WHAT DO INUIT DRAWINGS MEAN TO NISGA'A CHILDREN?

by

Yuka Izu

B.A., Tsuda University, 1999

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

FIRST NATIONS STUDIES

THE UNIVERSTIY OF NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

November 2002

APPROVAL

Name: Yuka Izu

Degree: Master of Arts

Thesis Title: WHAT DO INUIT DRAWINGS MEAN TO NISGA'A CHILDREN?

Examining Committee:

Chair: Dr. Robert W. Tait
Dean of Graduate Studies
UNBC

Supervisor: Dr. Antonia Mills
Associate Professor, First Nations Studies Program
UNBC

Committee Member: Margo Greenwood, MA
Assistant Professor, Social Work Program
UNBC

Committee Member: Dr. Heather Harris
Assistant Professor, First Nations Studies Program
UNBC

External Examiner: Edith Turner, MA
Lecturer, Anthropology Department
University of Virginia – Charlottesville VA, USA

Date Approved: November 25, 2002

Abstract

This thesis documents interviews with five Nisga'a children about five Inuit drawings which were selected from the University of Northern British Columbia collection of Inuit art. The thesis asks whether the drawings spoke to the children and whether their views were influenced by the Nisga'a cultural and natural environment and traditional values, as well as by their intuitive perception. The Nisga'a children shared their appreciation of the drawings and their sense of connection with the animals through the interviews. Their response reflects their understanding of traditional values expressed in the Inuit drawings. These values suggest the significance of First Nations connection with the land, which validates Nisga'a resilience to the challenges for maintaining their traditional ties to the land. The conversations between the Nisga'a children and me happened in a cross-cultural context. Inspired by a phenomenological approach, I include my leaning process as a part of the thesis. This process indicates the importance of learning different perspectives when communicating and the complexity of working from my appreciation of Inuit art to understand the Nisga'a children's appreciation of the Inuit art. In effect, the interviews with the Nisga'a children reveal another way of interpreting the Inuit drawings, and the value of the drawings in promoting communication across cultures.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to express my great thanks to Dr. Antonia Mills, my supervisor, for your patience, understanding, efficient help, and constant support and encouragement throughout my entire degree process and learning journey. I would not have been able to survive the difficult and frustrating thesis process without you. You gave me the best reason and motivation for completing this thesis. I want to give my special thanks to a relaxed and comfortable atmosphere that you offered in the "academic world." Your kindness and smile cheered me up. Your sympathy and sensitivity consoled me when I, as an international student, needed understanding. Your enthusiasm towards my thesis and ideas gave me confidence.

Thank you, my committee members; Margo Greenwood and Heather Harris. I appreciated your patience, understanding and inspiration during my learning process. Thank you, my lovely external examiner, Edie Turner. I appreciated your sincere interest towards my thesis. Having you as an external examiner was my honor.

Thank you, Mrs. Deanna Nyce, Nisga'a children, the Nisga'a school teachers, and Nisga'a people in the Nass Valley. Without Deanna Nyce's assistance I would not have been able to interview the children in the Gitwinsilkw School You were all very helpful and generous. My best memories of the Nisga'a and the Nass Valley come from you. I truly enjoyed the experience of learning what the Nisga'a children had to say. Their spontaneity and enthusiasm cheered me. The experience of being with them is one of my most treasured memories of my experience at UNBC.

Thank you, my Canadian family, Ron and Dee Neukomm for your warm support, unselfish help, and sincere encouragement. Your love and caring has always made me feel good about myself, even when I was not doing well with my schoolwork. I am grateful for your introducing me to Special Olympics. Through the experience of being involved with it I want to say,

Thank you to all the special girls that I have worked with in the Special Olympics. Your beautiful smiles and attitudes towards challenges have inspired me. I learned from you that life is about joy and fun and that a challenge makes it much more fun.

And thank you very much, my family in Japan. I greatly appreciated your unconditional love and support for me from Japan.

Thank you all my great friends that I have made since I became a graduate student at UNBC. Thank you for sharing my frustrations and joy in life. Thank you for being so thoughtful, caring, cheerful, warm, and inspiring. There are too many of you to list you names here. All of you are my treasure; you are worth as much as my Master's degree.

Thank you my spiritual father for your unconditional love.

Thank you Great Spirit for giving me this great opportunity to learn to be appreciative of all the people I needed and for all the experiences that I needed for my soul journey. Also thank you in advance for your blessings on my continuous life path. Great thanks and admiration to my great guru, Paramahansa Yogananda, for your wisdom and blessing that have filled me and will fill me with a sense of happiness and gratitude.

MANY THANKS TO YOU ALL for reminding me of unlimited greatness and love of Great Spirit. My interactions with everyone have enriched my life and expressed the value of life during the entire thesis process.

Dedicated to the Nisga'a children, Harvey Wells,
Keilani Morgan, Paulina Robinson, Rayline Adams,
Tara Robinson, and to the Inuit artists.
You are the essence of the study.

Chapter One:

Introduction

The Dancing Bear

I have been interested in Inuit art ever since I first saw an Inuit carving in the Canadian Embassy in Japan. The carving was a dancing bear; the surface of the stone was smoothly polished and shining enchantingly. The bear was animated, and it appeared as if it would start moving. It entranced me and made me feel that the spirit of the bear spoke to me. While many works of art convey the artist's spirit to their viewers, few allow the spirit of the artwork itself to speak so powerfully as the carved bear did to me. I found this to be unique to Inuit art and so became interested in Inuit artists.

The Inuit traditionally live in the Arctic from the Arctic coastal regions of Alaska, all the way to the eastern Arctic shores of Canada, and in parts of Greenland. Inuit art appeared in the world art market in the late 1950's with the help of James Houston and has been promoted through commercialization (Hessel 1998). Since commercialization, Inuit art, including carving, printmaking and drawing, has generated an increasing appreciation from people all over the world (Houston 1999, Paci 1996). Adopting modern technology and specialized tools and paper from western cultures, Inuit artists have expressed more freedom in styles in new art forms than in traditional art. The Inuit artists have also incorporated Japanese traditional printing methods. It is interesting that the Japanese traditional technique allowed the Inuit artists to express their values.

Even though some critics say that Inuit printmaking is not authentic because it is not traditional, the increasing number of lovers of Inuit art suggests that Inuit art speaks to

people. While employing modern techniques like other western art, what makes Inuit art unique is the Inuit expression of their worldview, and I believe that it is one of the aspects in Inuit art that people appreciate. By using modern tools that are familiar to modern people, Inuit art makes it possible to communicate Inuit views to a broader audience.

What in Inuit Art Spoke to Me?

The carved bear spoke to me with its dynamic expression of life. I felt that the Inuit artist admired the bear's power and life. I imagined that the Inuit artist created the carving, absorbed in and in tune with the bear. The artist thus made the carved bear speak to me.

Inuit art is active, alive and interactive. It expresses the sacred circle of life, which embraces Inuit artists and animals, and the viewer. This process reminds me of the shamanic role of art, which communicates to people through "a secret language" (Eliade 1974:96) and teaches the spiritual quality and the essence of life. It appears to me that Inuit art suggests this essence of life. The message is suggestive, yet it reaches the core of my heart.

An increasing number of Japanese audiences are inspired by Inuit art. People admire the Inuit values of nature that are forgotten in contemporary materialist society (Canadian Embassy in Japan 1994). Inuit art allows Japanese people to recall their traditional values which see a close connection between humans and the natural world. I became interested in this reaction of Japanese people to Inuit art. The essential values in Inuit art might have spoken to Japanese people, teaching them what their spirit appreciates.

Japanese Appreciation of Inuit Art: Traditional Values of Animals

Japanese traditional values have been cultivated through various beliefs, such as an indigenous way of life, Shintoism, Buddhism, and Zen Buddhism. Today's Japanese perspectives on animals are also strongly influenced by those beliefs. Buddhism teaches that

people need to respect the lives of other living beings as their souls have the same qualities as human beings' and we equally share the land. Influenced by Buddhism, up until the late 19th century, the vast majority of Japanese did not eat meat or slaughter four-legged animals (Japan: An Illustrated Encyclopedia 2000:273). Even though the Japanese started to eat meat after late 19th century, it is reasonable to assume that people's views of animals still remain to some extent.

Japanese perspectives on animals have been shaped largely through two factors: natural and environmental conditions, as well as traditional and imported cultural influences (Japan: An Illustrated Encyclopedia 2000). The imported cultural influences include the Chinese year system which count years as a twelve-year-cycle according to the twelve different animals. Even today many Japanese people think that they have a special relationship with the animals which represent their birth year. Influences of natural and environmental conditions appear in Japanese folklore dealing with animals and talking about their spiritual interactions with human beings. This folklore developed into various beliefs about animals and animal spirits. Some animals, such as a fox, turtle, crane, and dragon, have been enshrined and worshiped. They were believed to have protective powers. People still often visit shrines to pay respect to the animals. Some animals are still feared for their ghostlike, mysterious power (Japan: An Illustrated Encyclopedia 2000). There are also many superstitions related to animals.

Japanese Aesthetics Influenced by the Values of *Shizen*

The indigenous views on nature are related to people's perspectives of animals. "*Shizen,*" meaning "nature" in Japanese, traditionally symbolizes "the power of spontaneous self-development and what results from that power" (Japan: An Illustrated Encyclopedia

2000:17). This view is associated with the belief in animism, which is the "belief in the existence of a spiritual life in natural objects, natural phenomena, and the universe itself that is capable of exercising an influence on human beings" (Japan: An Illustrated Encyclopedia 2000: 269). The ancient Japanese people recognized every phenomenon as a manifestation of the *kami* (god or gods) and revered them as such. The heaven and the earth and all living things that represent this manifestation were *shizen* and *kami*. Human beings were not considered to be superior to any other living beings and were also part of *shizen*. *Shizen* as a concept keeps a perfect balance and meaning: it contains the whole world including all living beings. Such beliefs have continued to endow the Japanese relationship to nature with a particular spiritual quality.

I believe that Japanese people like and admire Inuit art because they agree with the Inuit way of representing animals. In some regions in Japan people see bears as sacred. Japanese people might have felt a sense of sacredness towards the carved bear as I did.

Traditional Japanese aesthetics based on the values of *shizen* reflects Japanese people's appreciation of art. I believe that this aesthetics is somewhat related to their appreciation of Inuit art. According to Japan: An Illustrated Encyclopedia,

> In traditional Japanese aesthetics the distance between art and nature was considerably shorter than in its Western counterpart. The mystery of nature could never be presented through description, however: it could only be suggested, and the terser the suggestion, the greater its effectiveness (*Japan: An Illustrated Encyclopedia* 2000:17).

The suggestive, intuitive, and communicative effect of art has been developed as part of the Zen practice and has created Zen art. Zen art emphasizes simplicity as a symbolic representation and demands imagination and intuition from the viewers. Zen regards beauty as something incomplete, which indicates something that can be completed with the help of

one's imagination. "An artistically created void is an important idea in ancient aesthetic speculations" (Japan: An Illustrated Encyclopedia 2000:15).

Inuit art has a similar quality to Zen art. Inuit art, by symbolically representing its theme, "suggests," rather than explains. Inuit art thus enhances people's imagination and communicates to them in such a way where people's own interpretation becomes part of the meaning of the art. People appreciate Inuit art all the more because they can link expressions of Inuit art to their life and values.

How the Japanese Are Losing their Values of *Shizen*

Traditionally, learning of Japanese values centers on the individual's connection with the land. *Shizen* was our teacher. Without any text or bible, but through everyday interaction in life, it has taught us our heritage of maintaining a balance in *shizen* and to pass it down to the next generation. The rules taught through the connection with *shizen* functioned as an unwritten law, becoming an indigenous way of life: Shinto. People have expressed their faith by practicing rituals, festivals, and everyday offerings and prayers at shrines (Kamata 2000). Edwin O. Reischauer, a professor of Japanese history at Harvard, says about Shinto, "It expressed an attitude of joyful acceptance of life and a feeling of closeness to nature" (Reischauer 1993:242). Lafcadio Hearn, the novelist who loved Japan, describes Shinto:

> There seems to be a sense of divine magic in the very atmosphere, through all the luminous day, brooding over the vapory land, over the ghostly blue of the flood—a sense of Shinto (Eastman 1993:237).

Today, many Japanese people forget Shinto beliefs under the influence of materialism (Kamata and Kina 1999). Most of the customs, ceremonies, and festivals which reflect Shinto beliefs are now commercialized and lose their true meanings. People have thus lost the home where their spirits can truly rest.

The shift from spiritually-oriented life to materially-oriented life has created a tremendous change in the life-style of Japanese children. In Japan today only a few children have an opportunity to have a connection with nature. Many natural areas are destroyed under the name of development. Japanese parents encourage their children to study rather than to play outside. I believe that most Japanese people forget that spirituality is an important part of human life and that it is developed greatly through the connection with the natural world.

My family liked to travel, and I had many opportunities to appreciate the beauty and gratefulness of *shizen.* Although living in the suburbs of Tokyo, I had many places like bushes and parks in which to play. I was allowed to play in the natural areas as much as I wanted. The bush around my house was a kingdom for the imagination. I realize that this connection cultivated throughout my childhood become an important part of my spirituality. I like to feel the breeze on my face, and I sense the seasons by their smell. Every little discovery of a natural mystery gives birth to a new joy of life. I like to observe many living things, from tiny insects to animals living in the wilderness. I feel most relaxed in nature. My heart becomes peaceful and calm when I am surrounded by the natural sounds of leaves, birds, and winds.

It is natural for me to imagine that all living things share the land and the blessings from the earth, including water, soil, and the sun. I appreciate this beautiful sharing of the earth with a great sense of awe and sacredness. *Shizen* is my home and my life where I can connect to our ancestor's wisdom. I believe that this spirituality allows me to appreciate Inuit art, receiving a suggested message of the essence of life, and to remember how much I missed feeling that connection in urban life.

Japanese Urban Children's Spiritual Crises

After the Meiji period (late 19th), the Western concept of nature, signifying the natural order, came to be attached to *shizen* (*Japan: An Illustrated Encyclopedia* 2000:19) and then became dominant. In my opinion, the introduction of Western concepts and the process of modernization have influenced the Japanese view of the natural world.

The Japanese government has started to focus on industrialization and modernization, and as a result, people have become occupied with monetary values and left behind their contemplation and appreciation of nature. Following the Western way of understanding the human and nature relationship, people started to see nature as a resource to be exploited. As Japanese people began to destroy their natural world without any concern, they started to lose traditional values, which was the most important part of their spirituality.

Japanese children are probably the most serious victims of this modernization. Recently news reports children's crimes, murders, and suicides every day, and these matters have become a social problem in Japan. It seems to me that Japanese children feel disillusioned and stressed in society. Some believe that the current education system is responsible (Kamata and Kina 1999:87). Materialism places a monetary value on life and encourages an education which primarily promotes success in business. While this will help people to make a living, this does not allow children to learn the real value of life through contacts with the natural world (Kahn 1999). Most of the urban Japanese children are forced to go to cram schools to enter a prestigious junior high school, high school, and university to satisfy their parents.

I strongly believe through my experiences that the natural world is significant for proper development of children's spirituality and that it is how people learn how to develop

love and care for other living beings. This learning occurs especially during childhood, when humans are most sensitive to the world. It is unfortunate that most urban children miss this learning. In any culture, children are a key to the future; they are an indicator of where humans are going and should go. Japanese children who get lost warn that Japanese society itself is getting lost.

Journey to Regain the Lost Values

When I noticed that my spirituality disagreed with the pace of contemporary Japanese society, I went on a journey looking for a place where it can develop. Inspired by Inuit art, I became interested in the First Nations beliefs. Before I came to Canada, I had various opportunities to meet with First Nation people and to learn about their cultures. I listened to oral stories, joined in their dancing and singing, and prayed with them in their ceremonies. I experienced various aspects of their culture and found many similarities between us. One of my Aboriginal friends said, "We are brothers and sisters." We are somewhat similar, including appearances and ways of thinking. We confirmed to each other that we were at risk of losing our spirituality, but now was the time to help each other to rebuild it and to spread the message that all human beings are brothers and sisters to the rest of the world.

Like *shizen,* the First Nations concept of nature expresses a vast idea which the "Western term *nature* seems incapable of enfolding" (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992: 16). First Nations people are "generally considered to possess distinctive cultures----in which, at least traditionally, they have a profound and deeply rooted sense of place and relationship with the entirety of the natural world" (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992:8-9). The Japanese indigenous religion, Shinto, and First Nations beliefs are both based on a view, which sees a living spirit in everything in nature, and on the fundamental values of living in harmony and balance with

nature (Kamata 2000, Kamata and Kina 1999, Eastman 1993, Nisga'a Language and Culture Department School District No.92 1996). This is termed an animistic view in Anthropology.

I remember that I felt a strong sense of closeness to the Inuit, when I saw pictures of them for the first time. They look like the Japanese. The characteristics of their faces are almost identical. Also I learned that we share many traditional spiritual beliefs. We are truly brothers and sisters who have grown up together under the same Mother and Father, but who live separately, following a different path. Suffering from difficult tasks in society, both of us strive for spiritual and cultural survival on our given lands assigned to us by Mother Earth. While the Ainu are officially called the indigenous people in Japan, many aspects of our custom and culture reflect an Animistic spirituality. The spirit of our indigenous ancestors still lives in and through me and many Japanese people who perceive our ancestor's spirituality through the land, shrines, and temples.

As urban Japanese society lost touch with the natural world and came to have less appreciation for their traditional views on *shizen,* we lost identity as animistic people by becoming not only "civilized" but industrialized. This "civilization" has made Japan a prosperous country but it also has allowed people to forget about the importance of their spiritual background. The famous French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss has stated, "A primitive people is not a backward or retarded people; indeed it may possess a genius for invention or action that leaves the achievements of civilized peoples far behind" (Roch 1974:7). I agree with this statement because being primitive, being natural, and being part of *shizen,* touches the essential meaning of life and wisdom of life. I believe that through this wisdom people can reach Truth that civilization cannot attain.

Although materialism has influenced every culture and has changed people's lifestyles, I did not believe a spiritual crisis would affect the First Nation people, especially children in Canada to the same extent it did the Japanese children. In Canada there remains a great deal of wilderness providing children with an environment to maintain their connection with the land. Non-First Nations people have gained increasing awareness of First Nations wisdom and have asked First Nations Elders for advice concerning traditional knowledge and wisdom about the land (Durning 1992, Knudtson and Suzuki 1995).

After I came to Canada, I realized that all Aboriginal traditional ways of life have been affected and drastically changed after contact with Western world (Alfred 1999, Deloria 1994). Learning about First Nations people's frustration over cultural loss, anger at the mainstream's lack of respect for their rights, and disappointment in those of their own people who have turned their backs on tradition (Alfred 1999) discouraged me who dreamt of learning about Aboriginal spirituality. What I learned was that a severe reality confronted First Nations people, and it was not something that I had imagined and expected. However, on the other hand, Aboriginal movements for cultural revival are powerful. It was inspiring to see many Aboriginal people are on a healing journey, asking for guidance from their respected Elders. Many words of the Aboriginal Elders and leaders have quenched my spiritual thirst, reassuring my belief in the importance of traditional wisdom. Deloria (1994: 236-237) says:

> The fundamental question facing tribal religions is whether the old days can be relived--- whether, in fact, the very existence of an Indian community in the modern electronic world does not require a massive task of relating traditional religious values and beliefs to the phenomena presenting themselves.

Taiaiake Alfred (1999), a leading Mohawk scholar and activist, in *Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto*, talks about the importance of traditional teaching for Native communities to heal their present divisions, resist assimilation, and forge new relationships of respect and equality with the mainstream society. He says:

> We have a responsibility to recover, understand, and preserve these values, not only because they represent unique contribution to the history of ideas, but because renewal of respect for traditional values is the only lasting solution to the political, economic, and social problems that beset our people. To bring those roots to new fruition, we must reinvigorate the principles embedded in the ancient teachings, and use them to address our contemporary problems (Alfred 1999:5).

