitants have evolved a remarkable and practical adaptation to the climatic and ecological extremes of the northern polar world. Indigenous knowledge—based on observation and inference and passed from generation to generation—forms an astute and perhaps surprisingly complex interpretation of



**FIGURE 1.** The terrible tragedy surrounding the loss of life during the U.S. North Polar Expedition (1879–1881) following on the debacle of the British Northwest Passage Expedition under Sir John Franklin (1845–1848) had soured public opinion in the United States on the benefits of polar exploration and transformed perceptions of the Arctic as a deadly and foreboding landscape. Editorial cartoon, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, 20 May 1882, William Dall papers, RU7073, SI Archives. (S. Loring photograph.)

the world inhabited by indigenous northern peoples. Yet with few exceptions (e.g., Rasmussen, 1929; Rink, 1875), visiting researchers and scientists have not learned the language of their hosts and thus have been denied much of the complexity of northern perceptions that has developed over generations by indigenous peoples.

Historically, science in the north began as a handmaiden of colonial enterprise. Having developed the technology to transport them into (if not always out of) the polar regions, nineteenth-century explorers, with their passion for expanding scientific and geographic knowledge, began to collect information about the places they found themselves in. As was typical on many early and mid nineteenth-century Arctic voyages, with their winter quarters established, observatories were placed on the ice and rounds of tidal measurements, weather, and geophysical observations began. Expedition accounts are filled with observations on the phenomenology of ice and cold, as navy explorers and scientists confronted the mysteries of Arctic life and returned with their collections of natural history specimens. Also in these accounts, are anecdotal and ethnohistorical passages that provide some of the first descriptions of Native residents of the Arctic. In comparison to more complex societies elsewhere, northern band-level societies, with their more modest material remains (the very antithesis of Euro-American values of dominance, competition and wealth) were perceived as being backward and marginal, literally frozen in time. Lacking a critical self-awareness the eyes of the European explorers had yet to take the true measure of the Natives of the eastern arctic who were frequently portrayed as quaint and childlike, devoid of the quarrelsome and bellicose attitudes of some of their western and southern counterparts (Figure 2).

Gradually the accumulation of geographical knowledge, dearly bought, began to make sense of the physical mysteries of the arctic. Still little in the way of serious attention to native cultures was afforded prior to the travels of Charles Francis Hall beginning in 1860 (Hall, 1864; Loomis, 1972). More visionary than scientist, Hall had been drawn to the arctic by the continuing fascination with the fate of the lost Sir John Franklin Expedition (1845) and the possibility that survivors might yet be living amongst the Inuit. Severely curtailed by financial constraints Hall broke from the prevailing tradition of using expedition ships frozen in the ice as base stations from which to launch sledge and small-boat voyages in favor of adopting Inuit modes of travel. Hall moved in with his Nunavut hosts, learned their language, and experienced their culture as an active participant. He was fortunate



FIGURE 2. Illustrations accompanying William Edward Parry's popular accounts of his search for the Northwest Passage (1819–1834) depict the central Canadian Arctic Inuit as whimsical and childlike catered to a European perception of the polar region as a fantastic otherworldly place (Parry 1821, 1824). Detail from a Staffordshire ceramic plate, "Arctic Scenery" ca. 1835. (Photograph by S. Loring of plate in author's collection.)

in befriending an extraordinary Inuit couple, Ebierbing ("Joe") and Tookoolito ("Hannah") who provided Hall with an entrée into Inuit society and served as his guides and guardians on all of Hall's three arctic expeditions (Loomis, 1997). Hall's receptivity to Inuit testimony and acceptance of the validity of Inuit knowledge about their history and their homeland both assured his own survival and the success of his expeditions and presaged (by more than half a century) the recognition of the validity and acuity of Inuit oral knowledge by subsequent Arctic scientists and travelers (Woodman, 1991) (Figure 3).