Aboriginal people have begun to appreciate the traditional wisdom as a means to recover the values in the modern world (Alfred 1999, Deloria 1994). Atsenhaienton, a Kanien'kehaka, who has been a leading spokesman for the Kanien'kehaka people at the international level, answering Alfred's question of whether a traditional value system is essential for the future, says:

> I think it's essential. How can we call ourselves 'Mohawks' without it? It's part of our culture. Mind you, culture evolves, and I'm not saying that the *Kaienerekowa* is set in stone or that we can't change it. I reject that, because culture does evolve. But there are certain fundamental principles: using reason and a good mind, not using sharp words, etc... Those are basic things that we should hang on to. But some of the other structures have to evolve to fit our modern society. I think this really is essential, because otherwise we're down the road to being assimilated. If [we] lose our traditional values, then we're just brown-skinned Canadians (Alfred 1999: 105).

Art has served as one of the most effective means for aboriginal people to express their culture and traditional values (Bouchard 2000, Gibson 1996). While aboriginal art has not remained static and has been influenced and changed in both theme, mode of production and audience, it has kept communicating the essential principal of the traditional values to which people can go back. In the same way Inuit art serves as a mediator which communicates Inuit traditional values to the modern world.

What in Inuit Drawings Communicates to Nisga'a Children?

I decided to examine First Nations children's responses to Inuit art for my research study. My main interests were to see if Inuit art would communicate to non-Inuit First Nations children and what in Inuit art would speak to the children. What speaks to people in Inuit art reflects personal values, and I thought that this exercise would reveal children's views of the world. Even though I was initially interested in working with urban children in Japan, considering that I am enrolled in a master's program in First Nations Studies in Canada, I decided to work with Canadian First Nations children in a rural area.

I oriented my study to see how rural First Nations children's rich cultural and natural environment would influence their views, and to see how the environment would potentially create a difference in children's values between urban children and rural children. My thesis presumes that closeness to the natural world and a traditional animal connection are intimately related with a better appreciation of natural and animal themes in Inuit art.

I decided to interview Nisga'a children of Gitwinksihlkw in British Columbia concerning Inuit art. Gitwinksihlkw was selected as the community to participate in my research because it is located relatively close to the University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC), and there are also important contacts between the Gitwinksihlkw community and UNBC. I had an opportunity to be introduced to Mrs. Deanna Nyce who is Tsimshian/ Nisga'a and CEO of The Wilp Wilxo'oskwhil Nisga'a (Nisga'a House of Wisdom, WWN) through my supervisor, Dr. Antonia Mills. Mrs. Nyce has provided me with meaningful advice and help while kindly accommodating me during my interviews.

Nisga'a culture was influenced after contact like other Aboriginal cultures. However, the Nisga'a have demonstrated their resilience in maintaining their culture through the

challenges in forming a treaty, in building a self-government, and in creating their own educational system. Following the Nisga'a traditional teaching from their ancestors, they have survived to become a powerful symbol of rebirth and renewal for many of the First Nations of the world (Nisga'a Tribal Council 1993). Their lives, their culture and their continued existence as a people are completely tied to the land in the area in which their ancestors have lived since time immemorial (Nisga'a Tribal Council 1992). I believe that Nisga'a spirituality has survived through their struggles, and that their cultural movement and continuous connection to the land affect their children's spirituality in a positive way.

The idea for my research plan came to me when I heard that the UNBC library carries a collection of Inuit art donated by Mr. Ray Anderson. I also had the opportunity to listen to a talk given by him at UNBC. A retired diplomat, he is also a long-time collector of Inuit art. One of his main aspirations concerning Inuit art is that it be shown to children so that they can share in the Inuit worldview. He believes that Inuit art is very influential and that it will speak to children's hearts and minds. I found this notion fascinating and intuitively agreed with his belief: children would find a great joy in Inuit art.

Since the UNBC library collection has many copies of Inuit drawings available for loan, I decided to use them. Even though UNBC has a collection of Inuit carvings, one of the most famous forms of Inuit art, they did not agree with the idea that I would take them out for my interviews, mainly because of the difficulties in transportation and fear that they might be damaged. Therefore, I decided on Inuit drawings as a representation of Inuit art.

Although Inuit drawings are relatively new compared to other forms of Inuit art, they vividly express the Inuit worldview in a more free and creative fashion than any other style. The tool for drawing is a felt pen, which is familiar to the children; possibly making them

feel more comfortable and allowing them to speak more freely. I created a process where five drawings from the collection were shown to the children, and the children were asked to comment on each drawing (The five drawings are shown in Appendix A). The five drawings were selected after consultation with my committee members. We chose the ones which depicted animals in more than a representational way.

I hope that my learning and research will serve to enlighten people about the evocative spirituality contained within Inuit drawings and their interpretation by the relative innocence of young minds. I also hope that my work will encourage people to once again open themselves up to contemplate the significant meaning of our surrounding natural world and the fundamental values of Inuit art.

Methodology

Cross-cultural Perspective

This study covers cross-cultural realms. Whole ideas and interpretations in this thesis reflect my cultural background as a Japanese person. Even though literature by First Nations people is reviewed, First Nations values are translated and represented through my perspective. However, I attempt to stand on a neutral territory where I believe that all humans can share the essence of life and can learn to appreciate each other with respect through our cultural diversity. I imagine that the interconnectedness of all lives embraces all cultures and all peoples and helps to keep us in balance. As a human being, I would like to learn from First Nations people and children with respect and understanding as if I was learning from my own family. This flexible and respectful learning also allows me to appreciate any feedback from people. A Japanese Shinto philosopher, Kamata (2000: 4-5) says that "a

divine arrangement" allows people of different beliefs and cultures to connect with each other. The basic human values of nature that are shared among various beliefs (Kamata 2000) contribute to this divine arrangement. I believe that it is our Mother's arrangement to let her children unite again. While peoples are all unique and different, I believe that they can share many important values through understanding and respect. Through discussions of differences and similarities between cultures, this thesis demonstrates what diversity means to the world and its people.

Phenomenological Approach

This thesis consists of interactive communication: the interview is based on the conversation between the Nisga'a children and me. I, as an interviewer, am involved in the context of the conversation. My observation and discussion promoted through my lenses is reflexive and personal. This type of approach is called phenomenology and seen in some Anthropological work.

Phenomenology emphasizes a focus on people's subjective experiences and interpretations of the world (Rubin and Babbie 1993). It is an approach to examine and describe a phenomenon as it is experienced (Beck 1992). Following this approach, my research seeks on "to understand people from their own perspective to understand their feelings, their views of reality, and the ... meanings of [their experiences] to them" (Rubin and Babbie 1993: 362)

Phenomenology frames all qualitative approaches, including ethnography. It is found in the work of some ethnographers who practice fieldwork with Aboriginal people, such as in the Turner's (1996) study about healing among the Inupiat of Alaska, and in the work among the Dene Tha by Goulet (1998). In fieldwork a reflexive observer apprehends himself or

herself as his or her "own instrument of observation" (Lévi-Strauss 1976:36), and the observer "must learn to know himself, to obtain from a *self* who reveals himself as *another* to *I* who uses him, an evaluation which will become an integral part of the observation of other selves" (Lévi-Strauss 1976:36; emphasis in original). To be a good observer requires communication and interaction between the hearts of human beings. My research starts from being a person, not from a theory.

Considering the Dene view of knowledge and learning, Goulet (1998: xxxi) says, "Knowledge would be personal knowledge derived from experience." Learning is an interactive process. Goulet (1998: xxxiii) also says that "the Dene expect the anthropologist to learn as they themselves learn: first from personal experience, second by observation of people who know how to do things." Ruchforth (1992: 488) adds third "informally by hearing mystical, historical, or personal narratives" (Rushforth 1992: 488). This personal process appears poetically or artistically and reaches across people to each other: "the most traditional position that we can take as anthropologists, and take it we must, is to imagine the democracy of this new aesthetic space where poetic voices reach across to one another and where they contend and converse" (Rose 1991: 300). Knudtson and Suzuki (1992: 185) describe:

> The most fruitful dialogue between Native and Western modes of thought will take place not under the scorching light of scholarly Western intellectual analysis but individually and internally. *Within* individual human minds, through mental and emotional processes of personal transformation that take place as culturally different ideas and values collide. *Without* the need for any final "proof," mutual exclusion, or conclusive "conquest" of one tradition's vision over the other [emphasis in original].

This thesis portrays my personal experience and soul searching. I listen and observe with my heart, think with my mind, and speak as who I am. I try to be an instrument,

receiving other selves, while allowing them to echo with myself. Thus I approach this study to share my experience with people.

Decolonizing Methodology: Interviewing First Nations Children

This thesis challenges colonizing methodologies, by introducing my view and a First Nation's view on First Nations art through the Nisga'a children's way of looking at Inuit art, and also by discussing First Nations spirituality.

First I need to situate the selection of Inuit art. The selection of Inuit art works in exhibitions usually reflects curators' views, and since there is no Inuit curator today, Inuit art had been represented and promoted based on views affected by western aesthetics (Bouchard 2000). Therefore, Inuit artists desire to have Inuit curators in order to represent their voices in their ways of representation (Mitchell 1997b). The film "Atanarjuat the Fast Runner" (2002), directed by the Inuit Zacharias Kunuk, is an example of Inuit representation of their culture. The film which describes Inuit traditional values has spoken to a large audience.

The Inuit have a different value for "art," and so do other First Nations people. To allow their art to communicate their message, their values need to be understood and appreciated.

Well-known Inuit artist William Noah raised the issue of curatorial control and noted that "in many cases the works valued by southern communities are not the works most admired by Inuit artists and their communities" (Mitchell 1997b: 5).

> Not only do Inuit have a lot in common with Western artists, but they are part of a global movement of indigenous people asserting their right to take control over the content and direction of their artwork and, furthermore, to have a voice in how it is represented to the public, a *foreign* public (Mitchell 1997b: 11).

Linda Smith, Maori scholar, in *Decolonizing Methodologies* says:

> Representation of indigenous peoples by indigenous people is about countering the dominant society's image of indigenous peoples, their life styles and belief systems. It is also about proposing solutions to the real-life dilemmas that indigenous communities confront and trying to capture the complexities of being indigenous (Smith 1999:151).

Art is an important part of this decolonizing project (Smith 1999). Mitchell says (1997b:14), "Canadian Indians may be getting their message across through their art more powerfully than with blockades, if only because art is supposed to be neutral territory." I would like to interpret "neutral territory" as an environment where people can experience their responses to the images free from prejudices based on indifference and ignorance about different cultures. I suggest that Inuit art evokes viewers' intuition cross-culturally. The Nisga'a children who participated in this study demonstrate that Inuit art communicates to them, allowing the children to appreciate Inuit values.

In my opinion, children live in a non-political "neutral territory" in general. They make friends easily regardless of any cultural, religious and racial differences. It appears to me that children are not afraid of such differences nor are they feel uncomfortable with; rather, such differences are something which stimulates their interest and desire to know. Pure acceptance towards new things allows things to work in the neutral territory that is free from a negative prejudice or judgment.

I believe that Nisga'a children would have a respectful attitude and interest towards Inuit drawings and thus would create a neutral environment to appreciate something that is perhaps culturally-affected but not negatively prejudiced. The children were encouraged to voice their thoughts in the interviews so that they can maintain their free space.

One of the themes in Inuit art, which the West has not understood or appreciated adequately, is Inuit spirituality. Concepts of spirituality have caused "difficult arguments for Western system of knowledge to deal with or accept" (Smith 1999: 74). Smith (ibid.) says:

> The values, attitudes, concepts and language embedded in beliefs about spirituality represent, in many cases, the clearest contrast and mark of difference between indigenous peoples and the West. It is one of the few parts of ourselves which the West cannot decipher, cannot understand and cannot control ...yet.

This thesis emphasizes spirituality, which centers in First Nations traditional values and which holds people together to revive their culture. Inuit spirituality permeates Inuit art, and it is this spirituality which I posit would speak to the Nisga'a children. I also would like to see how I, on behalf of the East can understand and interpret First Nations spirituality.

Ethics for Data Collection

To conduct interviews with Nisga'a children required ethics approval. I sent consent letters to the Gitwinksihlkw School, parents, and the Board of WWN in order for my research plan to be approved by the UNBC Ethics Committee. These letters include a request for permission to videotape and tape-record the interviews with the children, as well as permission to use the children's name in the thesis. The letters are provided in APPENDIX B. A copy of the interview audio tapes and videotapes will be submitted to WWN, so that they are available to the public as they wish.

Methodology for Data Analysis and Presentation

The answer to the research question 1: What do Inuit drawings mean to the Nisga'a children? is revealed throughout the interviews. I have documented the interviews in their

entirety in Chapter 4. I posit that what the Nisga'a children said about the Inuit drawings is exactly what the drawings meant to the Nisga'a children. This process demonstrates communication between the Inuit artists, the Nisga'a children and me, evoked by the Inuit drawings.

My remaining research questions are presented in the Chapter 2, and discussed in Chapter 3. In Chapter 5, I analyze the interviews based on research question 2: Do the Nisga'a children demonstrate their traditional values in their responses to Inuit drawing? There, I attempt to clarify the interview contexts developed through my interpretation. I draw conclusions through my process of reflection in Chapter 6.

Objective of this Thesis

This thesis seeks to discern how the Inuit drawings speak to the Nisga'a children, documenting Nisga'a children's interpretation of the Inuit drawings. This thesis shows that the Nisga'a children's interpretation reflects First Nations values, as well as Nisga'a values. I also talk that the Nisga'a children's values as reflecting not only their learned knowledge, but also their intuitive nature, seen through their imaginative, loving, and respectful manners. I would like to discuss that this intuitive quality which enables their appreciation for Inuit art, is a key to realizing tribal wisdom (Alfred 1999, Deloria 1999).

One of the purposes of documenting the entire interviews is to encourage others to make another interpretation of my interview data. Nisga'a people and Inuit people will look at the data in a different way. This thesis is written as my personal learning process, evoked by a conversation with the Nisga'a children.

Chapter Two:

Children's Intuitive Nature, Inuit Arts, Nisga'a Values

This chapter describes first, why I anticipated that a child's potential appreciation for Inuit drawings would flow from a child's intuitive connection with art and nature. I will then describe Inuit art, its history and its connection to Inuit values and Shamanism, the connection of these to Deep Ecology, and to First Nations philosophy in general. The decision to see how Nisga'a children responded to Inuit drawings was prompted by my assumption that Nisga'a, as other First Nations children, would respond to the shamanic or deeply interconnected views of animals, as those values underscore Nisga'a values as well.

Children

Children's Intuitive Nature

There is a saying in Japan which describes the Japanese view of children: "before seven, among the gods" (*nanatumade wa kami no uchi*). Among the various possible interpretations, the one most often adopted by modern writers is that children younger than seven years of age are innocent and pure (like the gods), so their doings are not to be punished (Arai 1992). As well as its educative meaning for parents regarding child rearing, the saying implies that children have an innate innocent nature, which reflects the *kami* (gods), and that they have a special ability of free communion with *kami*. This concept made me decide on the age of the children to show Inuit art to as between six to seven years old. I believe that children of these ages are able to express their feelings and thoughts in speech,

while they preserve an innocent and pure nature. This Japanese concept is also reflected in Inuit and other First Nation thought, and forms a part of the concepts of Deep Ecology.

The Western world also has thought that children can potentially commune easily with the natural world and universal wisdom. In the words of G. Stanley Hall, "oneness with Nature is the glory of Childhood; oneness with Childhood is the glory of the Teacher," or in the words of Wordsworth, "the Child is Father of the Man" (Chamberlain 1896:4).

Professor of Systematic Theology, D. Devries (2001), in her article describes the intrinsic worth of children as beings with deep spiritual insight. While discussing various spiritual qualities of children, she suggests to adults the significance of listening carefully to the voices of children and of incorporating children's insights into their understanding of Christian faith (Devries 2001). She says that children know more than the adults, for "God reveals to infants what is hidden from the learned" (Devries 2001:163). Their spiritual insight does not rest on their education but "on their openness to being vehicles for divine revelation" (Devries 2001: 163). Children have the intrinsic gifts of trust, curiosity, and openness to the wonders of life, and these gifts are not something learned through school. Consequently, "The child's perception of reality is valuable and provides a necessary corrective to the more measured perceptions of adulthood" (Devries 2001:167).

> Sometimes the complications and subtle distinctions that maturity brings to our perspective do not really clarify but rather blind us to the truth. The child sees things simply--- sometimes disarmingly so---and is prepared to speak straightforwardly about what she sees (Devries 2001: 172).

Even though Devries (Devries 2001) develops her theology of childhood in terms of Christian faith, her argument can apply to any world, faith, culture, or society. I argue that children's spiritual insight is in tune with universal truth, including *shizen, kami*, the Great Spirit, and God. Devries and I believe that they speak the truth, to which the adults are blind

because of their involvement in the complications of worldly and daily matters (Devries 2001).

Concerning the First Nations views of children and childhood, *Children of the First People* (Haegert 1983) introduces with vivid photo images the First Nations intimate connection with the land which their childhood establishes and which has strongly influenced their values of life. Children's intuitive nature allows them to relatively easily attain a sense of awe-inspiring interconnectedness of life that First Nations wisdom has taught.

Knudtson and Suzuki (1992: 185) say that The Native Mind includes intuitive understanding of the world:

> We will always need the Native Mind's vibrant images of a living world that can penetrate to the deepest and most heartfelt (what science calls "irrational" or intuitive") realms of human understanding. We need the Native Mind's bold assurance that while much of the universe is accessible to human sensibilities, it possesses dimensions that may remain forever beyond human logic and reason, and that the cosmic forces of mystery, chaos, and uncertainty are eternal (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992:185).

Children's intuitive nature possibly allows them to approach the world where "the cosmic forces of mystery, chaos, and uncertainty are eternal" (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992: 185) by being "active participants" (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992:11) in the natural world. It is through this intuition as well as through their cultural knowledge that Nisga'a children might appreciate Inuit traditional values expressed through Inuit art.

Children's intuitive and sensitive nature is respected by First Nations communities. Inuit society as countless other First Nations cultures around the world see children as "extraordinarily precious members of society," "alert, sensitive, and conscious of their surroundings" and "extraordinarily vulnerable to maltreatment or emotional abuse by adults

who refuse to give them the profound respect and affection to which they are unconditionally entitled" (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992)

This thought is embedded in a story about the transformations of frightened children to willow grouse. The story reflects the idea that the willow grouse, mirroring the children's own capacity for suffering, must therefore be treated with much the same compassion with which the adults would treat the children (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992). The Inuit believe that animals are endowed with the vitality, sentience, and sacredness inherent in their own human kin. The children have sensitivity similar to animals and serve as a reminder of the important kinship to animals (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992).

Children were thought to have a special ability to talk with animals. The theme of transformation from child to an animal, which is commonly seen in First Nations oral histories, suggests the child's spiritual nature. Chamberlain (1896), in *The Child and Childhood in Folk Thought: Study of the Activities and Influences of the Child among [Indigenous] Peoples, their Analogues and Survivals in the Civilization Today*, collected considerable accounts of indigenous beliefs all over the world concerning children. He discusses a relationship between a child and the animal world and mentions that there are "many Inuit tales in which children and animals are associated; very common are stories of children metamorphosed into birds and beasts" (Chamberlain 1896:190).

The Haida Indians in British Columbia have a story about children who transformed themselves into bears, seals, and birds (Chamberlain 1896:182). There are also several accounts which suggest that children have an ability to communicate with birds. The Nisga'a think of children as a gift or loan from the Great Spirit to be treated with the same respect that the Nisga'a have for the animals, since they are sacred (Nisga'a Tribal Council 1976,

1993). This belief illustrates that the Nisga'a identify children as connecting with animal spirits, power and wisdom.

Reincarnation beliefs seen among aboriginal communities support the discussion about children's spiritual nature (Mills and Slobodin 1994). The children who were born with a memory of their previous life are considered to be reborn from the ancestors, and children's speech is often identified with ancestor's speech in this context.

The Nisga'a strongly believe in reincarnation beliefs, and they think that children are born with the soul of an ancestor (Nisga'a Language and Culture Department School District No.92 [Nisga'a] 1996:158). This indicates that the Nisga'a respect children for having the wisdom of their ancestors. The children's spiritual nature emphasizes the importance of listening to children, who sometimes offer insight into the depth of ancestor's wisdom and the spiritual world.

According to Halifax (1982), Inuit Shamans listened to children who speak of what comes to them in a mysterious way. Halifax does not discuss this further, but this suggests that the Inuit Shamans believed that children have an ability which makes possible the communion with the animals and spiritual world. Saladin d'Anglure (1994) talks about the reincarnational aspect of Inuit children's behavior. The following account explains that the Inuit believe that the Inuit fetus is endowed with special and spiritual characteristics shared among children, animals, shamans, and supernatural beings:

> The Inuit fetus is considered as a miniature human endowed with consciousness and will, but psychologically fragile, unstable, susceptible, and versatile, characteristics shared with the spirits of the dead and with animals, as well as supernatural beings, dwarfs and giants, with children, and with shamans. Endowed with hypersensitivity, it hears, understands, smells, and sees (from the moment of birth) that which humans cannot see, smell, hear, or understand, the exception, of course, being the shaman (Saladin d'Anglure 1994:83).

Significance of Intuitive Perception

Intuition guides people to the right path on their spirit journey, giving them strength in their faith, such as traditional values. Intuition thus is the way to hold the wisdom and the truth (Devries 2001). Kawagley (1995: 18) says that people in quest of knowledge and the paths available for making a living and living a life need to seek it "through the use of the five physical senses, well sprinkled with intuition." Alfred (1999) also says that intuition is a key to holding traditional values. Intuition, as well as the ability to recognize it and to trust it, is important in trusting ourselves and our own choices made through our intuition and knowledge.

Inuit artists show their intuitive understanding of the world through appreciation of the shamanic theme. Shamanic insight allows people to be more in tune with Mother Earth and with the interconnectedness of all lives, and to develop and understand it requires intuition. Deloria suggests that only by using intuition human beings can communicate to animals and be part of creation:

> Unlike the religions of the Near East which see humanity as the supreme production of creation, traditional religions see our species as existing about halfway up the scale of life, when such a scale is based on relative strength, wisdom, and talents. Each bird, animal, or reptile is thought to possess major potentials which make it what it is. Thus the eagle can fly highest, the hawk see farthest, the owl see deepest, the meadowlark hear keenest, and so forth. Human beings have some talents, but not developed beyond those of any one of the other forms of life. The special human ability is to communicate with other forms of life, learn from them all, and act as a focal point for things they wish to express. In any sacred location, therefore, humans become the instrument by which all of creation is able to interact and express its totality of satisfaction (Deloria 1999: 258).

To become an instrument means to be intuitive and receptive towards other lives. People thus can always be open to learning from interactions with other creatures.

Children and Art

Art is a desirable and effective way to explore children's intuition and imagination and has increasingly been introduced in education (Chapman 1978, Oole 1980, Taylor 1972). Chapman (1978) talks about the necessity of Art education as an opportunity for children to develop their thoughts through the real world, not just through the media:

> The child in today's world is bombarded---by the mass media, advertising, consumer products, and the environment---with countless ready-made self-images and values. There are relatively few opportunities for the child to express *how* his or her particular life feels, to discover *what* its special meanings are, or to comprehend *why* it is like no other person's life. Art education can acquaint children with more subtle forms of feeling and more precise images of the human spirit than they are likely to discover on their own. Through instruction in art, the child can acquire the know-how to explore the deeper meanings of visual forms (Chapman 1978:5).

Chapman (1978) strongly insists on the need for children's "art experiences that are intellectually sound, personally rewarding to children, and relevant to their lives"(1978: 4). Art experiences allow children to connect art to their life (Taylor 1992, Chapman 1978).

> Children's responsiveness to works of art can be no richer than their response to life itself, and, reciprocally, children's perception of works of art should intensify and make vivid their responses to everyday life (Chapman 1978:179).

Inuit drawings portray the themes which are relevant to Nisga'a children's everyday life, such as a scene of fishing and depictions of animals.

Taylor (1992: 123) says that art also provides people with a different way of looking at things and raises environmental awareness through the sensitive and imaginative way that artists take. "Things that you wouldn't have found interesting before, now you do. It's changed the way that I look at things!"(Taylor 1992: 125) Art can be an influential tool to evoke people's thoughts and ideas. I thought that showing Nisga'a children Inuit art would appeal to children's sensitivity and curiosity towards the world in which they live and in

which the Inuit live. Inuit art, which vividly conveys the Inuit values, would influence or contribute to the Nisga'a children's views.

The environment where children have been raised has great influences on their appreciation of art. Eugenia M. Oole in *Art is for Children* (1980) suggests that nature affects children in their production and appreciation of art, by providing children with significant experiences of the world and themselves. Emphasizing children's essential connection with nature, she discusses that the connection will encourage the child's natural sense of wonder and respect and will enrich their eyes for art and their lives:

> Nature provides some of the most valuable resources for learning for every human being. Although children learn many facts about the wonders of nature in school, they cannot gain full understanding inside a classroom. One must experience nature directly to appreciate it completely. ..... the effect of the seasons upon growth cycles of plants, trees, food, crops, insects, birds, animals becomes a wonderful revelation to children (Oole 1980: 22).

Her argument suggests that the Nisga'a children who have developed their sense of wonder and respect through their daily communication with the natural world have good eyes for art. Gitwinksihlkw where the Nisga'a children live is a great environment for children to develop their appreciation for natural beauty. The land is filled with the natural blessings: the Nass River flows nearby, where people go for fishing, and mountains surround the village on either side of the rushing river. A sense of appreciation for beauty enhances a sense of reverence for the land. It evokes people's understanding for the importance of the land from which their ancestors lived.

Chapman, in *Approaches to Art in Education* (1978), talks about the developing stage of children's awareness about artistic heritage and also mentions that children's sense of beauty is influenced by images in the home, the school, the neighborhood, and the mass media.

> To the child, a general like or dislike is clearly different from a judgment of beauty or a desire to own an object. The child is now attracted to beauty in manufactured objects more than in natural objects. Vivid colors and motion are still important considerations in preferences. Responses to manufactured objects are primarily tactual and visual; natural forms are perceived kinesthetically and visually (Chapman 1978: 180).

Nisga'a children are bombarded by Western culture. How does the Nisga'a children's aesthetic sense respond to Inuit drawings which employ bright colors and describe the natural world? Are the images attractive to the children, regardless of influences by mass media? My assumption was that the Inuit images would speak to their souls nurtured through Nisga'a culture.

Inuit art

Inuit Art Conveys Inuit Traditional Values

Inuit art has gained a broader audience worldwide since commercialization began in the 1950's (Houston 1999, Paci 1996). Even though commercialization influences the Inuit traditional lifestyle and may westernize partially their values, the Inuit maintain their traditional values in their minds and hearts (Crandall 2000, Finckenstein 1999, Seidelman and Turner 1993). Inuit art represents Inuit visions and voices through art, and thus allows Inuit artists to communicate with people across cultures.

McGhee (2000), in "The Prehistory and Prehistoric Art of the Canadian Inuit," argues that Inuit art still conveys the Inuit artistic heritage; even after Inuit art employs a modern form for commercial purposes. Hè introduces the prehistoric art forms used for ceremonial means in the context of Inuit cultural heritage cultivated over 4,000 years, and mentions that there is a great deal of variability among prehistoric art forms (McGhee 2000).

His perspective regards modern Inuit art as an integral part of an Inuit artistic heritage, a heritage marked by diversity and occasional florescence rather than by gradual and uniform development (McGhee 2000). The Inuit thus continually expresses their traditional values through art form from ancient times to the present.

> On the surface, these new forms of artistic expressions bear little resemblance in art to those of the prehistoric past. Yet there was a great deal of variability among prehistoric art forms. The complex engraved decoration of the Old Bering Sea culture bears no closer relationship to the magical carvings of the Dorset people than it does to contemporary Inuit Carving (McGhee 2000).

It appears to me that for the Inuit, producing art reflects a connection with the land, animals, people, and the spiritual world. It is an important process for the Inuit to hold onto their identity and spirituality and to pass it on to the next generation. Even though the tools and materials that contemporary Inuit art employs are western and are not related to their traditional life, art-making itself allows the Inuit to remember the traditional way of life and to convey traditional values through their powerful imagination. James Houston says:

> But these technical details are as nothing compared with the subtle shamanic dream world that these Arctic people reveal to us. Their powerful images reach out across barriers of time, language and frozen distances and unveil mysteries of a hidden spirit world overflowing with half animals, half human creatures, and with memories of the past (Quoted in Roch 1974: 7).

In Inuit Perspective: Baker Lake Sculpture (Bouchard 2000: 5) describes "the first major exhibition of visual art to be organized by Inuit." Through representation of the voices of the artists, this book vibrantly reveals what contemporary Inuit art means to the Inuit and what art-making means to Inuit artists:

> As noted in many of the carvers' statements, art-making is an important means of communicating with one's children and grandchildren as well as the outside world. This is why, perhaps, the Inuit do not feel the need to possess their work. Learning takes place during the creative process. As the image takes form, the carvers respond

> to the curious inquiries of their progeny, relating stories of the old ways, bits of legends, memorable incidents (Bouchard 2000: 31).

Many interviews with Inuit artists in *Inuit Art Quarterly* reflect the artist's voices and demonstrate that Inuit art means more than making a living for Inuit artists in contemporary society. Inuit art has thus greatly contributed to the Inuit artists' abilities to regain and maintain their cultural values and identity. The following interview with an Inuit artist, Akpaliapik, by Ayre (1993: 40) shows that Inuit art serves as a tool to heal the Inuit themselves, by representing not only traditional values, but also struggles in the modern life.

> Ayre: There's much interest in your new piece of a man's head with a liquor bottle coming out of it. Is this a new emphasis on social problems?
> Akpaliapik: I guess it's part of me and part of the culture. I lost quite a few cousins with alcohol and suicide. You hear these stories from each community. It always has something to do with alcohol abuse. I was going through that. I'm still fighting it myself. That particular piece is a hangover kind of thing: You're fed up; you have this bottle in your head; it's controlling you. I felt it's not just for me, but for a lot of Inuit people who are caught in that situation.

Akpaliapik believes that art serves a constructive atavistic role, of restoring important elements of past culture even if he and others have never fully lived them (Ayre 1993).

A considerable number of books and journals, such as *The Inuit Imagination* (Seidelman and Turner 1993), *Celebrating Inuit Art* 1948-1970 (Finckenstein 1999), *Inuit Art Quarterly*, *Pictures out of my Life* (Pitseolak 1971), *Inuit Art: Introduction* (Hessel 1998), and "Colour drawings by Fifteen Cape Dorset Artists" (Hay 1972), describe the Inuit worldview woven into their expression of art. These books and journals are good resources to develop understanding about Inuit life and their intense interconnectedness with the animals and the land.

Inuit Interconnectedness with the Animals and the Land

Hay (1972) describes Inuit life which influences their way of expression in "Colour Drawings by Fifteen Cape Dorset Artists." He says:

> The joy to be found in these drawings is consistent with, indeed reflects directly, the attitudes and the values of the culture. In a land as harsh as the Arctic there was no room for gloom and despair. Total interdependence leaves little room for competition and no place for the entrepreneur. The elements were a common enemy and the people banded together to fight that enemy collectively. Everyone knew the reality of everyday life but the spiritual life, the fun and the laughter had to be woven in as well, in order to survive. The children had to be taught the legends, a respect for the Shaman who could go to the moon, the spirits of the animals, fish and birds so vital to their lives. The colour and enchantment of the stories, the stone carving of a seal or a bear, the skin silhouettes on their wall depicting characters from stories all helped lessen the fear of the world around them (Hay 1972: Excerpt from the catalog).

The distinctive theme described in Inuit art is Inuit spiritual relationships with animals and the land. All Inuit beliefs and behaviors respect harmony with other lives and aim to establish a sense of interrelationship and continuity (Inuit Tapirisat of Canada 1995).

Videos such as *Inuit Art vol.1, 2 ,4, 5* (A National Film Board of Canada production from 1997-1999), provide visual information concerning Inuit traditional and modern lives, as well as their processes of making art. *Nanook of the North* (International Film Seminars, Inc. 1976) is a documentary that contrasts the beauty of Inuit traditional life against the harsh climate of the arctic north. The smiles of the Inuit in the movie were impressive. Their smiles under the severe environment signify Inuit spiritual richness which allowed the Inuit to overcome difficulties in their lives with strength. These videos illustrate how the harsh environment has formed the Inuit spiritual connection with animals and the land. The Inuit values nurtured by the deep tie with animals and the land continue to inspire Inuit imagination. A report on Inuit relocation, *The High Arctic relocation: a report on the 1953-55 relocation* (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1994) portrays the Inuit relocation

that resulted in physical dislocation, cultural collapse and widespread despair, and allows the voices of the community to express the Inuit's own rarely-heard point of view.

George Wenzel (1991) in *Animal Rights, Human Rights; Ecology, Economy and Ideology in the Canadian Arctic*, discusses the Inuit relationships with animals which give the Inuit responsible attitudes towards the natural world and maintain their subsistence in the community. Their daily interactions with animals reflect the Inuit value of interconnectedness with the land and animals. He says:

> Inuit do not segregate the qualities enjoyed by human beings from those enjoyed by animals. Animals share with humans a common state of being that includes kinship and family relations, sentience, and intelligence. The rights and obligations that pertain among people extend to other members of the natural world. People, seals, polar bears, birds, and caribou are joined in a single community in which animals give men food and receive acknowledgement and revival (Wenzel 1991:60).

Hunting is a significant activity in traditional Inuit life, which strongly influences people's attitudes towards animals. Whether they respect animals properly is the most important issue that determines successful hunting. Thus the Inuit survival depends on their relationships with animals. Wenzel discusses Inuit values regarding animals and says:

> Animals are to be 'respected' not because they are superior to humans, but because they, like us, are sentient beings. Being *silatujuk* (intelligent), animals are aware of the thoughts, speech, and actions of hunters (Wenzel 1991:138).

The hunters are required to be aware of the most serious relationship that exists between human beings and animals; the good and humble intent is required. The relationship between the Inuit and animals rests on the same moral values which are the basis of human social interaction (Wenzel 1991, Turner 1994, 1996, Fienup-Riordan 2000). It indicates profound Inuit meanings and feelings with regards to hunting and receiving animal life.

The Inuit have oral stories which "include events in which humans become animals or vice versa, implying interrelationships with all humans and nonhumans alike, to maintain

harmony and balance" (Kawagley 1995:11).The Inuit think that human and nonhuman persons can be seen to share two fundamental characteristics: an immortal soul and mind, or awareness (Finenup-Riordan 2000). These qualities of personhood shared between human and nonhuman persons established the basis for a mutual and necessary respect. The following story explains this human and animal relationship based on reciprocity.

> If, in defiance of traditional codes of conduct, a careless hunter fails to honor properly the physical remains of an animal he has slain, the spiritual fires still flickering within the animal's blood-flecked carcass will refuse to be reborn. The animal's spirit will decline to sacrifice itself again in order to feed and clothe human beings, and future populations of its kind will decline (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992:153).

One of the spiritual figures commonly seen in Inuit art is the sea goddess Sedna. Sedna sacrificed herself to produce a bountiful harvest of sea mammals for the Inuit, and thus the Inuit believe that they are obliged to obey many rules and taboos to keep Sedna happy. To appease her was one of the chief duties of the shaman (Hessel 1998). An annual Sedna Festival was held in some regions as an indication of the people's appreciation and respect (Hessel 1998).The Inuit carefully observed animal behaviors, inner qualities and the genius of a particular animal species with a view of deriving spiritual and moral lessons from that animal species (Kawagley 1995). The Inuit believe that "animals have much to teach man concerning the divine wisdom and about his own inner nature" (Baker 1991:95). Thus, based on these Inuit beliefs, Inuit drawings express animals' messages to the viewers.

Considering the fact that the Inuit care about their thought and behavior towards animals because they believe that animals read human minds, it is reasonable to assume that the Inuit artists draw animals with this concern. The artists draw respectfully and carefully so that the animals will not be upset and harm people. Inuit artists not only seek beauty through expressions, but also wish to dedicate their proper respect for the animals. Thus the

expressions of the Inuit drawings reflect the Inuit interrelationship and reciprocity with animals.

Wisdom of Shamanism in the Modern world

Edith Turner (1996) in *The Hands Feel It* portrays the Inuit interactions with human, non-human and the spirit world, which are alive in contemporary Inuit society. She describes Inuit spirituality, including the important role that shamans and shamanic vision have played. This spirituality based on traditional values continuously influences the Inuit way of life and helps people create the strength to hold onto their culture and identity. I believe that true healing requires this spiritual strength.

The concept of shamanism commonly appears in aboriginal hunting cultures, and is integrated into art, even though the shamanism carried on by shamans was devastated by Western influence and is not practiced openly as before. Among aboriginal peoples all over the world, the Inuit are one of the many examples of shamanism, and Inuit art frequently incorporates the themes of shamanism into its expression.

Eight Inuit Myths (Spalding 1979) illustrates many examples of Inuit shamanism seen in the myths. Mircea Eliade (1964), Flynn-Burhoe (1996), Joan Halifax (1982), and Michel Ripinsky-Nexon (1993) develop discussions about Shamanism, and refer to powerful descriptions of the spiritual transformations from animals to humans, or humans to animals. Besides coping with shamanism as expression, Inuit artists themselves, or Inuit art itself plays a shamanistic role and helps people understand advice and messages from the natural world by shaping intangible concepts and thoughts into art forms. Halifax (1982) says:

> The special and sacred awareness of the universe is codified in song and chant, poetry and tale, carving and painting. This art is not art for art, rather it is art for survival, for it gives structure and coherence to the unfathomable and intangible. By 'making' that

> which is unknown, the shaman attains some degree of control over the awesome forces of the *mysterium* (1982:11).

Shamanism is not only an old technique to heal people, but it functions in the modern world with its eternal values. According to Drury (1996: 6) "whatever the specific role, the shaman is one who universally commands awe and respect." One of the important shamanistic roles which must be emphasized is to help others tune into a universal awareness in order to build an environmental understanding that acknowledges the sanctity of nature (Drury 1996).

Inuit Spirituality Expressed in Inuit Art

Inuit spirituality is represented in prehistoric Inuit art. Crandall (2000) says that there is indirect evidence which supports the belief that Inuit carving from Dorset sites was related to the practice of shamanism:

> It is known through the ethnographic record that animals such as the bear, bird, walrus, and seal were believed to be powerful spirit helpers, and these animals were commonly represented in Dorset carving. Dorset carvings of the human–seal or human-bear forms may be associated with the ability of a shaman to transform into an animal's spirit helper or enlist the use of a spirit helper to travel to the spirit world (Crandall 2000:18-19).

Hessel (1998) in *Inuit Art: An Introduction* says that shamanism plays an important role in Inuit spirituality and has been expressed through their contemporary art. He observes in Inuit drawings that the artist blends aesthetic concerns---bold pattern, symmetry and large blocks of color---with a knack for visually communicating human thought and a love of animal-human transformation and that the world of the Inuit and the world of animals mix freely.

> Inuit believed that in the distant past, animals and humans could transform effortlessly, each into the other. More recently, only shamans were able to perform this type of transformation. In a séance, the shaman would wear tusks, teeth or claws, and the spirit and voice of the animal helping spirit would speak through him (Hessel 1998: 46).

The beliefs in supernatural power and shamanism continue to play an important part in Inuit art (Hessel 1998). Hessel (1998: 43) says it is perhaps because "the visual arts provide a safe outlet for presenting subjects that cannot be openly discussed, or for secularizing the supernatural." He cites the following account from an Inuit artist, Tivi Etook, Kangiqsualujjuaq:

> I have always been concerned with supernatural things. I believe that the Spirits were not created by man and that they were very powerful. There were many Spirits in former times and they influenced the lives of the people. Although I do not want to believe or follow the old ways which involved these Spirits, I feel that we should reveal the things which exist and perpetuate the stories which are told about them... Maybe as I do my prints and drawings I will remember them (Tivi Etook, quoted by Hessel 1998: 43).