In the eastern Arctic, it is not until nearly 20 years after Hall that the fledgling discipline of Arctic anthropology emerged as a direct consequence of the first International Polar Year with the arrival of Lucien Turner in

Ungava in 1882–1884 and Franz Boas in Baffin Island in 1883–1884 (Loring, 2001a; Cole and Muller-Wille, 1984). Neither Boas nor Turner was formally trained in anthropology. Turner's first interest and abiding passion was ornithology while Boas came to the eastern arctic as a geographer. Boas' trip to Baffin Island was planned and partially sponsored by the German Polar Commission, which was then processing the data gathered from the German IPY station in Cumberland Sound (Barr, 1985). The resulting ethnographic monographs of both Boas (1885) and Turner (1894) were subsequently published by the Smithsonian Institution. These monographs have proved to be the emerging discipline of anthropology's intellectual bedrock for research pertaining to the indigenous peoples of Baffin Island and northern Quebec-Labrador, and these



FIGURE 3. Thule ground-slate whaling harpoon endblade found by Charles Francis Hall's Inuit companion Eberbing, also known as "Esquimaux Joe." Historically, the role of Inuit guides and companions in the production of Arctic science was rarely acknowledged. SI-10153, Charles Francis Hall collection, NMNH. (S. Loring photograph)

works remain as some of the lasting triumphs of the first IPY accomplishments.

The scientific agendas of the International Polar Years, in 1882–1883, 1932–1933, and 1957–1958 have all been concerned with addressing problems of meteorology, atmospheric science, and high-latitude geophysics. Yet, ironically, arguably the most lasting accomplishments of the American contribution to the First IPY—from the Point Barrow and Ungava stations—were the collections of natural history specimens (e.g., Dunbar, 1983) and ethnographic materials that Smithsonian naturalists acquired around the fringes of their official duties as weather observers for the U.S. Army Signal Service (Murdoch, 1892; Turner, 1894; Nelson, 1899). Surprisingly, the volumes of atmospheric, oceanic, magnetic, and solar observations

gathered at the dozen IPY 1882–1883 stations did not yield the anticipated insights into global climatic and geophysical regimes (Wood and Overland, 2006). Perhaps more significant than the research results in the physical sciences was the establishment of a model for international scientific practice based on coordination and cooperation, and the recognition that the study of high latitudes (at both poles), as with the high seas, was an arena of international consequence and significance.

In company with the earth sciences and natural history, anthropology and archaeology were part of the expanding western economic, social, and intellectual hegemony of the nineteenth century. The construction of scientific knowledge about the world has, for the most part, proceeded following well-defined western notions of logic and scientific explanation as the principle explanatory process for understanding the natural world and the place of human beings therein. Now, in the twenty-first century, with much of the world's cultural and biological diversity documented in at least a preliminary fashion, anthropology faces the challenge of recognizing, articulating, interpreting, and preserving as broad a spectrum of humanity's shared cultural diversity as possible.

At the time of the first IPY, many of the indigenous peoples of North America had been swept from their traditional homelands. Secure in their northern redoubts of ice and stone, the Natives of the eastern Arctic had been spared much of the continental dislocation and genocide waged against indigenous communities in warmer climes. The inroads of European explorers, and later missionaries, whalers, and traders, had not significantly impeded traditional Inuit subsistence practices nor had they intruded far into their spiritual matters and beliefs. Under the leadership of Spencer Baird, the first curator of the U.S. National Museum and the Institution's second secretary (1878–1887), and later, John Wesley Powell (Director of the B.A.E. 1879–1902), Smithsonian anthropology—in the guise of the Bureau of American Ethnology—operated under a paradigm of salvage anthropology in the belief that Native American peoples were fated to gradually decline and disappear. Situated in the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH), Smithsonian anthropology had a decidedly materialist, collections-based orientation that was strongly influenced by biological sciences and Darwin's evolutionary doctrines. Northern native cultures were seen as being somewhat uniquely divorced from history due to their remote geography, and many theorists of the day considered them to be a cultural relic of Ice Age Paleolithic peoples, at the extremity of the scale in terms of human cultural variation.

The Smithsonian Institution's previous interests in the eastern arctic—beginning with biological studies in Hudson's Bay in the early 1860s, and support for the U.S. Eclipse Expedition to northern Labrador in 1860, as well as its close relationship with the Hudson's Bay Company (Lindsay 1993)—provided a basis for a concerted study in the Ungava region. As part of the First International Polar Year 1882–1883, the Smithsonian Institution partnered with the U.S. Signal Corps to establish meteorological and astronomical observatories at Point Barrow, Alaska, at Ft. Conger on Ellesmere Island, and at the Hudson's Bay Company Post at Fort Chimo (Kuujjuaq) in Ungava Bay (Barr, 1985). Sent to man the post at Kuujjuaq was one of the Smithsonian's most experienced northern naturalists, Lucien Turner, who had previously conducted important studies for the Smithsonian in the Aleutian Islands and Western Alaska (Turner, n.d.; 1886; Loring, 2001a).