In a catalogue of *Shamanism in Inuit Art* (Flynn-Burhoe 1996), an exhibition of Inuit prints and sculpture from the Tyler-Brooks Collection shown at the Carleton University Art Gallery in 1995, Rose Ann Hoffenberg questions: "Will shaman figures disappear? Will they become a treasured legend or will they be regarded in a new context as the complexities of the twenty-first century unfold? "(Flynn-Burhoe 1996:49) Inuit spirituality in Inuit art will add a new meaning in order to meet the need of people who live in contemporary society, while holding on to basic principles. The basic principles form the framework for everything, including culture, spirituality, and government. "What you have to do is know your basic principles in the first place, and then blend the contemporary and traditional together--- but you have to have the principles right" (Alfred 1999: 11):

> All basic teachings are part of a unified whole that is crucial to understanding the tradition and the wisdom; we have to understand the way they all interrelate. You can't just ignore sections of it. If you haven't ever got to the real meaning, then I agree with you--- in two or three generations it'll just be folklore (Alfred 1999: 11).

Ann Fienup-Riordan (2000) in "Eye of the Dance: Spiritual Life of the Central Yup'ik Eskimos" portrays the Yup'ik worldview which centers on significant spiritual relationships between humans and nonhumans. She discusses the circle-dot motifs seen in the Yup'ik masks in terms of the symbol system in the Yup'ik spiritual worldview. The circle-dot motif appears as big circle eyes in Lucy's drawing (Drawing #2), as big eyes of the bird in Eegyvudluk's drawing (Drawing #4), and as circle eyes in the creatures in Kudjuakjuk's drawing (Drawing #5). Pitseolak's drawing (Drawing #1) deals with the theme of the sea.

Expressing themes of spirits through art illustrates Inuit appreciation and respect for their traditional beliefs and spirits as the giver of life. Kawagley (1995:33) mentions an approach to the spiritual world shared between the shamans and artists.

> The shamans and artists brought to the Yupiaq the by-laws of life, inscribed indelibly into their tools, both intellectual and material. They had the flexibility of thought necessary to use the conscious levels of thinking and to have easy access to the subconscious mind. The shaman had the added dimension of access to the spiritual world to solve the conundrums, or puzzles, presented by nature. His function is to explore and interpret what he saw creatively and positively, with insights to be taught to his people (Kawagley1995:33).

Inuit artists thus play a role of conveying the importance of the traditional values and teachings that the Elders and shamans have told. The shaman commuted easily and readily between nature, human beings, and the supernatural and served as a messenger (Kawagley1995), and today Inuit artists serve as a messenger and express teachings that they learned from the Elders and shamans in art forms, using Inuit wisdom to restore a sense of balance and harmony. Drury (1996:6) puts it this way:

> Shamanism is thus a visionary tradition, an ancient practice of utilizing altered states of consciousness to contact the spirits of the natural world. This is where it begins to touch our modern lives. At a time when we are all becoming increasingly aware of our environment and the fragility of ecological balance, the essential call of shamanism is clear: we should respect the sanctity of Nature. Shamanism reminds us

> that our destinies on Earth are intertwined and interdependent. For us, as for the ancients the voice of the shaman offers a powerful and optimistic message.

Inuit art-making has a profound meaning and role which communicates Inuit spirituality to the Inuit today and to a wider audience.

Inuit Drawing

Though the origin of drawing in Inuit culture can be traced to the prehistoric period, when hunting imagery and decorative embellishment were inscribed on implements and sacred objects (Himmelheber 1993) widespread, Inuit drawing has evolved only since the 1960's, nurtured in various artists' workshops that have sprung up in scattered communities across the Arctic, especially at Cape Dorset (Hay 1972).

Hay (1972) describes that some purists feel that contemporary Inuit drawings are not really of the old way:

> True, the artists did not have until recently any way of reproducing primary colour, or the more subtle secondary colours, but they did know about them from direct experience. The coloured inks, paints and felt pens had to be imported but the knowledge of colour and the feeling for colour they have always had.

Most importantly, as well as the knowledge and feeling of colour, what they draw also comes from what they have always had and sometimes what their ancestors had always had from old days.

In Inuit drawing the Inuit artists employ many colors. The colorful image of the drawings may be affected by Inuit people's impression of summer in the arctic land.

> The days are long and sunny. Clear brooks and streams run between the rocky crevices and tiny arctic flowers, in brilliant colours, are everywhere. The quality of the light is astonishing in its clarity. For a few brief weeks everyone can relax, unburdened by heavy clothing. The children can run free to explore the terrain. The coming dark winter will require sharp memories of the world of colour (Hay 1972).

I think that during dark winter, using bright colors must have allowed Inuit people to keep their summer memories alive. Thus the colors reflect the brightness of the sun in their hearts.

Nasby (1994), in "Revealing the Truth of the Artist's Hand: Contemporary Inuit Drawings," discusses several characteristics seen through Inuit drawings, such as: Inuit traditional life, the images of oral tradition, the repetition of motifs, a concept of spiral organization, and traditional Inuit spirituality. The Inuit drawings by Cape Dorset Inuit Woman Artists which were employed in the interviews of this thesis represent these characteristics well. Though brief biographies of the Inuit artists are available, there are no captions for their drawings, and therefore, it is impossible to know the artist's true intention in the drawings. This lack of information, on the other hand, provides the Nisga'a children with freedom in interpretation.

Drawing has allowed the Inuit artists to express their own ideas relatively freely compared to carving and printmaking where they have to work under unusual constraints imposed by market demands (Mitchell 1997 a & b). Inuit drawing appears to have made a success in gaining and exhibiting spontaneity (Nasby 1994). Thus the most direct and unencumbered mode of visual expression makes it possible for the Inuit artists to reveal the truth of the artist's hand (Nasby 1994).

Many Inuit women responded to the opportunity to work with drawings. The majority of Inuit artists who draw are women. Hay (1972) says:

> Although the men tend to excel in carving and the women in print designs and drawings, there is no real male-female role to play among the craftsmen. Everyone feels free to try his or her hand at all or any form (Hay 1972).

While carving requires much strength that only a few women have, designs and drawings require sensitive eyes that many women develop through everyday lives. Traditionally Inuit woman and girls combine drawing and singing with storytelling (Himmelheber 1993).

Inuit Women Artists (Leroux, Jackson, and Freeman 1994) introduces the Inuit drawing of Cape Dorset women artists along with their lives and voices. This book refers to some of the Inuit women artists whose drawings I employed for the interviews. It illustrates that drawing allows modern Inuit woman today to carry over traditional values. The women's art is seen "through female eyes, noticing colors, clothes, and relationships with children, chores that demand daily attention, hardships that must be endured, customs that must be passed on, and beauty that underlies even the bleakest landscape" (Leroux, Jackson, and Freeman 1994:18). Their art also leads the viewer into a world torn between the traditional and the modern, the mystical and the rational.

> Inuit women artists know that their drawing can help them translate their emotions and concerns as women and as members of the Inuit community in the face of their deteriorating environment and disappearing customs and culture. Inuit women artists are drawing from the perspective of appreciating the role of art in preserving the Inuit culture (Leroux, Jackson, and Freeman 1994:36).

The Five Inuit drawings Employed in the Interviews

Among all forms of Inuit art, Inuit drawings are employed in this thesis, as a representation of Inuit art. Five drawings from the UNBC library collection were chosen and taken out for the interviews. The artists of the drawings are all women from Cape Dorset. The five drawings employed in the interviews describe different aspects of the Inuit worldview and life from the unique perspective of each artist. As the drawings do not have any titles, I put numbers with the artist's name to identify each; Drawing #1: Pitseolak's,

Drawing #2: Lucy's, Drawing #3: Kenojuak's, Drawing #4: Eegyvudluk's, Drawing #5: Kudjuakjuk's.

Books about some of the artists' life story and pictures are available. Pitseolak, one of the most famous Inuit artists, published a book, called *Pitseolak: Pictures out of my life* (1971), in which her life is illustrated with her drawings and in her own words. Kenojuak is a world-renowned artist. One of her designs of a bird is used for a Canadian stamp. The book *Kenojuak: an Inuit artist's life story* introduces her life as an Inuit woman and as artist (Walk 1999). However, further research is needed to ascertain more fully what the artists of the drawings meant by the forms they depicted.

Suggestive Expression of Inuit Art which Communicates

Inuit art conveys its message to individuals much as oral history does (Gibson 1996). *Quiviuq-a legend in art* (Gibson 1996) describes a visual storytelling as it lives on today in contemporary Inuit art. Gibson says (1996:7), "although the visual images are different from traditional Inuit storytelling, drawings, prints and sculptures do maintain the organic nature of the oral tradition." Hessel also says:

> Since very little Inuit literature has been written down and published, the visual arts have become a valuable permanent record of oral history and myths: a carving or drawing of a legend becomes the equivalent of its telling in words (Hessel 1998: 60).

Inuit drawing, like storytelling, functions to teach children ideas such as how people should relate to other people, to animals, and to the land. It also passes on the history of their ancestors, spiritual beliefs as well as tools for ordinary daily life. Invoking the imagination of the viewer more vividly than storytelling does, drawing allows both artists and viewers to re-experience a story and to create another story.

Kawagley suggests that an oral story has a human interaction element; "the hearer becomes a part of the story, an essential participant observer in the events" (Kawagley 1995:17). Through stories children and all participants learn self-discipline and respect for the rights of others (Kawagley 1995:17). Like oral histories, Inuit art tells people about how humans are to interact with others, with natural things and with spirits by requiring the viewer to be "an essential participant observer." Inuit art is thus alive as much as words in the oral histories and goes beyond time.

One of the striking features of Inuit art is that it is interactive and communicative. Through its suggestive expressions, it seems that Inuit art encourages people to develop their imagination and the need to interpret what is not clearly explained in the way that makes sense to them. Inuit art thus requires people to reflect on their own values. This process is similar to the approach of Zen art, in which incomplete expression can be completed with the power of viewer's imagination. Zen art is dynamic interaction and communication that requires the viewer to be involved in the creation of art and its world of beauty. In my view, the suggestive expressions in Inuit drawings will stimulate Nisga'a children's imagination and allow them to freely interpret the drawings based on their own experiences and perspectives.

Inuit Art and Deep Ecology

The Inuit views of nature have an important message of environmental awareness. The Inuit connection with animals based on respect provides people with an insight about people's own views of animals created through modern life which separates humans from animals. Learning Inuit values through their art encourages people to recognize what respect for wildlife and environment means in a real context and how it links to their own values of

life. McDonald et al., in *Voices from the Bay: Traditional Ecological Knowledge of Inuit and Cree in the Hudson Bay Bioregion* (1997), describe the Inuit worldview in terms of traditional ecological knowledge which is relevant to the modern world and which can contribute to increasing environmental awareness of non-aboriginal people. They point out:

> The word respect is key to understanding wildlife and environment. If there is no respect then environmental problems arise. Everything in the environment has a place and use by people and wildlife. So, damage to any of these causes problems. We learn something about currents, ice, and all these things have to be respected. Respect towards nature is needed in order to have food and a good living (McDonald et al.1997: 5).

There is much to learn from Inuit respect for nature in order to have proper environmental attitudes.

The interconnectedness centered on First Nations' traditional values is better understood with the concept of "deep ecology," which has been raised by the Western world. By going beyond the idea of "ecology," deep ecology has reached a further depth in understanding a whole life system. This realization is the same as or similar to what First Nations traditional values have taught people from time immemorial. Knudtson and Suzuki note that deep ecology:

> In its own distinctive way sheds genuine light on the sense of awe-inspiring interconnectedness, the persistent resiliency, and the raw beauty that long, intimate contact with nature evokes in patient, sensitive human beings, regardless of their geographic, racial, or cultural pedigree (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992: 58).

In contrast to ecology, deep ecology emphasizes individual understanding of ecology with the deep part of human hearts, not just with minds; this deep understanding and feeling has an influential power on people's daily attitudes which forms their values of life.

Devall and Sessions' (1985) book provides useful information to understand the concept of deep ecology. Devall and Sessions explain deep ecology saying, "a deeper

approach resulted from a more sensitive openness to ourselves and non-human life around us" (Devall and Sessions1985: 65). This challenges the dominant belief that "humans are fundamentally separate from the rest of Nature, as superior to, and in charge of, the rest of creation" (Devall and Sessions 1985: 66). It brings people a new consciousness that human beings are "part of the organic whole" (Devall and Sessions 1985: 66).

Regarding a way to gain the consciousness of deep ecology, Devall and Sessions (Devall and Sessions 1985:66) raise two ultimate concepts: "self-realization and biocentric equality." Self-realization requires people to realize their real self as identification with humanity which includes the non-human world, in contrast to the modern Western self which is defined as "an isolated ego striving primarily for hedonistic gratification or for a narrow sense of individual salvation in this life or the next" (Devall and Sessions 1985: 67). Self-realization and a sense of the biocentric equality are developed through the basic intuition that all things in the biosphere have an equal right to live, because they are equal in intrinsic worth.

To appreciate traditional values requires the sense of self-realization and the concept of biocentric equality. In the interviews, you will see that the Nisga'a children reveal that they also have a similar kind of self-realization and appreciation of biocentric equality.

Nisga'a

The Nisga'a

The Nisga'a are one of the First Nations in British Columbia, many of whom live in the Nass River Valley of northwestern British Columbia (see Map: APPENDIX D). The

population of the Nisga'a is found in the villages in their traditional territory. About 2,500 people live in the villages of Gingolox (Kincolith), Lakalzap (Greenville), Gitwinksihlkw (Canyon City), and Gitlakdamiks (New Aiyansh). Another 3,500 people live elsewhere in Canada and around the world (Nisga'a Tribal Council 1992:1).

The Nisga'a traditionally established strong spiritual relationships between humans and animals (Nisga'a Language and Culture Department School District No.92 [Nisga'a] 1996). They still demonstrate traditional ties to the ancestral land through their resilience to the challenges of forming their own education system and settling treaty negotiations. Their book *From Time before Memory* (Nisga'a Language and Culture Department School District No.92 1996) introduces the Nisga'a spiritual connection with and a view of animals and Mother Earth, which have been expressed through traditional ways such as rituals, crests, and totem poles. Even though the Nisga'a have blended Christianity with a number of their traditional beliefs and values, they still hold strong connections with the land (Nisga'a Language and Culture Department School District No.92 1996). Nisga'a beliefs are referenced as well when analyzing children's comments in the following chapters.

The videos, *As Long as the Rivers Flow: Time immemorial (National Film Board of Canada, 1991)* and *Ayuuklh Nisga'a: A Common Bowl* (1996) provide documentaries of a history of the Nisga'a land question, while powerfully introducing Nisga'a culture and traditions with vivid images of the beauty of the Nass Valley and the power of Nisga'a people who live on and for the land.

As well as the rest of all aboriginal nations, the Nisga'a had their own government and laws before contact with non-aboriginal government; however, in the 1860's the government of British Columbia established reserves in the Nass Valley. Since that time the

Nisga'a have fought to regain control over their land and have experienced many trials and challenges (Nisga'a Language and Culture Department School District No.92 [Nisga'a] 1996). In 1975 the Nisga'a established a school and their own school district in New Aiyansh over which the Nisga'a have total control within the guideline of the BC curriculum (Bilingual-Bicultural Department 1982). Okuma (1996) studied Nisga'a education in her master's program at UNBC. She illustrates the Nisga'a experience of running their own school district and introduces their unique curriculum. The Nisga'a triumph of their control over education provides a big step for the Nisga'a to verify the significance of maintaining their culture and to empower their people. The Nisga'a continue the challenge of revitalizing their culture, language, and tradition through education, so as to promote cultural awareness for future generations, not only in primary and secondary schools, but through WWN, their own post-secondary school.

The Nisga'a way of life has dramatically changed since pre-contact. However, despite living in villages centered on schools and living in the world of a cash economy, their traditions towards animals and the sacredness of animals persistently remains. The Nisga'a resilience seen in their trials of treaty negotiations reveals their strong faith in their traditional connection with the land and animals, which have guided people with its eternal validity from time immemorial to the present. This is their heritage to protect for their lifetime and to pass on to the future generations.

Nisga'a Children in Gitwinksihlkw

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Gitwinksihlkw was selected as the community to participate in my research. There is a grade school in Gitwinksihlkw, established and run by the Nisga'a. The school provides ample programs which are relevant to Nisga'a culture, and

an environment for children to learn their culture. There are totem poles in front of the Gitwinksihlkw School, which the children see every day.

Interest in artistic materials is an important factor when examining children's appreciation of art. Juniper (2000), who graduated from a master's program at UNBC, worked with the Nisga'a and studied about Nisga'a songs in relation to cultural performance and music education. Listening to the voices of Nisga'a people, she portrays how cultural performance has been central to Nisga'a identity (Juniper 2000). Seeking transformation towards curriculum focused on Nisga'a culture, the Nisga'a school district has strived for further development and implementation of Nisga'a language and culture materials for the classroom (Juniper 2000). When I visited a Nisga'a language class at the Gitwinksihlkw school, the teacher was employing artistic materials (Nisga'a traditional drawings which portray their animal crests) to teach crests' names in the Nisga'a language.

Nisga'a Traditional Values

Anhluut'ukwsim Xkwsdaksa'askwhl Nisga'a: The Treasured Legacy of the Nisga'a (Bilingual-Bicultural Department 1982) is published as a Nisga'a cultural infusion resource for the exclusive use of School District 92 (Nisga'a). Providing ample information about the Nisga'a worldview with figures, photos and Nisga'a language, it serves as a useful guide for the learner of Nisga'a culture. It explains about the Nisga'a animal connections shown in the totem poles and crest system in great detail.

Since there are few books that deal with Nisga'a oral history and culture specifically but there are a number of books available about Tsimshian oral histories and culture, I refer to Tsimshian oral histories and myths. The Tsimshian live next to the Nisga'a and are

culturally very similar to the Nisga'a (Toye-Welsh 1997). Miller (1997) uses "Tsimshian" as an all-encompassing term for the four divisions: Coast, Southern, Gitksan, and Nisga'a.

Txamsem Steals Fire (Toye-Welsh 1997a) and *Txamsem and Salmon Woman* (Toye-Welsh 1997b) are picture books, which vividly convey the Txamsem legend adapted from the works of anthropologists Franz Boas and William Benyon in the early twentieth century. Both of the books describe a Tsimshian significant connection with animals from the origin of time. These oral histories continue to tell people how much humans depend on animal's generosity for giving their lives for human food and wisdom that makes the earth and life system function. The messages of oral histories thus have educated people to have proper respect for the animals. Miller (1997) in *Tsimshian Culture: A Light through the Ages* reveals his study about Tsimshian culture with resourceful information. He provides a deep insight into Tsimshian spirituality expressed through crests, oral histories, and beliefs.

Like the Inuit traditional values, Nisga'a culture is based on reciprocity and interconnectedness with animals. The Nisga'a believe that every person, plant and animal has a similar spiritual quality. They believe that human and animals are different only in the way they look, but that animals had the same soul as human beings under their flesh or meat (Nisga'a Language and Culture Department School District No.92 [Nisga'a] 1996:162).

> Nisga'a believed that both the animal world and the spirit world were as important as their own. They paid a lot of attention to the needs of the animals and spirits. They believed that if the spirit of an animal or plant wanted to, it could give its body (its cloak) to a human. For this reason, it was good to always show respect and kindness to everything in nature (Nisga'a Language and Culture Department School District No.92 [Nisga'a] 1996:162).

The Nisga'a idea of the crests illustrates their deep connections with animals, such as Raven, Frog, Wolf, Bear, Killer whale, Owl, Eagle, and Beaver. Crests were "a legacy from myth-time acquired by ancestors and held in perpetuity by their lineal descendants" (Bilingual-

Bicultural Department 1982:18). Many crests are associated with the "wilp"(house) by "adaawak"(oral history) and explain their origin and their connection with the owner (Bilingual-Bicultural Department 1982).