Lucien Turner (1848–1909) was at the center of a small and talented band of young naturalists that were

recruited by the Smithsonian's second secretary, Spencer Baird. An accomplished ornithologist, linguist, and taxidermist Turner reveled in the opportunities for research and collecting in the North American arctic. Baird arranged for Turner to be posted at the Hudson's Bay Company post at the mouth of the Koksoak River in Ungava Bay as a member of an IPY-sponsored meteorological observatory for the U.S. Signal Corps.

Turner's arrival at Fort Chimo in 1882 was something of a surprise for the chief factor there, as news from the outside world only arrived once a year with the annual supply ship. Not easily rebuffed, Turner quickly established his observatory and took up the responsibilities of his post (Figure 4), both those pertaining to his IPY agenda and those dictated by his Smithsonian mandate. Although constrained by the demanding regime of his observation and recording obligations, Turner was able to develop a close rapport with Inuit and Innu families visiting the post, from whom he acquired an extraordinary array of scientific



FIGURE 4. Lucien Turner at his observatory at the Hudson's Bay Company Post at Fort Chimo (near present day Kuujjuaq), 1881. (SI-6968)

specimens and ethnological materials (Turner, 1888, 1894; Loring 2001a) (see Figure 5).

Unfortunately, no traces of a personal diary or letters survive from Turner's time at Fort Chimo. Diligent archival research, at the Smithsonian and Hudson's Bay Company archives, provide a few tantalizing clues to his rapport with the northern Natives he came into contact with (Loring, 2001a). However, for the most part these contacts are only dimly referred to as the source for knowledge about the local environment, animals (including mammals, birds, fish, and invertebrates), social relations, and mythology. The contemporary "intellectual

landscape" of Innu and Inuit groups—the complex web of oral histories and observational knowledge pertaining to animals, weather, and the land—was largely overlooked and ignored by the IPY-era anthropologists, as their focus, stemming from the natural history approach of their missions, was to categorize and describe the material culture of the people they encountered. Despite being confined by the intellectual framework of the day, Turner's Ungava collections (as well as the collections made by Murdoch and Ray at Point Barrow in 1881–1883) have become a powerful instrument for evoking knowledge, appreciation, and pride in Innu and Inuit heritage. They serve as a point



FIGURE 5. Innu women and children visiting Lucien Turner at Fort Chimo, 1881. Photography was deemed an essential component of the work of the Smithsonian naturalists. As some of the earliest extent photographic images of northern Natives, they remain a prominent legacy of the first IPY. (SI-6977)



of departure for research during this IPY in 2007–2008, as explained below. Within the confines of their training and natural history proclivities, the Smithsonian’s Arctic naturalists had a demonstrated sensitivity to some aspects of native knowledge pertaining to the cultural and biological collections they acquired, though for the most part these are brief and anecdotal notations. Today, these notes, but more significantly the objects themselves, are being reexamined and reinterpreted by descendants from the communities from which the objects had come more than a century before.

### THE SHIFT IN INTELLECTUAL PARADIGM

The recognition that arctic people have an intellectual, moral, and sociopolitical mandate to participate in and inform northern research marked a fundamental and dramatic shift in the practice of scientific research in the north. It did not arrive until the 1970s and more firmly, until the 1990s (Berger, 1977; Berkes, 1999; Nadasdy, 1999; Stevenson, 1996; Nicholas and Andrews, 1997) (see Figure 6).

With the passage of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act in 1990 (NAGPRA) and the National Museum of the American Indian Act (in 1996), the intellectual landscape as it pertains to the use and study of the Native American collections has been transformed into a museum anthropology that is more inclusive, more diverse, and contingent on Native participation and expertise (Crowell et al., 2001; Fienup-Riordan, 1996, 2005a, 2005b, 2007; Loring 1996, 2001b; Swidler et al., 1997; Thomas, 2000; Watkins, 2003; 2005; Zimmerman et al., 2003). It is in this context of cooperation and respect that the agendas of Smithsonian anthropology and IPY converge as specific information about objects in the museum collection are not only interpreted by knowledgeable elders and descendant community representatives but also serve as a touchstone or gateway to discussions about traditional ecological and environmental knowledge. It thus seems appropriate, given the degree that human agency is implicated in climatic change, that anthropology for the first time has been formally recognized as a goal of IPY polar science, under its new mandate:

to investigate the cultural, historical, and social processes that shape the resilience and sustainability of circumpolar human societies, and to identify their unique contributions to global cultural diversity and citizenship. (ICSU/WHO 2007:13)