The crests express identity and shared history, and are displayed at feasts as physical representations of the great formative events of the group's past: its mythic birth throes, its ancient military victories and defeats, its long legacy of supernatural dialogue, and its adventures with the forces of nature, ancestral life-forms, and local features of the landscape. The crest is the fruit of a direct, ongoing communion with the natural world over a period of more than five thousand years...(Knudtson and Suzuki 1992:127). The crests and their associated adaawak or oral traditions have been represented on totem poles. Each figure on the totem pole is validated by the adaawak which explain the origin of each representation (Bilingual-Bicultural Department 1982). The totem poles also have expressed Nisga'a societal evolution in a variation and change of crest motifs. For example, after the 19th century the Nisga'a turned to depicting the human face and figure as crests in wood, and thus the human face became the dominant image (Bilingual-Bicultural Department 1982). The Nisga'a crest designs have been carved, painted or woven on many art forms of both ceremonial and everyday use (Bilingual-Bicultural Department 1982). Nisga'a children are familiar with crest designs in and outside of the village.

What lies behind the expression of interconnectedness with animals is the Nisga'a value of "living in balance with the people and the spirits they share the world with" (Nisga'a Language and Culture Department School District No.92 [Nisga'a] 1996:145). If any person is cruel to an animal, the other animals might become angry and will not appear in front of the Nisga'a. Thus the Nisga'a, being careful not to break the balance, try to be respectful

towards animals in all possible ways so they will come back to give their lives to human beings.

In order to keep the balance, the Nisga'a practice ceremonies and give offerings to the Supreme Being called *K'amligihahlhaahl,* and to please spirits, called *Naxnok* (Bilingual-Bicultural Department 1982). These spirits are real and play different roles in order to help human beings in various ways. This strong tie to the spirits enables the Nisga'a to have responsibilities in maintaining peaceful relations with animals and the land at the physical level. If the Nisga'a children carry on such traditional views, then they will not see animals as "natural resources" as Western society looks upon them. The interconnectedness with animals is essential to Nisga'a life.

As supplemented materials to learn Nisga'a traditional values, I also referred to other First Nation traditional views of animals and the natural world. Many books which deal with wisdom of the elders are available, such as *Wisdom of the Elders* (Kudtson and Suzuki 1992), *The Book of Elders: The Life Stories and Wisdom of Great American Indians* (Johnson 1994), *Native American Religious Identity* (Weaver 1998), *Wisdom of the Elders* (Kirk 1986), *The Soul of the Indian* (Eastman 1911), and *Tales the Elders Told: Ojibway Legends* (Johnston 1981). They are referenced when examining the Nisga'a children's traditional views. The words of the elders explain the fundamental philosophy and spirituality of First Nations simply but powerfully. The First Nations elders are treasures of Mother Earth: they are real people who know intimately the interconnectedness of life and live on the right path. *Black Elk speaks* (Neihardt 1969) is a story "of all life that is holy and is good to tell, and of us two-leggeds sharing in it with the four-leggeds and the wings of the air and all green

things; for these are children of one mother and their father is one Spirit (Neihardt 1969: 1)" and provides a deep insight into First Nations' spirituality.

Literature Review on Methodology of Interviewing Children

The Interviews are core to this thesis. Interviewing children requires a careful methodology, as an interview context greatly influences children's responses. My decisions about interview methodology, including how to observe children's narration and responses and how to interpret the collected data was influenced by a thorough literature review. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, I take a phenomenological approach where I myself am involved in the interview context and observe the communication that happened between the interviewees and I.

Oole (1980), in *"Art is for Children,"* provides useful information about communication with children. From reading Oole I noted that whether Nisga'a children show their interest in Inuit drawing is one of the most important responses, as children will not talk about Inuit drawings if they are not interested in them. Even so, as Oole suggests (1980), the children should not be forced to talk beyond their will.

Garbarino and Stott, in *What Children Can Tell Us* (1992), provide meaningful guidelines for interviewing children. They suggest how to conduct interviews and how to transcribe and interpret them, as well as the limitations of the interview process. They suggest that children's storytelling is an efficient way to know children's true feelings. Through stories that children sometimes tell, they deal with their emotions and feelings, and

thereby, understand themselves. Through interviews based on storytelling, children's thoughts are revealed freely and creatively.

Storytelling is also discussed in "Narrative Practices and the Social Construction of Self in Childhood" (Miller, Potts, Fung, Hoogstra, and Mintz 1991). The authors demonstrate how personal storytelling functions in the social construction of self.

> We propose that children develop a means for expressing and understanding who they are through their routine participation in culturally organized narrative practices in which personal experiences are recounted. Furthermore, we propose that narratives of personal experience can provide access to culturally specific images of self as well as to the ways in which those images are conveyed and evaluated (Miller, Potts, Fung, Hoogstra, and Mintz 1991:295).

Kahn (1999) examines methodology of interviewing children resourcefully in *The Human Relationship with Nature: Development and Culture*, including the selection of children, the use of questionnaires, and data analysis. He analyzes his mistakes in the previous interviews of his research, and suggests desirable ways of interviewing children. Children's narratives tend to be influenced by interview context, such as whether interviews are held individually or in a group. Following the way Kahn (1999) conducted his interviews, I interview children individually in this thesis.

Child psychology provides much meaningful information based on a number of case studies. *The Psychology of the Child* (Piaget and Inhelder 1969) and *The Piaget Primer: Thinking, Learning, Teaching* (Labinowicz 1980) develop profound discussions concerning children's cognitive development and provide ideas about a method to work with children from the age of six to seven. *School-Age Children* (First Nations Parenting Program 1997) and *National Inquiry into First Nations Child Care* (Assembly of First Nations 1989) provide further information on how children are treated in current society and what kinds of situations they confront.

Terminology

I will define the terms that are used in this thesis. Translation and interpretation is a great difficulty in a thesis which includes a cross-cultural study. English is my second language; therefore, my understanding and usage of English words might cause misunderstanding by English-speaking people. There are always risks of conveying unintended meanings because of this language barrier. However, this difficult challenge has taught me the importance of being respectful and sensitive of different perspectives, including the western perspective, the Inuit perspective, and the Aboriginal perspective. The implication behind words always needs to be considered at the cultural level, and sometimes at the individual level. Therefore, the children's words are documented in their original form to avoid misunderstanding caused by my misinterpretation. To make sure my use of terms is clear I close this chapter with definitions of the key terms I use in this thesis.

The Inuit are one of the indigenous groups who traditionally inhabit the Arctic coastal regions of North America and parts of Greenland and are related to the Yup'ik of Alaska and northeast Siberia (*Canadian Dictionary of the English Language* 1997:715). When this thesis talks about Inuit culture and worldview, Inuit does not specify the Inuit of a certain region, although the pictures used are from Cape Dorset.

Inuit art means art produced by Inuit artists. Kenojuak says (Walk 1999:156), "the making of prints, what you call art, is simply to transfer the real to the unreal." The word "Art" does not exist in *Inuktitut* (the Inuit language) (Leroux, Jackson, and Freeman 1994:15). Art is one of the everyday actions for some Inuit artists, although some accept

calling it "art" from a western perspective. Instead of art, some Inuit people prefer to use terms such as "'visual image' and 'visual expression' to describe this concept in a way that is meaningful to them" (Bouchard 2000:15). "In Inuit culture the aesthetic experience exists as part of an integrated whole and is not segregated into a separate category as in Western forms of classification" (Bouchard 2000:14-15). For the Inuit, art is "a great living tradition practiced, and continually evolving through centuries" (Bouchard 2000:17).

Inuit art includes many forms, such as carving, printmaking, mask-making and drawing. In this thesis, Inuit drawing serves as a representative of the broader nature of Inuit art. Five watercolor drawings were selected from the UNBC art collection and were employed for the interviews.

There are several places which are famous for Inuit art-making, such as Cape Dorset and Baker Lake. Even though there are some regional differences about themes, influenced by a particular geographic feature or lifestyle, Inuit art across Canada's arctic shares most aspects of its cultural expression (Hessel 1998) as I said before. This thesis does not deal with regional differences and looks at Inuit culture in general. However, the five Inuit drawings employed in the interviews are all from Cape Dorset.

Cape Dorset, where archaeological evidence of a later Arctic culture that began around 800 B.C. was found (Hessel 1998), has the biggest population of Inuit artists, and their art works have spread out throughout the world and are well known. Cape Dorset is a rapidly growing Inuit community of approximately 1200 people on the southwest coast of Baffin Island in the new Canadian territory of Nunavut. The West Baffin Eskimo Co-operative was formed and incorporated there in 1959, and has developed an international reputation for its involvement in promoting greater awareness and appreciation of Inuit fine

art (Dorset Art). The Co-operative is wholly owned by its resident community members. The location of Cape Dorset is shown in the map of Nunavut (APPENDIX C).

Inuit artist identifies the Inuit who produce Inuit art. Some of them do not call themselves "an artist" due to the Inuit perspective about art. On the other hand, there are many people who are proud of their work and are called artists. Inuit artists' views are of concern in understanding what "Inuit art" and "Inuit artist" truly mean. Lalonde (1995:6) says as follows:

> Artists such as Pitseolak are internationally acknowledged as individuals, but that recognition is framed within Western cultural parameters. These parameters do not value the cultural environment from which the art arises; they do not validate the economic motivation of Inuit artists to create; they do not explore the cultural motivation of Inuit artists to document their past, and they do not give credence to the language and vocabulary with which artists such as Pitseolak have verbally expressed their commitment to art and their strong sense of self as artist.

She also adds the necessity and difficulty of understanding a concept of "self " from the Inuit perspective. The concept of Inuit self is integrated into a broader self, which encompasses all the relatives, including their ancestors depicted in oral history, in society, in all humans, in the natural world, and in the spiritual world. Inuit art is Inuit culture, which forms the Inuit collective identity. A famous Inuit artist Kenojuak identifies herself as a mother, a wife, and an Inuit, more than as an artist (Walk 1992). Such Inuit values are important keys to a better appreciation of Inuit art.

The five female artists from Cape Dorset whose drawings I use in the interviews are the ones mainly discussed in this thesis.

Nisga'a Children indicates five Nisga'a children who go to the Gitwinksihlkw School, and are interviewed in my thesis. The children are; Paulina Robinson (Age 8),

Kailani Morgan (Age 7), Raylene Adams (Age 5), Tara Robinson (Age 6), and Harvey Wells (Age 7).

Children's **response** to Inuit art means what children say and express about Inuit drawings. The responses include non-verbal expressions such as face, and body language and tone of voice. As well as the content of children's speech and stories in relation to Inuit drawings, the responses show whether children like or do not, whether they feel comfortable or do not, and whether they are interested in or are not in the depictions and themes of Inuit drawings. The responses emphasize children's voices and views evoked by Inuit art.

Interpretation suggests an understanding from an individual point of view. Interpretation includes biases, and is not the only truth. In the interviews, Nisga'a children interpreted Inuit drawings, and their interpretations are interpreted by me based on my interpretation of the Inuit drawings. My interpretation reflects my cultural background as a Japanese person and my own theoretical stage of life.

Nature means the land and the natural world, which holds all the beings existing naturally on the earth, except human beings. Nature reflects a western concept and view of the natural world. It sees humans as separate from the natural world. Therefore, the word "the natural world" is more frequently used than nature to specify the intended meaning.

First Nations put nothing above nature. "Their gods are a part of nature, on the level of nature, not supra-anything" (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992:16), and for First Nations people nature includes human beings.

> The narrow Western term *nature* seems incapable of enfolding Native notions of a vast, spiritually charged cosmic continuum, in which human society, biosphere, and the whole universe are seamlessly rolled into one (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992:16).

Also, the Japanese word for nature, *shizen*, reflects a Japanese view of the natural world and has a different connotation. The definition and meaning of nature also depends on the individual, as well as culture. Values towards nature vary according to an individual connection with and view of the natural world. Therefore, this thesis is aware of the limitation of this word, when using it in the context of First Nations, art, and the interviewed Nisga'a children's responses to it.

This thesis highly emphasizes the spiritual quality of nature, which permeates First Nation way of life, and which provokes in people a sense of gratitude towards its blessings. This thesis also challenges the idea that nature is nothing but resources to be exploited. The values of nature and the connection between humans and nature are discussed later in the thesis.

Traditional values mean indigenous beliefs which have been established through balanced human relationships with the natural world and have been practiced from time immemorial. Those holding traditional values find that such values permeate their way of life and, in fact, are their lives and identity. Traditional values were essential to all aspects of life.

The list of traditional values that Alfred (1999) gives provides an idea of traditional values. The list was used for the survey of the cultural appropriateness of various social services in his community in the early 1999s. People were asked to say whether they agreed that these concepts were still important today (1999:22). The statements include; responsibility to all creation (97%); importance of extended family (89%); respect for inner strength or wisdom (88%); sacredness and autonomy of children (78%); importance of family unity (78%); wisdom of the past (71%); and sharing and cooperation (71%).

This thesis focuses on appreciation of interconnectedness of all lives; responsibility to all creation in the list, when examining the Nisga'a children's traditional values. It mainly discusses interconnectedness with animals, rather than with plants and rocks, because animals are the major theme described in the Inuit drawings that the children are asked to talk about. This thesis also proposes five factors to assess this interconnectedness of all lives.

Living in harmony with nature is one of the most important First Nations traditional values, and emphasizes the human obligation to practice every day traditional values in life. It includes a respectful and healthy relationship with other lives based in reciprocity—"for humans to express gratitude and make sacrifices routinely—to the natural world in return for the benefits they derive from it—rather than to extract whatever they desire unilaterally" (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992:13). This concept encompasses all spiritual relationships to the universe, to the landscape and to stones, rocks, insects and other things, seen and unseen (Smith 1999). Human beings have enormous responsibility for sustaining harmonious relations within the whole natural world (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992).

Interconnectedness "is rooted in a vast web of reciprocal relationships that have always existed between all elements in nature" (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992:24). The relationships encompass physical and spiritual ties between the earth—with its myriad mountains and forests and rivers—and the first forms of life—the animals, the plants, and people. This concept includes an Animistic view, which believes in a spiritual quality of the natural world, such as rivers, the sun, the moon, plants, rocks, and animals. This view provides people with a sense of gratitude, awe, fear, and reverence toward the natural world and spiritual interactions between humans and animals.

An understanding of the interconnectedness of life makes people live in harmony with nature. This theme is the essence of every First Nation worldview and forms the basis for First Nations values towards life.

Spirit means invisible power in, between, and behind visible things, or an invisible being which has various roles and interacts with human beings. It is "dispersed throughout the cosmos or embodied in an inclusive, cosmos-sanctifying divine being"(Knudtson and Suzuki 1992:13). It is one of the English translations used to describe a whole concept of traditional values seen in Nisga'a and Inuit life. Spirits are sometimes called by different names, depending on their role. Each Aboriginal language has different name for them. The terms in aboriginal language, such as *K'amligihahlhaahl* and *Naxnok* in the Nisga'a language and *Kami* in Shinto, will be referred to with adequate explanation in order to avoid misunderstandings through translation (Smith 1999). The human interactions with spirits strongly support the need for humans to build a balanced relationship with Mother Earth in their lives. Animism sees spirit in every thing in the natural world, and allows people to believe the power of spirit which influences their lives.

Spiritual concerns a quality of spirit, including interactions and relationships among human, animals, and the spirits, physically or metaphysically. When people are called spiritual, it means people with understanding and appreciation of the quality of spirit. Intuitive perception is often required to recognize this quality.

Chapter Three:

Asking Nisga'a Children about Inuit Drawings

Five Inuit drawings

In this Chapter I describe the five drawings based on a review of the literature about Inuit and First Nations worldview, and then I lay out the questions I expected the children might answer through their response to the sculptures. Then I portray the methodology I employed. Images of the drawings are provided in Appendix A. The drawings used are:

Drawing #1 The drawing by Pitseolak shows traditional seal hunting. In the sea, there are many animals, including fish, sea mammals, unidentifiable figures, and even four-legged mammals. They are all in the water. In her picture, some animals and fish have a human-like face. This theme of the sea reminds me of the sea goddess in Inuit mythology known as Taleelayu, Nuliajuk or Sedna, the giver of life and a symbol of abundance, but who could and would withhold her animals when angered (Hessel 1998).

This drawing by Pitseolak illustrates Inuit daily life, but also expresses the Inuit interconnectedness to the natural sea world in hunting, which also relates to Inuit mythology. Humans, animals, fish, and birds are inextricably connected and share the world, as their oral histories tell.

Drawing #2 In Lucy's drawing, there are four yellow bird-like beings, as well as a red unidentifiable being in the center. The red being does not look like anything in the real world. It may be a spiritual figure. It is spreading its arms over the yellow birds. Inuit sculpture and print often represents a similar theme, which portrays the proud and protective owl mother and her offspring (Roch 1974).

All the five beings in the drawing have big round eyes, which appear to be observing the world thoroughly. These big eyes might be indicators of the spiritual passageways (Fienup-Riordan 2000). Fienup-Riordan (2000) writes that the ringed center eye motifs signify the passageway between worlds: the human and nonhuman worlds. The passageway motifs are also symbols of communication between the worlds of the hunter and the hunted, as well as the living and the dead. According to her, "not only did the motif of the ringed center signify spiritual vision and movement between worlds but the act of encircling was also performed in various contexts to produce enhanced spiritual vision or as protection from spiritual invasion" (Fienup-Riordan 2000: 195). This motif suggests shamanism. The employment of the motif in arts and festivals today shows an example of how much Inuit art maintains traditional values and spirituality under the Western influence.

The birds, or parts of birds such as feathers, have important meanings in Inuit legendary accounts (Ray 1961). The Inuit believed that the birds did miraculous things for human beings, such as enabling the people to fly in the air, or to go as fast as an arrow in a kayak (Ray 1961). The birds also taught human beings how to dance and how to make a drum:

> The eagle and the brant goose also told the Eskimos how to dance two of their most important dances, the Eagle Dance and the Red Fox Dance. Not only did the eagle tell them how to prepare for the dance, but he ordered them to make a box drum, the pounding of which is the beating of his heart (Ray 1961: 114).

In some traditions, the bird is symbolic of the soul; in others the bird is recognized as an intelligent collaborator with man, the bird being the bearer of celestial messages (Halifax 1982: 86).

The way Lucy draws illustrates her curiosity and love towards the birds. Such love comes from an inherent love and sense of kinship with all forms of life on earth (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992: 84).

Drawing #3 In Kenojuak's drawing there are two bears which look like a mother and a cub, as well as a big bird. They are drawn in white and black. The body of the bird and bears are decorated with spots. The background is decorated by a design with three colors: purple, green, and red. Both the bird and bears take human-like dignity on their face. The eyes of each figure look like those of human beings.

The mother and child theme is one of the most important themes in Inuit art (Hessel 1998). The close relationship between a mother and a child was crucial to survival in the harsh climate. Under the severe environment it is a mother's responsibility to protect her children and to teach how to survive. Although this theme often appears in the form of humans in Inuit art, this drawing shows that of bears. It illustrates that bears equally have closeness between a mother bear and her cub. First Nations people believe that animals live in their own world like the human world. Considering that, it is natural to imagine a mother's love for her child in animals.

Drawing #4 In Eegyvudluk's drawing, there is a bird, which is an owl-like figure, staring at viewers with big eyes. Many colors are used to decorate the background of the owl, as if it praises the owl's dignity. In this way the artist shows "the impulse to renew humankind's deep-seated and perhaps ultimately irrepressible capacity to be drawn to, somehow identify with, and even feel visceral concern and affection for fellow animal species" (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992: 84).

Drawing #5 Kudjuakjuk's drawing depicts an aspect of Inuit life, which focuses on Dogsledding. Interestingly, the figures which are pulled by a sled (supposed to be dogs) and the figures which ride on the sled (supposed to be human beings) take on the same physical appearances. They are unidentifiable creatures. This drawing depicts that animals and human beings take equal and joint roles in one activity to survive. It seems that this drawing centers on a significance of the activity itself, where human and animals are involved and are given the same respect. This message communicates the Inuit interconnectedness of life. Humans and animals both at the physical and spiritual level help and relate to each other for each of them to be able to fulfill his/her purpose for being given by Mother Earth and are involved in the creation and keeping of balance (Kawagley 1995).