FIGURE 6. “We were *real* red-men in those days!” says Uneam Katshinak, a much revered Innu hunter, as he reminisces about being covered in blood while spearing caribou from a canoe as a boy. The continuity of traditional subsistence practices has anchored northern Native perceptions of their identity and their homeland belying the “vanishing Indian” paradigm of nineteenth-century anthropology. (S. Loring photograph at the Tshikapisk-sponsored rendezvous at Kamestastin, Nitassinan, September 2000)

### SEEING AND BELIEVING: CHANGING PERSPECTIVES IN MUSEUM ANTHROPOLOGY

At the Smithsonian Institution, the climate and philosophy of *repatriation* (Loring, 2001b; 2008), coupled with the moral and inspirational presence of the new National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), has encouraged the emergence of new practices and scholarship.

The new paradigm is evidenced by the significant numbers and variety of northern Native American and Inuit scholars, academics, artisans, and visitors who come to acknowledge, study, and appreciate the collections that were derived from their ancestors a century or more ago (Figure 7). The Smithsonian's anthropology collections acquired during the First International Polar Year in Alaska and Nunavik had languished for almost a century, awaiting an appreciation of their significance—first as objects of art with *The Far North* exhibition at the National Gallery of Art (Collins et al., 1973) and then as symbols of cultural glory and scholarly wonder in a pair of precedent-setting exhibitions, *Inua: Spirit World of the Bering Sea Eskimo* in 1982 and *Crossroads of Continents* in 1988 (Fitzhugh and Kaplan, 1982; Fitzhugh and Crowell, 1988). In opening the Smithsonian's "attic" and in returning to northern Natives an awareness of their material culture patrimony, the role of the museum has been radically transformed. Today, the Smithsonian collections at the NMNH and the NMAI form the largest holding of material culture pertaining to the heritage and history of North America's indigenous peoples. With the passage of time and the miracle of conservation, these objects have undergone an extraordinary transformation from natural history specimens and anthropological curiosities to become the foundation stones for contemporary community identity and heritage (Figure 8). The challenge of the next century is to accommodate this transformation and incorporate new perspectives and knowledge.

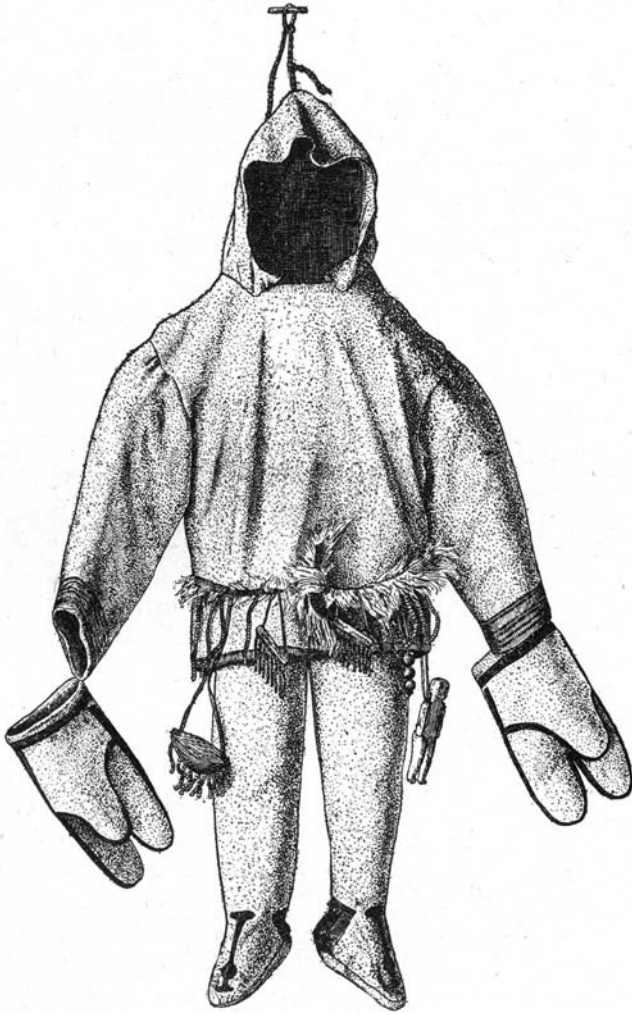
The future of anthropology in the museum will encourage—and necessitate—new ways of thinking about the past that would require museum anthropologists and archaeologists surrender—or negotiate—their prerogative to interpret the past. Even more important, it is incumbent upon museum professionals to learn new ways of listening, new ways of recognizing the legitimacy of other voices, and other ways of knowing and accepting oral tradition as a valid interpretive tool (Tonkin, 1992). This sea change in museum anthropology and archaeology is inherent in the programs and initiatives that Smithsonian anthropology is conducting during the time of IPY 2007–2008. A joint NMNH–NMAI exhibition project is bringing more than 500 Native Alaskan artifacts collected around the time of the First IPY to Anchorage, Alaska. The exhibit relies heavily on curatorial input from teams of Native Alaskan consultants affirming the legitimacy of their perspective, knowledge, and link to their legacy and heritage.

### AN ENDANGERED PERSPECTIVE ON THE PAST

With the passing of the *Inumariit*, the knowledgeable Inuit who lived in the country in the manner of their ancestors, and the *Tsheniu Mantushiu Kantuat*, the old Innu hunters with special powers, so passes one of the last vestiges of the link to the intellectual landscape of hunting-foraging peoples. To anthropologists and even many indig-



**FIGURE 7.** Community-orientated collection consultation and outreach has been a core concept of the Smithsonian's Arctic Studies Center since its inception in 1991. Here George Williams, from the village of Mekoryuk on Nunivak Island, Alaska, points out construction details of a model kayak that had been collected by Henry B. Collins in 1927. Williams was part of a delegation of Nunivak elders and educators who visited the Smithsonian in March 1996. (S. Loring photograph)



**FIGURE 8.** A drawing of the so-called magic doll collected by Lucien Turner in 1881 from Labrador Inuit visiting the Hudson's Bay Company Post at Ft. Chimo (Kuujjuak) in Nunavik. Such unique specimens eloquently attest to the continuity of shamanistic practices in country-settings beyond the purview of missionaries and traders. Transformed into museum specimens such objects still retain a tremendous potency to inspire and inform descendant community members of the people from whom they had been acquired. (Fig. 22 in Turner 1894, Smithsonian catalog number ET982, NMNH)

enous people themselves, it becomes increasingly difficult to grasp the richness and complexity of the hunters' worlds as discerned through artifacts and museum exhibits. The insights and wisdom derived from centuries of intimate knowledge and experience on the land now exists as a much impoverished and fragmentary corpus. In Labrador, the 1918 influenza pandemic devastated Inuit communities and savaged Innu camps, killing off a generation of story-

tellers and tribal elders and often leaving camps where only children and dogs survived. Soon, much of what remains of this specialized knowledge will only reside in libraries, museum collections, and in the clues that archaeologists might deduce. However, there is yet a great potential for the practice of archaeology in the north to be informed by the knowledge and perceptions of elders, the last people to be born in snow houses and tents and to have spent much of their lives as subsistence hunters and seamstresses. The sense of urgency is palpable, as the stock of elders' knowledge and perceptions is not renewable and will not be with us much longer. Subsistence strategies are being replaced by the market economy; communal social relations predicated on reciprocity and kinship are subordinated by government mandates and initiatives. The problem can be framed in a global perspective of diminishing ecological, biological, and cultural diversity. All of which begs the question: How important are "old ways" and "traditional subsistence practices" in the modern world?

In Labrador, as elsewhere in the north, today's Innu and Inuit youth are village-dwellers. Born in hospitals and brought up in isolated rural towns, northern young people have few opportunities to acquire country experiences and knowledge. There is a huge discrepancy between the past as experienced by their grandparents and the present. However well-meaning Canadian government policies may have been in advancing schooling, health care, and old-age pensions, the results have often been disastrous (Samson, 2003; Shkilnyk, 1985). Suicide rates in Labrador Innu communities are the highest recorded in the world and substance abuse is rampant (Samson et al., 1999). Fueled by chronic unemployment and inappropriate educational development, the impoverishment of village life—devoid of country values and skills with its concomitant package of social, health and economic woes—is striking in comparison to ethnohistorical accounts which invariably describe the Innu as arrogant, self-sufficient, "tiresomely" independent, and proud (Cabot, 1920; Cooke, 1979).