Interview Data Analysis

Research Questions

My basic research questions and sub-questions were used to analyze the interview results but were not directly asked of Nisga'a children. The research questions are as follows:

1. What do Inuit drawings mean to the Nisga'a children?

2. Do they demonstrate their traditional values in their responses to Inuit drawings? The key sub-questions to assist research question #2 are:

A. Do the children show an interest in Inuit drawings?

This question asks whether Inuit depictions of the natural world and animals are attractive and interesting for the children, and what Inuit drawings mean to them. If the

children do not show any interest in the drawings, then one can assume that they do not find the drawings valuable from their perspective.

B. Do they mention animals as if the animals have human characteristics, such as human emotions or an ability to speak?

If the children think that animals have emotions or abilities as humans do, they understand animals based on traditional values. Traditional society expected hunters to be able to communicate with animals to demonstrate respectful attitudes (Wenzel 1991, Nisga'a Language and Culture Department School District No.92 [Nisga'a] 1996).

First Nations people sometimes call animals and fish, "animal people," and "fish people" (Eastman 1911). The Haida refer to "whales and ravens as their 'brothers' and 'sisters' and to fish and trees as the finned and tree people" (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992:xxv). Also there are some Inuit stories which portray that a human being may turn into a fish and allow him/herself to be speared, swimming away with part of the object he/she desired still intact (Gibson 1996). These stories show "a conceived fluidity between the states of human and animal life" (Gibson 1996:33) and illustrate how people interact with animals. Tsimshian culture views animals and fish as members of societies which have intelligence and power and can influence the course of events with respect to their interrelationship with human beings (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992: 153).

C. Do they rank animals as equal, or superior, or inferior to humans?

This question is to see how the children relate to animals with respect to their understanding of their traditional values, such as oral histories and the concept of interconnectedness of all lives.

If they think that animals are "superior" to humans (Wenzel 1991: 138) for some reason, their values may be relevant to traditional values: First Nations folklore frequently talks about animal's smartness which helps people or tricks them (Radin 1972, Dove 1990). Sometimes animals are identified with gods and sometimes with tricksters (Radin 1972, Dove 1990). Nisga'a oral histories, which tell how the world was created, suggest that human beings needed power and wisdom of animals, such as ravens and salmon, to survive and to learn about the world from the time of creation (Toye-Welsh 1997). The animals were great teachers of human beings.

If children regard animals as equal to them, they may understand that humans share the land with animals in a balanced way. This idea is associated with the spirit world where human spirits and animal spirits live with no difference, as the Nisga'a believed (Nisga'a Language and Culture Department School District No.92 [Nisga'a] 1996:162).

The animals in the Inuit drawings are often decorated with many colors. In Inuit way of drawing, it appears to me that the Inuit artists treat animals with respect. I believe that Inuit art thus reveals the Inuit traditional views of animals, where the Inuit see animals as their equal and superior. This idea is also seen in their belief that animal's life for food is given to humans because of animal spirit's generous consideration for human beings. Inuit respect for animals is also based on their belief that animals are as sentient beings as humans, not that they are superior to humans (Wenzel 1991).

I sometimes hear people say that they want to be born as a bird or cat in their next life because of an animal's special talent and characteristic that humans do not have. Here, people accept animals' superiority in some sense. On the other hand, Buddhist respect for

other lives comes from human mercy for lower beings. Human superiority in intelligence is emphasized here.

D. Do they relate traditional clan connections or oral history to animals?

The children might talk about their culture based on traditional values, such as the clan system and their oral history, in their response to Inuit drawings. This question is to see if the children relate to animals with a special sense of connection as First Nations cultures traditionally demonstrated. The Inuit drawings contain bears and eagles, with which many Nisga'a have a clan connection. The Nisga'a also have an oral history about the Lava bed made from the eruption of a volcano in response to children's disrespectful treatment of fish.

E. How do they respond to unidentifiable figures in the drawings?

There are some unidentifiable figures in the drawings. I believe that these are spiritual beings which were commonly talked about in First Nations society but are not discussed as often today in the Western influenced world. Question E is to know how the Nisga'a children perceive these figures and what they say about them. Do they regard these figures as strange or as spiritual beings?

Interview Methods

The interviews were held at the grade school in Gitwinksihlkw. I had asked the school principal for permission through a letter (APPENDIX B) in advance and had received permission to conduct the interviews. I also mentioned that I would need help from the teachers with the selection of five children whose age is around or less than seven, as well as advice concerning the arrangement of the interviews. I was planning to have two girls and two boys for my interviewees; however I got one boy and four girls. A teacher gave me a list

of children who have good eyes for art and are not too shy to speak. They are all wonderful children. All of them were very helpful and willing to spend time with me. The children are; Paulina Robinson (Age 8), Kailani Morgan (Age 7), Raylene Adams (Age 5), Tara Robinson (Age 6), Harvey Wells (Age 7).

I was introduced to the class and spent the first day with the students without starting the interviews, so that they would get to know me and feel comfortable with me. Also I thought that to know my interviewees better would help me interpret what they said. Although within a limited time, I actively participated in the activities with the students; I attended the class with them, helped them with their studies, we drew pictures together, ate lunch together, and played outside together. The children were shy at first, but the more time I spent with them, the more it seemed they were comfortable talking to me. I learned how much drawing was incorporated into their curriculum and how much they liked drawing pictures. They were using felt pens for drawing, which are the same tool as Inuit artists employed in the Inuit drawings. I liked to draw and I showed some of my drawings to them.

The next day, I interviewed the children. The interviews were conducted individually with the five children. An empty classroom was used for the interview session, so the children could feel at ease in a place where they were accustomed. A video camera was set up at an appropriate spot in the room to record every reaction from each child, including their facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice. These reactions indicated whether the child was interested in the drawings or not, and whether they liked the drawings or not.

I did not consider the order of the interviews. I respected the schedule of the class and the preference of each student; I basically followed the instructions from the teacher. The teacher asked each child to go to take an interview during class time. The children were not

given any information about Inuit drawings or the artists so as to gain their pure and fresh responses. Each interview took about ten minutes, depending on the interests and concentration of each child. All interviews with the five children were finished during two classes.

Questions Asked the Children

In the interview, each child was asked to talk about anything they saw or felt. The children were given enough time to think and were encouraged to create their own stories in relation to the drawings. The questions to start the conversation were:

1. What is this drawing about?

2. What do you see in this drawing?

3. Do you like this drawing?

4 Can you tell me some story about this drawing?

The children were not asked to speak any further beyond their will, because interest was the most important determining factor to examine their appreciation of Inuit drawings.

I gave small gifts to all my interviewees and their classmates after the interviews. The gifts were handmade origami (folding paper) crafts: a small box and a crane. Most of the children had not seen them before and were excited about them. The children showed a great appreciation and interest towards Japanese culture as well as Inuit culture.

The third day, I went to the school to see the children learning in the class, and also I was going to say good-bye to them. Many students were absent from school this day, because they went for berry-picking. I found it interesting that the school accepts berry-picking as a proper reason for absence. I imagine that it was and is an important part of learning in Nisga'a culture and tradition. Here, the Nisga'a school curriculum plays a major role.

Later, I sent a thank you card and photos to the school and the children.

Challenges to the Interview Process and Suggestions for Future Research

Because I did not explain to the children about the cassette recorder and video recorder, almost all the children asked me about the machine, and their questions stopped or changed the flow of the conversation to some extent. Because what the children said about the machines has nothing to do with the interview context, I should have explained them to the children before the interviews. Also, because I did not explain anything about the Inuit and Inuit culture, they questioned me about the Inuit alphabet. Even though their questions were not directly related to the drawings, their attentions to the alphabet show that the children are sensitive to something unknown, and I believe that these reactions are an important sign to know their cultural sensitivity.

I had not planned to tell the children about Inuit people and therefore I answered their questions only briefly. To provide the children with information about Inuit culture in advance might have helped them understand the Inuit life that is expressed in art, and the children might have said something more relevant to Inuit culture. However, in my interviews I tried to be careful about giving information to the children, because I am not familiar with teaching methods for children of various ages, and I did not know how teachers deal with different cultures in schools. Also, I am not an Inuit person or Inuit artist, and I did not feel it was appropriate to give the children any information.

To introduce new things to children may always enhance their knowledge; however, researchers need to consider an appropriate way to approach children according to the child's learning stage, the school curriculum and the type of information itself.

Interview Methodology: a Negative Aspect and a Positive Aspect

Instead of asking the children my research questions directly, I decided to simply ask questions such as what the children saw. This thesis centers on children's pure responses to Inuit drawings. However, being afraid that the children might not talk about anything relevant to them, I decided to sometimes give some related questions according to the flow of the conversation. As a result, my questions vary depending on what the children said, and what the children said also varies, according to my questions. For example as Chapter 4 shows, I asked about the clan of Paulina, but I did not ask this of other children. Nobody else talked about his/her clan system. The length of the interviews also varies depending on each child's concentration.

In order to make conversations natural and make the children feel comfortable, I wanted to listen to and talk with them as a human and as a Japanese person, not only as a researcher with many questions. I tried to avoid being systematic and automatic by not giving them all the same questions. To minimize the differences between the responses of the children, I could give them the same simple questions. However, I realized that this would not work, because the children stopped talking if I only gave them simple questions. It appears that how much they talk about what they feel is related to their shyness. I needed to urge them to speak.

Also, it was difficult to pose questions which did not give them any direction. Therefore, even though I tried not to lead children's answers, my questions were prepared with some expected answer in mind. Therefore the children must have been affected in their responses to some extent. If I had only given the same questions to the children, the

interviews would have been intact, but boring and unnatural. I believe that my interviews were successful in providing children with an atmosphere where they could talk without being hesitant. The children's enormous interest and understanding created a smooth flow in the interview process.

Thus my interviews take an interactive approach. Looking at the positive side, our flexible conversation reveals how each child is unique and different. This process also exposes differences and similarities in our views between Nisga'a and Japanese people, and consequently, this helps people to understand the Nisga'a children's unique way of thinking and looking at the world that might not have been noticed by Nisga'a people. This interactive communication allows for a deep insight into the Inuit drawings, Japanese culture, and Nisga'a culture.

Chapter Four:

What do Inuit drawings mean to the Nisga'a children?

Interview with the Nisga'a children at Gitwinksihlkw

In the interviews, the children showed a variety of facial expressions, behaviors, and tones of their voice, which are important part of their responses. Their feeling and thought are sometimes better communicated through these non-verbal expressions; unfortunately, a written document has a limitation in revealing these expressions. Also, all these expressions that communicated to me are interpreted based on my understanding, which may miss some cultural and psychological connotation that can be observed by a professional eye. The videotape shows the Nisga'a children's non-verbal expressions and covers what my written document could not express.

Observing the children's reactions, I was sometimes hesitant to talk to them. They looked absorbed in the drawings as if they were full of feelings and thoughts. Being afraid that my questions might disturb their process of learning new things, I asked them a few questions only to encourage them to speak, but most of the time I tried to read their thoughts and feelings through their non-verbal expressions.

Following are the transcriptions of the interviews of the five children. The sequence is the order in which the interviews occurred.

Paulina Robinson, Age 8

Paulina's response to Pitseolak's drawing, Drawing #1

1. Paulina: Do you want me to say something about the pictures?

2. Yuka: Yeah, please. What is this drawing about? You can say everything you want.

3. P: A bear.

4. Y: Yes.

5. P: A wolf. Is there a seal in there? A person going fishing for fish, he's got one seal. I don't know what that is?

6. Y: That's right. So it's a person fishing?

7. P: Yeah.

8. Y: Ahh.

9. P: Did you draw this?

10. Y: Not me, what do you think about the person who draws this?

11. P: It looks good. (Pause) What does it say down here?

12. Y: This is an Inuit writing, Inuit people..... Do you have any other stories to say?

13. P: They are all fighting.

14. Y: What?

15. P: They are all fighting.

16. Y: Fighting.

17. P: What's that? [pointing at one of the animals in the sea]

18. Y: What's that?

19. P: I don't know.

20. Y: Why are they fighting?

21. P: They don't like the other animals.

22. Y. Um.

23. Y: Is it a canoe?

24. P: Yeah.

25. Y: So they are all under...

26. P: Under the sea. These are their paddles.

27. Y: Yeah. Is it possible that they are all under the sea? There is a bear?

28. P: (She shakes her head, meaning 'no')

29. Y: Why do you think they are fighting under the sea?

30. P: They all fell in.

31. Y: Hm?

32. P: They fell in.

33. Y: Yeah.

34. P: They are fighting, fighting over fish under the sea.

35. Y: Ahhh, ahh, that's right.

36. Y: Do you like this? Do you think it's good?

37. P: It looks nice.

38. Y. So we are going to go on to the next picture.

Paulina's response to Lucy's drawing, Drawing #2

1. P: There is a spider, there are big doves, owls. It's a nice one, too. These should be birds and a red spider.
2. Y: Spider.
3. P: Hm.
4. Y: Have you seen a red spider?
5. P: [No, just] Little ones.
6. Y: Ahhuh.
7. Y: Why do you think it's red?
8. P: The colour of the trees.
9. Y: Trees?
10. P: That's what the spiders crawl over. It doesn't want the bears in the trees.
11. Y: Haah, That's interesting. Are they same kind of birds or different?
12. P: Different.

Paulina's response to Kenojuak's drawing, Drawing #3

1. Y: Here we go to the next one.
2. P: This is a mama bear, these two. This is a cub. And this is a bird...an eagle.
3. Y: Ahh.
4. P: [the eagle is] pecking the bear's back! There are leaves.
5. Y: Yeah, leaves. Are they getting along?

6. P: He's massaging the back.

7. Y: Massaging the back? So are Bears and eagles friends?

8. P: Yeah. There are lots of bears around here.

9. Y: Yeah. Have you seen eagles too?

10. P: Lots around the park.

11. Y: Have you seen bears a lot?

12. P: Down by the bridge.

13. Y: Ahhh. Did you do something to them?

14. P: We shot them.

15. Y: (Sad sound) Ahh...What do you think about it [shooting]?

16. P: Cool.

17. Y: Cool? Why do you shoot them? Dangerous?

18. P: I think so. Always they steal, and I think they shot it.

19. Y: People don't like bears?

20. P: Yeah, we do.

21. Y: We do, eh?

22. P: Do you guys?

23. Y: Yeah, We do. I don't know. We share the land, anyways they live, too. We need to be friends. Are we friends?

24. P: Huh?

25. Y: Are human beings and bears friends?

26. P: Hu-huh.

27. Y: Are eagles and human beings friends?

28. P: Animals and people are friends.

29. Y: Yeah? Which clan are you from?

30. P: Eagle and half bear.

31. Y: Oh, really? So it [this drawing] is like your clan. Do your family talk about the clan?

32. P: Yeah.

33. Y: Anything else?

34. P: No.

Paulina's response to Eegyvudluk's drawing, Drawing # 4

1. P: It's a pretty bird.
2. Y: Yeah.
3. P: It looks like an owl perching the back of it. Big stump.
4. Y: Umm.
5. P. Did these come from Prince George?
6. Y: No, it's from up north. Cape Dorset. Alaska—no, no, Canada [In fact Canada].
7. P: There are things like this up there?
8. Y: Things like this?
9. P: Yeah.
10. Y: Umm... You mean like these colourful birds?
11. P: Yes.
12. Y: I think they are from their [the artist's] imagination and thinking. But when you draw, you can draw anything you like, right?
13. P: Yes. I want to be an artist when I grow up.
14. Y: What?
15. P: I want to be an artist when I grow up.
16. Y: Yeah, you can be. Then you draw your own, what you think is beautiful and pretty. What do you think about drawing, using lots of colours like this?
17. P: Nice.
18. Y: Do you like to draw animals like this?
19. P: (nods)
20. Y: Yeah. So cute.

Paulina's response to Kudjuakjuk's drawing, Drawing #5

1. P: This part looks like a fish, the other part looks like a bear, another body back of it. And this looks like lizards.
2. Y: Hm.

3. P: This looks like a bird. These two should be kids.
4. Y: These are kids?
5. P: Yeah. These three are babies. There're horses to them. I think I am finished with this one.
6. Y: Yeah? Anything else you would like to say?
7. P: No.
8. Y: Thank you.

Keilani Morgan, Age 7

Keilani's response to Pitseolak's drawing, Drawing #1

1. Keilani: What's this for?
2. Yuka: Tape recording to remember what you say.
3. K: So you turned it off?
4. Y: No, turned it on. Can we start?
5. K: What do we have to do?
6. Y: You tell me what you find, everything you find.
7. K: Everything I learnt on them?
8. Y: Yeah, everything, what you think, or you feel? What...
9. K: You mean what I know about them?
10. Y: No, no. What is this drawing about?
11. K: You mean what they are called?
12. Y: No, no. You can make a story about them, too.
13. K: You mean, what they are called?
14. Y: No, no. You can tell me anything, what they are doing, or what you think they are doing.
15. K: They look like they are swimming.
16. Y: Swimming?
17. K: He looks like he's gonna try catch some.
18. Y: Ahh, yeah.

19. K: He looks like he caught one already.
20. Y: Yeah? That's right... hm.
21. K: What's that [one of the animals in the sea]? It looks like a wolf.
22. Y: Why are they swimming? Can they swim?
23. K: Bears could. But I don't know if they go into the water.
24. Y: Hm.
25. K: I don't know about this and this and this. I only know this one. You guys have bears in Japan?
26. Y: Yes, we do.
27. K: Do they walk around in Japan?
28. Y: Yeah, sometimes.
29. K: What do they do to people?
30. Y: If people go into their territory, they might attack you.
31. Y: What do they do to people here?
32. K: They just walk around and look for food.
33. Y: Look for food.
34. K: Most of them, most of the time, they don't come here. What does this say?
35. Y: This is an Inuit language.
36. K: What does it say?
37. Y: I think it's about the name of the artist.
38. K: Did you bring these here?
39. Y: Yes. To show you and ask you about these.
40. K: What does this say?
41. Y: Oh, actually, I cannot read, but this is something about... This is Pitseolak who draw this. Her name and where she lives and she can imagine all this.
42. K: She drew all this?
43. Y: Yes. What do you think?
44. K: Can I look at this one now?

Keilani's response to Lucy's drawing, Drawing #2

1. K: Ahhhh! Those look like owls.
2. Y: Hm.
3. K: These look like.... A peanut. What's that [a red being]?
4. Y: I don't know... What do you think?
5. K: It looks like an octopus.
6. Y: Because of the colour? Because it's red?
7. K: And because of the hands.
8. Y: Why are they all together, do you think?
9. K: I like the way people draw in Japan. (She misunderstands the drawing was done by Japanese people)
10. Y: What kind of picture have you seen? Like these drawings?
11. K: Yeah.
12. Y: Those are Inuit's [drawings]. They are not Japanese. Why do you like these? Why?
13. K: Because of the way they got drawn.
14. Y: You mean animals? Lots of animals here.
15. K: Yeah.

Keilani's response to Kenojuak's drawing, Drawing #3

1. K: Ahh! Those are two bears. That looks like some kind of a bird.
2. Y: Hm.
3. K: What are these [designs behind the animals]?
4. Y: What do you think these are?
5. K: They look like leaves.
6. Y: Yeah.
7. K: What's going on in the Inuit language here?
8. Y: Right here?
9. K: I don' know. What does it say?

10. Y: It says.... Kenojuak.
11. K: Kenojuak?
12. Y: Hm.

Keilani's response to Eegyvudluk's drawing, Drawing #4

1. K: I've seen this one before, but I haven't. Looks like an owl with bunch of stuff behind it. Looks like a hat. It has hair on it. Looks like shoes. Looks like dirt. (Pause) I like the way they made this.
2. Y: Hm? Why do you like those?
3. K: I wonder who made it.
4. Y: Yeah. Inuit people, I will show you later pictures of the artists.
5. K: So, the next picture?
6. Y: Yeah, the last one.