### KNOWLEDGE REPATRIATION AND ARCHAEOLOGY

In this situation, Smithsonian cultural research in the north becomes a component in the communities' response to the current heritage crisis and social dissolution. For the past decade, in close collaboration with Native elected officials, community leaders, and teachers, the Arctic Studies Center has pioneered community archaeology programs in Labrador with Inuit and Innu communities

(Loring, 1998; Loring and Rosenmeier, 2005). These programs have sought to develop archaeological field-schools that would provide Native youth with opportunities to experience life in the country, acquire new job skills, and foster self-esteem and pride in oneself and one's heritage. This type of enterprise, generally called "community archaeology," especially as it is practiced in the north, is rooted in applied socially conscious advocacy anthropology. In addition to addressing the special scholarly questions that archaeologists commonly pose, community archaeology seeks additional goals that strive to empower and engage communities in the recognition and construction of their own heritage. In the north in general, and in Labrador specifically, community archaeology initiatives celebrate

traditional values and share a research focus and practice that is responsible for creating and returning knowledge to communities (Lyons, 2007; Nicholas, 2006; Nicholas and Andrews, 1997), in a sense coming full circle since the years of the first IPY.

Perhaps the most important facet of community archaeology as practiced in Labrador is that it is situated outside the settlements, in the country where the knowledge, wisdom, and experience of elders is relevant and apparent (Figures 9 and 10). Fieldwork based on mutual respect and sharing among families, generations, and visiting researchers honors and encourages indigenous knowledge and different ways of knowing. The practice of community archaeology with the Innu in Nitassinan is culturally



**FIGURE 9.** No longer the exclusive domain of professional researchers, archaeology in the north has become a cooperative initiative between local community interests and visiting researchers. Here, community activist and former Innu Nation president Daniel Ashini, left, accompanied by Dominique Pokue, survey the ruined shorelines of former Lake Michikamats during an Innu Nation-sponsored archaeological survey of the region in 1995. (S. Loring photograph)

situated experiential education and has an important subsistence component. An awareness of animals—especially caribou—trumps the mechanics of fieldwork: Survey is as much scouting for game as it is searching for the sites where ancestors lived and hunted. The acquisition of game is an integral part of the fieldwork as young people prepare their own trap lines, catch fish, and learn from elders how to prepare food and pay proper respect to animals (Loring, 2001b; 2008). And in contrast to the practice of archaeology in the strictly scientific paradigm, the lessons of community archaeology—sharing resources and interpretations and communal decision making—could be neatly summed as “don’t be bossy, don’t be greedy.” Beyond expanding an awareness and appreciation of in-

digenous knowledge and values, Smithsonian archaeology today is about being socially responsible, recognizing that the present is connected to the past, and celebrating indigenous heritage and land tenure.

## CONCLUSIONS

Around the campfire or next to the tent stove, the conversation about archaeology with Native participants is tumbled together with thoughts of the weather, caribou, and seals; of the places where one went hunting, berry picking, or fishing; and of the old places where ancestors and supernatural creatures once lived. New directions



**FIGURE 10.** Coming full-circle in the production of knowledge about northern people and their history community archaeology returns knowledge to a local setting. Working with local youth, and informed by knowledgeable elders, such initiatives serve to celebrate and respect the continuity and experiences of Native northern hosts. Here, visiting elders from Makkovik interpret architectural features at the mid-eighteenth-century Labrador Inuit village site at Adlavik (GgBq-1) in 2002. With them is Lena Onalik (right) from Makkovik, the first professional Inuk archaeologist from Nunatsiavut. (Central Coast of Labrador Archaeological Project photo)

in the practice of archaeology in the north recognize the legitimacy of life “in the country.” Because of different ways of thinking about the past, explaining the past is a basic operating assumption predicated on respect of the cultures and traditions of the people on who live (or used to live) on the land (Lorde, 1981). This collaborative approach of northern anthropological research, predicated on repatriation, recognition, and respect, suggests that the future of the past is likely to re-imagine the cultural and physical landscape of the Arctic in wholly new ways. With the passing of the last vestiges of humanity’s hunting heritage, future generations will need to derive new sources for inspiration. Northern Native involvement with Arctic science might be thought to have begun with the collaboration and insights provided to early explorers and collectors, including those affiliated with the First IPY in 1882–1883. The increased awareness of the value and acuity of native knowledge and perception has radically transformed the social construction of northern science as the interests and concerns of researchers and indigenous residents alike come to share an interest in the ecological and behavioral consequences of life at high latitudes and a concern for understanding both the past and the future.

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