Keilani's response to Kudjuakjuk's drawing, Drawing #5

1. K: They look like a whole bunch of birds and ants. These look like ants and birds.
2. Y: Hm.
3. K: These look birds and their body like just following around.
4. Y: What are they doing?
5. K: I don't know.
6. Y: Do you like those? What do you think about these strange things?
7. K: They look like something, I don't know what they are called, but looks like something pulling down like somebody's holding onto them so that bird looks like it's going that way somewhere, they look like they are walking up the hill.
8. Y: Hm.
9. K: I like the way they draw.
10. Y: Why do you like the way they draw? What is the most interesting thing for you? Why do you like the picture?
11. K: Just the way they look like.

12. Y: What is that [the vehicle]?
13. K: Like sleigh or something? Sleigh like wintertime? They can use that.
14. Y: Like canoe or something.
15. K: Like sled?
16. Y: Yeah, sled.
17. Y: There's an eye here or something?
18. K: I don't know! Can I look at the [artists'] pictures now?
19: Y: Hm?
20: K: Can I look at the pictures now?

Raylene Adams, Age 5

Raylene's reponse to Pitseolak's drawing, Drawing #1

1. Raylene: Hee! (A big smile) A boy. What's this?
2. Yuka: What's this [One of the animals] ?
3. R: Fish. Looks like a dragon. Seal.
4. Y: Dragon?
5. R: This one is a bear. This one is a little fox, a little baby fox. Number one! [Looking at the small note, saying drawing #1].
6. Y: What are they doing here?
7. R: They are catching one of these.
8. Y: Okay.
9. R: Catch those ones. He has a canoe here.
10. Y: Yeah?
11. R: He pushes him around in water.
12. Y: Yeah.
13. R: Mittens in here.
14. Y: That's right.
15. R: Nothing else! ..... She is pushing that in the water.
16. Y: Yes, that's good.

Raylene's response to Lucy's drawing, Drawing #2

1. Y: Would you like to see another picture?
2. R: (Nods)
3. R: Hee! These are birdies. This is an octopus, black eye, red mouth, red eyes. These red eyes are birdies. These are baby birds. They are hatched. This has a nose they can find this over here.
4. Y: Yeah?
5. R: What are these right there? (She is curious about Inuit letters)
6. Y: These are their language, language of the artist. We have a different language.

Raylene's response to Kenojuak's drawing, Drawing #3

1. R: Bears, birds. Birds and what's those? These birds. Green, red, Purple, purple, green, red (Hitting on the drawing picture with a hand). What are these [Inuit letters]?
2. Y: These are different language from English, Inuit language. These are the same. Do you like that?
3. ..... (She takes the next drawing and starts looking at it by herself)

Raylene's response to Eegyvudluk's drawing, Drawing #4

1. R: Bird.
2. Y: Why do you think it's got those pretty things?
3. R: Ah...I don't know.
4. Y: What are they [the things around the bird]?
5. R: They are feathers. What's that [a head part of the bird]?
6. Y: What's this?
7. R: It looks like a head.

Raylene's response to Kudjuakjuk's drawing, Drawing #5

1. R: This is birds take a fish.
   (She is out of concentration.)
2. Y: That's it? No more stories to tell?
3. R: ..... (She starts to put away all the drawing tidily.)
4. Y: Thank you.

Tara Robinson, Age 6

Tara's response to Pitseolak's drawing, Drawing #1

1. Tara: Can I hold the picture?
2. Yuka: You don't need to. Tell me anything.
3. T: I like pictures because it looks nice and I like to draw.
4. Y: Ah, How about this picture, what do you think? What do you see?
5. T: I can see fish.
6. Y: Yeah, ah.
7. T: That's right there. And I can see a boat with people and fish. People are fishing. A person is looking in the water where the fish are.
8. Y: Huh.
9. T: There isn't big fish. There is some small fish.
10. Y: Are they all fish?
11. T: Not all of them, I can see this one is a bear. And one is a wolf. And I can see, I think that's a... I don't know what this one is.
12. Y: I don't know. What are they doing?
13. T: I think that they are fighting.
14. Y: Ah, fighting. Why are they fighting?
15. T: I think it's because some people, some other fish don't like the others?
16. Y: What do you think about fighting?
17. T: Think about fighting?

18. Y: Hm. Is it a good thing or bad thing?
19. T: Bad thing.
20. Y: Bad. You don't want to do?
21. T: Hn?
22. Y: You don't want to do.
23. T: No. Can we do the next one now?

Tara's response to Lucy's drawing, Drawing #2

1. T: This one about birds. Look, there are some spotted ones, and a red bird, yellow one. One has some spots and the other has more spots. I want to see this one [pointing at Kenjuak's drawing].
2. Y: What's this [meaning an unusual figure]?
3. T: I don't know. Mother bird?
4. Y: Mother bird? So what are they doing?
5. T: Mother bird is taking care of the baby birds.
6. Y: Oh, that's right. So, taking care of the birds. Okay.
7. T: Some of them are pretty big.

Tara's response to Kenojuak's drawing, Drawing #3

1. T: I can see some bears and a bird. I think the bird is pecking on the bears. I can see some leaves. There are purple leaves and green leaves and red leaves. I think the red leaves are being ready for fall and green leaves are going to be ready after fall. I don't know about the purple.
2. Y: That's right.
3. T: Who drew these pictures?
4. Y: People who live far North part, Cape Dorset.
5. T: Cool. This kind of drawing is painting?
6. Y: This is done by felt pens like ones you have. What you think....
7. T: Pair bear.

8. Y: Why do you think this bird is pecking on the bears.
9. T: Because the small bird, the baby. It is standing on the big bear.

Tara's response to Eegyvudluk's drawing, Drawing #4

1. T: This one I could see an owl with whole bunch of stuff on it.
2. Y: What's the stuff?
3. T: A funny hat. He's standing on the wood with a whole bunch of flowers back of him. Even it's red and purple, that's what I could see and the blue hat. And owl is grey and the wood is brown. That's what I could see here, the only thing that I could see.
4. Y: Why do you think this bird has the funny stuff? Do you think that people look at the bird like this?
5. T: Because the bird has a hat with three big crowns on the top, and it's because flowers in back of him look like they are all his feathers, and stretching up feather, some of them look like hearts.
6. Y: Do you think this drawing looks nice?
7. T: Yeah. (Pause) That's all I could see.

Tara's response to Kudjuakjuk's drawing, Drawing #5

1. Y: The last one.
2. T: I can see some red drawing. This is nice, and I think these people are birds. And some of them look like a reindeer fishing. Some of them look like birds, some of them look like peoples. Some of them look like sleighbirds.
3. Y: What did you say?
4. T: A sleigh bird. And what's this (pointing at the microphone)?
5. Y: A microphone?
6. T: What does it do?
7. Y: It catches our voices
8. T: All our voices?
9. Y: All the voices.

10. T: Their drawing looks very nice. Look at some eyes. Big eyes, small eyes and medium eyes. Some eyes we've got...
11. Y: Why do they have eyes?
12. T: Because of all the little circles there.
13. Y: It's a sleighbird, right? Are all of them working together?
14. T: Huhu, no, not all together, some of them are apart. This one and this one.
15. Y: Are they looking at the same thing?
16. T: Yes, it looks very nice.
17. Y: Yeah.
18. T: I like all of these.
19. Y: Which one do you like best?
20. T: I don't know, they all look nice. I like this one [Drawing #4]
21. Y: Oh, why.
22. T: It's because I like the drawing, the drawing has nice colours. Purple and red especially in this. It's because there are hearts on them.
23. Y: You like hearts? I saw you draw a lot of hearts. Why do you like hearts?
24. T: Because I love a lot of people, a lot of people here and from where I lived last time. I have three places to live, I used to have three places to live. Now I only have two places to live. I live with my dad, and up here there are a lot of people I like in town too. Some of them are boys some of them are little girls. I love my grandpa and grandma.
25. Y: Nice.
26. T: I like this drawing. Because I like all of them. I like them all best, but I decided to pick on it best. I would like to start with all of them. This one [Drawing # 1] has nice drawing, because there is a bird and there are some white ones. Water looks nice. The boat looks very nice. I never know these are going in water. And this, and the bear is in the water, because he is trying to catch fish. He's getting ready for the weekend? What are those? [referring to the video camera]
27. Y: I will tell you later.
28. T: Is this catching our voice in it, too?

Harvey Wells, Age 7

Harvey's response to Pitseolak's drawing, Drawing #1

1. Yuka: I will show you pictures, and tell me what you find and what you think and everything.
2. Harvey: Hm! It looks like a dog, I mean, a tiger [pointing to one specific animal with spots]. Are those water animals, because that's water?
3. Y: Yeah, maybe... but they have four legs.
4. H: Yeah, four legs, two legs...
5. Y: What are they doing in the water?
6. H: Swimming. Sleeping.
7. Y: Some of them are sleeping.
8. H: Some of them are swimming.
9. Y: What is this person doing?
10. H: Mm..mm... trying to catch animals?
11. Y: Are they all sleeping or swimming?
12. H: He's riding on a canoe.
13. Y: Shall we go to the next one?
14. H: What's this? [microphone]
15. Y: This is a mic. Microphone to record your voice.

Harvey's response to Lucy's drawing, Drawing #2

1. H: An octopus, four birds, hey, I thought he had eight legs instead of four. I didn't know they are red.
2. H: Paulina...
3. H: Black eyes....
4. Y: What is this octopus doing?
5. H: I don't know,
6. Y: I don't know?

7. H: Hey there is a mouth like them. How come it has a red line, and this one doesn't.
8. Y: It's interesting, hey?
9. H: Now I wanna those bird things and the little box [meaning origami cranes that I made as a gift].
10. Y: I will make some tomorrow and give them to you.

Harvey's response to Kenojuak's drawing, Drawing #3

1. H: Oh! A big bird, bigger than the bears.
2. Y: That's right. Why is it bigger than them?
3. H: And an eagle, I didn't know it was bigger than the bears.
4. Y: That's right. It's so big.
5. H: And a big beak. Is that part of the eagle or just leaves?
6. Y: What do you think?
7. H: .... (Silence)
   (Interrupted)
8. Y: So what is this eagle doing?
9. H: Pecking this one [the bear]?
10. Y: Hmm. Yeah...
11. H: .....(Silence)
12. Y: Is there anything? Anything interesting?
13. H: Looks like a hill. I thought that the part is connected.
14. H: There is a sun. Six leaves.
15. Y: Yeah.

Harvey's response to Eegyvudluk's drawing, Drawing #4

1. H: Oh! Is that a bear, bear bird?
2. Y: bear bird?
3. H: (nod) Those look like they are in water.

4. Y: Water?

5. H: Yes.

6. Y: What did you say?

7. H: They look like something from the water.

8. Y: Something?

9. H: I didn't know that the bird could have the leaves. Did they colour this, all of them, or did they just paint them?

10. Y: They used felt pens like you used today. It's a good colour.

11. H: Paulina... Shall I open the door?

(Paulina and Keilani came into the room)

Harvey's response to Kudjuakjuk's drawing, Drawing #5

1. (Keilani and Paulina came into the room and talked to Harvey.) Keilani: Say what you like about it. She wants to know what you like about it.

2. H: Look at these fish deer. Look!

3. Paulina: I think we should go out for a while. He is shy to talk in front of everybody.

4. Y: Yeah! That's a good idea [To Paulina].

(They left the room.)

5. Y: Now you can talk to me.

6. H: What does it say there? [He points at the Inuit language]

7. Y: It is a different language, not Nisga'a, not English, an Inuit language. What are they doing here?

8. H: ..... (Silence, while staring at the drawing)

9. Y: So these are fish?

10. H: Fish people!

11. Y: Yeah, so these are fish people?

12. H: Yeah. They have tails.

13. Y: That's right. So are they fishing?

14. H: It looks like that they are fishing.

15. Y: Do you fish like this? Is that what your Dad does?

16. H: Yep. He does.

17. Y: Which drawing do you like best?

18. H: All of them!

19. Y: Oh, do you like them? How do you like them?

20. H: They are nice.

21. Y: Do you like pictures of animals?

23. H: (nods) They all have birds, except for this one [Drawing #5]. What are these?

24. Y: These are names of the persons who drew.

25. H: Like here.....

26. Y: That's good? That's it?

Chapter Five:

Nisga'a children's responses to Inuit drawings

Interviews Data Analysis

In this chapter I will analyze the interview data, following my research questions. As mentioned previously, these questions were created to help me examine the Nisga'a children's connection with animals in their responses to the Inuit art, but were not asked the children directly.

A. Do the children show an interest in Inuit drawings?

Non-verbal Responses of Liking

The Inuit drawings drew great attention from the children. All the drawings caught their eyes and made the children silent every now and then. Their faces brightened up at the moment they saw the colorful depictions of the animals. Their shining and smiling eyes showed that they were full of joy and excitement as if they found something interesting.

Kailani often made sounds of excitement and appreciation, with such words like "Ahh." Harvey said with surprise, "Look!" and "Oh!" Tara frequently said "Nice" and told me many times that she liked the drawings. The five-year-old girl, Raylene, was constantly

touching and stroking the shapes in the drawings with enthusiasm, while smiling fulsomely. She sometimes said "Hee!" with excitement. Even though her concentration did not last long, she showed her great excitement towards the drawings. Once she finished looking enough at one drawing, she always wanted to see another drawing as soon as possible and started to look at the next drawing by herself.

Reasons for Liking

When asked, the children said that they liked the drawings and appreciated the way the Inuit artists drew. When asked if she liked the drawings, Paulina said that she liked them because they looked nice. Keilani said that she liked the way the artists draw three times, appreciating just the way the drawings look. Tara said, "I like pictures because it looks nice and I like to draw." She repeatedly said that she liked the drawings. Another reason why she liked the drawings was because the drawings had nice colors. In the last part of her interview, she started to mention each drawing all over again and commented how nice each depiction looked:

> *I like this drawing, because I like all of them. I like them all best, but I decided to pick on it best. I would like to start with all of them. This one [Drawing #1] has nice drawing, because there is a bird and there are some white ones. Water looks nice. The boat looks very nice.*

I asked Harvey if he liked the drawings, and he answered:

> *Y: Which drawing do you like best?*

H: All of them!
Y: Oh, do you like them? How do you like them?
H: They are nice.
Y: Do you like pictures of animals?
H: (nods) They all have birds, except for this one [Drawing #5].

What appealed to the children most was the colorful and decorative depiction of the animals, some of which they are familiar with in their lives and some of which they do not know. The children themselves often draw pictures at school, and it seems that art serves as an important communication tool to express their ideas and to learn others'.

They also showed curiosity towards artists and admired the way they draw. Paulina asked me if the artists see the colorful animals of the pictures where they live. When I answered that majority of the image came from their imagination, Paulina responded that she wanted to be an artist when she grows up.

P. Did these come from Prince George?
Y: No, it's from up north. Alaska—no, no, Canada. [In fact Canada]
P: There are things like this up there?
Y: Things like this?
P: Yeah.
Y: You mean like these colorful birds?
P: Yes.
Y: I think they are thinking they are from their imagination and thinking. But when you draw, you can draw anything you like, right?
P: Yes. I want to be an artist when I grow up.

Keilani was surprised when she realized that Pitseolak drew Drawing #1, saying "She drew all this?" Also, after admiring the other artist's work, she wondered who made the

drawing. She was interested in the Inuit artists and wanted to see the pictures of the artists that I promised to show her after the interviews. She could not wait to see who made the drawing and urged me to show her the pictures in the last part of her interview, "Can I look at the picture now?" Tara also asked about the artists and the type of drawing.

T: Who drew these pictures?
Y: People who live far North part, Cape Dorset.
T: Cool. This kind of drawing is painting?
Y: This is done by felt pens like ones you have....

Interest in Different Culture

The children also showed an interest in the Inuit writing symbols. Three children asked me about the Inuit letters at the bottom of the drawings, which were part of the artist's name. I believe that the children showed an excitement about the Inuit symbols all the more because they had not experienced Inuit culture before. They seemed to be excited about knowing something new. They also showed an interest towards Japanese culture as well; they wanted to learn about the origami crafts that I brought. Keilani misunderstood that the drawings were Japanese, since she knew I was Japanese.

It appears to me that the children's interest in and appreciation for different ways of representing values suggests that they are flexible in accepting other ideas. They never looked upset with any depiction in the Inuit drawings. Two (Paulina and Tara) saw and accepted fighting; Paulina saw and accepted killing of bears. When Harvey saw the red being in

Drawing #2, he simply accepted the Inuit imaginative description and said, "An octopus, four birds, hey, I thought he had eight legs instead of four. I didn't know they are red." When he found that the eagle was drawn bigger than the bear in Drawing #3, he said, "And an eagle, I didn't know it was bigger than the bears." When Harvey saw the owl with leaf-like decorations on the head, he showed surprise, "I didn't know that the bird could have the leaves." Harvey accepted what he saw, even though it was different from what he knew. He was respectful towards different ideas and tried to understand them. Tara also said that "I never know these (animals) are going in water." They are surprised at something that they did not know before and are interested in something new, but they did not show any disrespect or indifference towards it. Keilani dealt with unsure information respectfully rather than just criticizing that the information was not true.

K: What's that? It looks like a wolf.
Y: Why are they swimming? Can they swim?
K: Bears could. But I don't know if they go into the water.
Y: Hm.

B. Do they mention animals as if the animals have human characteristics, such as human emotions or an ability to speak?

Animal People

Paulina said that animals and human beings are friends.

Y: Are human beings and bears friends?
P: Hu-huh.
Y: Are eagles and human beings friends?
P: Animals and people are friends.

It suggests that Paulina relates to animals in the same way as she relates to her human friends. This friend-like relationship with animals is part of traditional values of animals. First Nations people believed that animals have emotions like humans, and thus they care and respect animals. Eliade (1964: 99) says:

> In numerous traditions friendship with animals and understanding their language represent paradisal syndromes. In the beginning, that is, in mythical times, man lived at peace with the animals and understood their speech.

In mythical times, human beings were friends with animals. Learning animals' language and transforming into an animal to communicate are essential themes of shamanism. Through this process of knowing the secrets of nature, a shaman has re-established the "paradisal" situation lost at the dawn of time (Eliade 1964).

The children showed various responses to Drawing #5. The figures in the drawing are unidentifiable, but they look like a dog-sleigh team. Paulina saw some of them as fish, some as lizards, and some as birds. She said that some of the things were horses to others. It suggests that some figures play a role of horses, and others conduct the horses. She saw that all different figures were involved in the same activity. To be involved in a certain activity as a team, people need to communicate and cooperate to each other. In this sense she might have thought that the

communication was possible between humans and animals, as well as between different animals. This idea reflects her sense of friendship towards animals.

Keilani saw the figures in Drawing #5 as birds and ants. She thought that they were walking up the hill by sleigh. Raylene thought that birds were taking fish. She seemed to have accepted that birds could manage a tool that human beings use for fishing. Tara said, "I think these people are birds." She thought some of them as reindeer fishing, some as birds, some as peoples, and some as "sleighbirds." Harvey said that the figures were fish deer, and when asked again, he replied that they were fish people, meaning people with tails.

H: Look at these fish deer. Look!
.....
Y: So these are fish?
H: Fish people!
Y: Yeah, so these are fish people?
H: Yeah. They have tails.
Y: That's right. So are they fishing?
H: It looks like that they are fishing.

First Nations people sometimes call animals "animal people," (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992) which indicates a traditional view of an animal as a human spirit who wears animal clothes. This idea is very common among First Nations where reincarnation beliefs exists (Turner 1996). Such beliefs refer to animals reincarnated into humans, and vise versa. The Nisga'a children also called them people. Here it appears to me that the children saw and respected animals as souls which live in the spiritual world like humans live in the human

world.

Animals Live Like Humans

For Pitseolak's drawing (Drawing #1), the children had various ideas about why there were many different animals under the sea and what the animals were doing. Even though they found two-legged and four-legged animals unusual in the water, they did not say, "This is not true," or "it is strange." None of them showed a big surprise. The children rather tried to interpret the fact that the animals were in the water. The children thought that there were some reasons why the animals were in the water. Paulina said that they fell in and that they were fighting:

Y: .....Is it possible that they are all under the sea? There is a bear?
P: (Action, meaning 'no')
Y: Why do you think they are under the sea?
P: They fell in.
.....
P: They are fighting, fighting over fish under the sea.

Tara found a person fishing on the sea. She also thought that the animals were fighting.

T: I can see fish.
Y: Yeah, ah.
T: That's right there. And I can see a boat with people, and fish. People are fishing. A person is looking in the water where the fish are.
Y: Hun.
T: There isn't big fish. There is some small fish.
Y: Are they all fish?
T: Not all of them, I can see this one is a bear. And one is a wolf. And I can see, I think that's a... I don't know what this one is.

Y: I don't know. What are they doing?
T: I think that they are fighting.

Keilani said that the animals were all swimming, while she said that she knew that the bear could swim, but did not know about other animals. Raylene said that a boy on the canoe was catching one of the animals in the sea. She saw a dragon, a seal, a bear, and a little baby fox. She did not look like she felt strange at all about these animals in the sea. Harvey thought that some animals were sleeping and some were swimming. He did not question why the animals were sleeping in the sea. Tara talked about why the bear is in the water, and said, "And this, the bear is in the water, because he is trying to catch fish. He's getting ready for the weekend?" It seems that Tara imagined an animal world like the human world. In the animal world, the spirits live like humans; they work hard on weekdays and get holidays on weekends.

Animals Feel as Humans Do

The children looked at expressions on the faces of the animals carefully. It seemed that they could imagine and sense how animals feel, why they act so, and what they would think, applying human emotions to the animals.

Drawing #2 has an unidentifiable red figure with four legs (or arms or wings), at its center, stretching out its arms towards yellow bird-like beings. Tara thought that the red thing was a mother bird that takes care of yellow baby birds by holding them in her arms.

Yuka: What's this [meaning the unusual figure in Lucy's drawing]?
Tara: I don't know. Mother bird?

Y: Mother bird? So what are they doing?

T: Mother bird. Mother bird is taking care of the baby birds.

Y: Oh, that's right. So taking care of the birds. Okay.

T: Some of them are pretty big.

This image of owl mother is seen in an Inuit print by Innukjuakjuk. The caption says:

> The own mother, protectively guarding her two offspring, one of whom is enfolded in the security of the wing, as an Eskimo child rests safely in its mother's *amautiq* hood (Roch, ed., 1974:32)

It appears to me that Tara received a similar Inuit message in Drawing #4. I believe that her admiration towards a mother's love for a child allowed her to interpret that a mother bird was taking care of her babies.

In Drawing #4, Tara thought that the bird wore a crown on his head, and that its feathers were decorated with flowers and hearts. She liked the hearts especially. She herself likes to draw hearts, because it is her expression of love for her family and friends. It seems that she thought that the bird had hearts because the bird likes others, which is the same reason why she likes hearts and often draws them. She was the only one among the children who found the heart in Drawing #4.

Drawing #3 has a big bird, a bear, and a cub. The big bird and the bears are drawn the same size. As I see it, they have no relationship in the drawing as if they exist in different dimensions. However, the children liked to find some relationships between them as if the children believe that the animals communicate to each other. Paulina thought that the eagle was

massaging the back of the bear. She said that they were friends.

P: [the eagle is] pecking the bear's back! I see Leaves.
Y: Yeah, leaves. Are they getting along?
P: He's massaging the back.
Y: Massaging the back? So are Bears and eagles friends?
P: Yeah. There are lots of bears around here.

Massaging is a human action; it is a symbol of caring and love for each others. Paulina saw that the eagle had a human-like kindness and care for animal friends.

It appears to me that the Nisga'a children intuitively think that animals share emotions with human beings, but I also believe that it is part of their traditional values. The Inuit believe that such human sensitivity creates respect for all life forms which is centered in traditional values (Wenzel 1991).

C. Do they rank animals as equal, or superior, or inferior to humans?

The Children's Respect for Animals

Considering the fact that the Nisga'a children appreciated the way the Inuit artists drew, in which animals were depicted with pride and dignity, it seems that the Nisga'a children agreed with the Inuit way of viewing animals and understand that each living being has its unique role and is connected to others in balance. Paulina's comment about friendship between humans and animals suggests her understanding that humans and animals are equal and that

they share the land equally.

Paulina also commented about fighting. It perhaps means that there is an understanding that sharing the land with animals and with others can be a conflicted process. Thus I believe that an implicit human agreement with animals on the land was shown in Nisga'a children's knowledge about animal's life.

The following story of Paulina describes that she respects bears even though she accepts taking lives of the animals. Paulina mentioned that people shot bears. The way she said this sounded as if she did not have any special emotion and certainly no negative feelings about killing. She thought it was "cool" for humans to shoot bears.

Yuka: Have you seen bears a lot?
Paulina: Down by the bridge.
Y: Ahhh. Did you do something to them?
P: We shot them.
Y: (Sad sound) Ahh...What do you think about those?
P: Cool.
Y: Cool? Why do you shoot them? Dangerous?
P: I think so. Always they steal, and I think they shot it.
Y: People don't like bears?
P: Yeah, we do.
Y: We do, eh?
P: Do you guys?
Y: Yeah, We do. I don't know. We share the land, anyways they live, too.

Somehow I was surprised at her response. I thought that an acceptance of killing animals means that people regard the animals as inferior. Since Paulina previously said that she liked

bears, I did not expect her not to be sympathetic to the bears. Therefore, I asked her if people did not like bears. To my surprise again, she answered that they did. Her response confused me. I started to wonder what kind of reasoning makes sense between her liking and acceptance of killing, forgetting Kawagley's (1995) explanation of First Nation's taking life with respect.

Paulina did respect bears and accepted killing without guilt or sorrow. When hunting, First Nations people traditionally follow their rules to maintain balance and harmony with the animals based on reciprocity and respect for the power of the animals. This idea marks the First Nation interconnectedness with the living beings. An excerpt from Mary Muktoyuk's story, *Inupiaq Rules for Living* (1988:65-66), explains this idea:

> Back then my parents would give us lessons on correct behavior, back when I was first becoming aware. My parents spoke with great wisdom of things that we did not know about.
>
> Also, when we were small, from time to time someone would kill a polar bear. The people were very happy when a hunter killed a polar bear, for polar bears were considered extremely dangerous then.
>
> Then after they had slept a certain number of nights, they would give thanks for it by dancing. They would give thanks for the polar bear (Muktoyuk 1988:65-66).

The people killed a polar bear to protect their lives and thank the bear spirit. They also used the polar bear for food, for which they give thanks. Not only with bears, have First Nations people seen interconnectedness with all life forms, including trees, plants, and stones. In this interconnectedness, lives are to be offered for other lives, and thus a balance is maintained.

Here, balance and harmony embraces a meaning of life both at a physical level and a spiritual level. First Nations, Nisga'a and Inuit, are grateful where animals allow themselves to be taken for food. Within the concept of this interconnectedness of all lives Paulina accepted killing as an act done without animosity.

First Nations culture does not attach the same meaning to the word "kill," as I do. The First Nations people even do not say or think that they "kill" animals. Turner (1996) carefully avoids using the word when she asks an Inuit person about a whale. The Nisga'a children did not use the word "kill," either. Paulina said that people "shot" the bear.

Beyond Judging and Ranking

The Nisga'a children did not indicate their judging or ranking of animals and humans. It seems that "judging and ranking" does not happen when the children see animals. They seemed to have simply accepted and liked the animals as what they were. I believe that this children's acceptance of individual uniqueness is a key to going beyond biases and prejudices cased by human judgment, and to reaching the realization of interconnectedness of all life forms. Ranking is associated with an order, as the Western perspective perceives life systems: hierarchies of species with humans at the top. This does not agree with First Nation values which see life systems as a circle, continuous and eternal. It appears to me that the Nisga'a children, by not ranking, demonstrated their understanding of interconnectedness of all life

forms.

D. Do they relate traditional clan connections or oral history to animals?

When asked, Paulina talked about her family clan, while looking at Drawing #3. She said that she was from the eagle and half-bear clan, which was exactly the same combination as shown in the drawing. It appeared to me that she talked about her clan with pride. She commented that the eagle was massaging the bear's back and they were getting along well.

Without being asked, the other children did not mention their clan connections. If asked, they might have talked about their clan as Paulina did. Clan connections are an important part of Nisga'a culture, and I believe that they know what clan they are from. Even though the Inuit drawings did not remind the other four children of their clans, the children talked about many animals, and it appears to me that their knowledge is influenced by their culture where human connections with animals are paramount.

Raylene mentioned a dragon in her response to Drawing #1. She might have heard about stories concerning Dragon Lake (Bilingual-Bicultural Department 1982) or she might have thought about one of the Nisga'a crests, Dragonfly. Paulina talked about lizards in her response to Drawing #5. "Gitwinksihlkw" where the Nisga'a children live in Nisga'a means "lizards" (Miller 1997: 166) I did not ask her if she knew that Gitwinksihlkw meant lizards in

English, because I did not know that when I interviewed her, but she probably knew that.

Looking at Drawing #1, Paulina and Tara thought that the animals were fighting over fish. In the interview with Paulina;

P: They are fighting, fighting over fish under the sea.
Y: Ahhh, ahh, that's right.

Tara also thought the animals in the sea were fighting;

Y: ... What are they doing?
T: I think that they are fighting.
Y: Ah, fighting. Why are they fighting?
T: I think it's because some people, some other fish don't like the others.
Y: What do you think about fighting?
T: Think about fighting?
Y: Hm. Is it a good thing or bad thing?
T: Bad thing.

These responses might derive from their experiences in real life where people fight over fisheries or stem from experiences of seeing bears and other animals catching and eating fish. Tara thought that fighting was a bad thing. Here she answered "a bad thing" because I gave her alternatives of good or bad, but if I did not, she might have expressed a different opinion. However, from how she sounded, it could be said that she was confident in her opinion. I asked this question because I had a strong feeling against what had just happened to the U.S on this day (September 11, 2001) and what would happen after the event. I was relieved to hear Tara saying that fighting is a bad thing.

The Nisga'a have many oral histories about their land and animals, such as that of lava bed and fish and stories to explain the beginning of their clans in which supernatural bears and eagles help found the Nisga'a villages, as do the Tsimshian and Gitksan, First Nations who speak related languages (Miller 1997). The children did not mention their oral histories in the interviews. I did not ask the children if they knew or had heard oral histories.

E. How do they respond to unidentifiable figures in the drawings?

Nothing Strange

Even when I used the word "strange" to describe the figures which did not seem to exist in the real world, the children never used any negative words in their descriptions in the interviews. Keilani liked "the way they [the Inuit artists] draw."

> Regarding Drawing #5:
>
> *Y: Do you like those? What do you think about these strange things?*
> *K: They look like something, I don't know what they are called, but looks like something pulling down like somebody's holding onto them so that bird looks like it's going that way, they look like they are walking up the hill.*
> *Y: Hm.*
> *K: I like the way they draw.*
> *Y: Why do you like the way they draw? What is the most interesting thing for you? Why do you like the picture?*
> *K: just the way they look like.*

In the interview with Tara, she used the word "funny" but in a positive sense. She described

Drawing #4:

T: This one I could see an owl with whole bunch of stuff on it.
Y: What's the stuff?
T: A funny hat. He's standing on the wood with a whole bunch of flowers back of him. Even it's red and purple, that's what I could see and the blue hat. And owl is grey and the wood is brown. That's what I could see here, the only thing that I could see.
Y: Why do you think this bird has the funny stuff? Do you think that people look at the bird like this?
T: Because the bird has a hat with three big crowns on the top, and it's because flowers in back of him look like they are all his feathers, and stretching up feather, some of them look like hearts.
Y: Do you think this drawing looks nice?
T: Yeah. [Pause] That's all I could see.

By using the words like "strange," I might have given the children a negative impression without intending to. However, the children implied that they did not agree with my idea, telling me how nice the drawings looked.

It seems that there was nothing strange in Inuit drawings to the Nisga'a children. It appears to me that unidentified figures and spiritual beings are accepted by the Nisga'a children as normal and natural. Even though the children did not use the word "spiritual," it seemed that they understood many elements at both at the physical and spiritual level. In my opinion, spiritual beings "suggest" something such as power behind visible things, and being spiritual, people are given the insight of perceiving what the spiritual dimension suggests. The Nisga'a children might be open to such power or interaction to a connection between visible

things and invisible things, that is, spiritual beings and spiritual aspects of physical beings.

What Imagination Allows the Children to See in the Inuit Drawings

I believe that the Nisga'a children's imagination cultivated through Nisga'a culture helped them to appreciate Inuit visual expressions of unidentifiable beings. The children's imagination allowed them to grasp and appreciate Inuit artists' views of the world and their spirituality, which Western curators of Inuit art might miss because of a lack of imagination. In my opinion, imagination is the power to create the world as people wish. Its unlimited expression allows people to create a world where everything is possible.

Looking at the red entity in Drawing #2, Tara commented that it was taking care of other birds; this image suggests the guardian role of a spirit. Although she did not mention that the red one was a spirit, she talked about how it related to others; it seemed that she knew the role of the spirits and how they interact with humans. Looking at the same red thing in Drawing #2, Paulina said that it was a red spider and that the red color came from the tree. Keilani recognized the yellow things as peanuts from their shape and the red thing as an octopus from its color. She laughed at the strange combination of an octopus and peanuts, created from her own imagination. Raylene said in her response to Drawing #2:

> *Hee! These are birdies. This is a birdie, black eye, red mouth, red eyes. These red eyes are birdies. These are baby birds. They are hatched. This has a nose they can find this over here.*

Raylene also saw one animal in Drawing # 5 as a dragon, a mythological being. Tara commented on unidentifiable figures in Drawing #5 as follows:

> *This is nice, and I think these people are birds. And some of them look like reindeer fishing. Some of them look like birds, some of them look like peoples. Some of them look like sleighbirds.*

The figures appeared almost all identical to me. However, the Nisga'a children saw people, reindeer, sleighbirds, and bird people existing in the figures.

Eye as a Symbol of the Passage to the Spiritual World

Some children noticed "the eyes" which are symbolic representation of a spiritual passage in Inuit culture. Eyes are symbols of all life that strongly communicates to others.

Tara talked about the eyes in Drawing #5.

> *T: Their drawing looks very nice. Look at some eyes. Big eyes, small eyes and medium eyes. Some eyes we've got...*
> *Y: Why do they have eyes?*
> *T: Because of all the little circles there.*

Tara also noticed spots on the animals. She said, "There are some spotted ones, and a red bird, yellow one. One has some spots and the other has more spots." The eyes of birds impressed Raylene. She noticed black eyes and red eyes of beings in Drawing #2, as previously quoted. Harvey also observed black eyes of the creatures in Drawing #2.

<u>The Nisga'a children's connection with the land</u>

The natural themes in Inuit drawings caught the attention of the Nisga'a children. This

observation of the natural world is an important part of their traditional values, and it seems that the natural environment of the Nass Valley has a huge influence on the children's views. The children were familiar with the natural world and animals. They looked confident and comfortable when mentioning what they knew through their experiences. They associated the events and scenes in the drawings to their own lives in the Nass Valley, such as the activity of fishing and using sleighs.

The children mentioned beauty of the land and showed their appreciation of seasons. All the children except for Raylene talked about leaves when they saw the design in Drawing #3. For example Tara commented on the design in the drawing:

> *There are purple leaves and green leaves and red leaves. I think the red leaves are being ready for fall and green leaves are going to be ready after fall. I don't know about the purple.*

The Nisga'a children were also knowledgeable about animal behaviors. They seemed to observe animals in Nass Valley and listen to what the adults say very carefully. Kailani knew that the bears could swim and what they do to people in the Nass Valley. She was curious about bears in Japan and asked me about bears:

> *Keilani: .....You guys have bears in Japan?*
> *Yuka: Yes, we do.*
> *K: Do they walk around Japan?*
> *Y: Yeah, sometimes.*
> *K: What do they do to people?*
> *Y: If people go in to their territory, they might attack you.*
> *Y: What do they do to people here?*

K: They just walk around and look for food.
Y: Look for food.
K: Most of them, most of the time, they don't come here.

Keilani also referred to an octopus in Drawing #4. She knew well what an octopus looked like.

K: It looks like an octopus.
Y: Because of the colour? Because it's red?
K: And because of the hands.

Harvey also saw an octopus in the same drawing and said, "An octopus, four birds, hey, I thought he had eight legs instead of four. I didn't know they are red." He also knew that octopuses had eight legs but did not know that they can be red. Both Keilani and Harvey might have seen octopuses in their real life. An octopus is one of the sea products that Nass people can get (Nisga'a Tribal Council 1992). I found it interesting that they mentioned octopuses, because I had never seen octopuses in Prince George and I doubted that children here know about them, while most Japanese children have seen them and know about them.

Paulina said that there were many eagles around the Lava National Park and bears around where she lived:

Paulina: ..... There are lots of bears around here.
Yuka: Yeah. Have you seen eagles too?
P: Lots around the park.
Y: Have you seen bears a lot?
P: Down by the bridge.

Paulina also talks about a red spider in reference to Drawing #2:

P: There is a spider, there are big doves, owls. It's a nice one too. These should be birds and a red spider.
Y: Spider.

P: Hm.
Y: Have you seen a red spider?
P: [No, just] Little ones.
Y: Ahhuh. Why do you think it's red?
P: The colour of the trees.
Y: Trees?
P: That's what the spiders crawl over. It doesn't want the bears in the trees.

Raylene knew about many animals. She talked about foxes, birds, seals, and fish. She saw that the baby birds were hatched in Drawing #2 and that the birds took fish in Drawing # 5.

Deloria (1999) describes how humans can learn from animals through their keen observation:

> How does one find relatives among the peoples of creation? The human being, the old ones relate, is a strange creature. The eagle's eye is stronger. The bear's arm is stronger. The swallow is able to fly. The fish is a better swimmer. The deer is much quicker. The panther can leap farther. The wasp has greater poison. The hawk is a better hunter. The snake is more in tune with the Earth. The dog is friendlier. So the human being must learn from these other peoples. Watch, listen, and learn (Deloria 1999: 237).

The Nisga'a children's sensitive observation for the natural themes demonstrates richness in the environment of the Nass Valley, where they watch, listen, play, and learn.

Chapter Six:

Reflection

What I Have Learned from This Exercise

Intuitive Perception of Interconnectedness of All Life Forms

In Chapter Four and Five, it has been shown that the Nisga'a children's connection with animals reflected the influences of their natural and cultural environment, as well as from their intuitive perception. Their sense of interconnectedness was revealed through their knowledge about animals, and it appeared to me that their acceptance of the fact that humans share the land with animals came from their intuitive perception. This intuitive perception is an important element in First Nations traditional values (Alfred 1999), and I believe that intuitive perception and cultural influences in Nisga'a children's views are closely related. To determine what part in the interviews with the Nisga'a children reflects Nisga'a cultural influences might require a comparative study between different cultures'. This question is not covered in this thesis.

It seems to me that the Nisga'a children have the qualities of self-realization and biocentric equality, suggested by deep ecology as important factors in obtaining an awareness of interconnectedness of all life forms (Devall and Session 1985). The first element, self-realization, means an identification which goes beyond humanity to include the nonhuman world (Devall and Session 1985). It suggests understanding others' feelings as those of one own self: a larger-self. I believe that the Nisga'a children's way of relating to animals, such as is seen in their sense of friendship and their understanding of animals as

people, mark this identification. It seems to me that such identification demonstrates children's appreciation of the interconnectedness of all life forms.

The second element, biocentric equality, is love of life which is gained as a result of self-realization (ibid.). The intuitive action of loving is based on appreciation of the interconnectedness of organic lives (ibid.). Paulina said that humans were friends with animals. Friendship means an extension of self (Devall and Session 1985:197) and is also a sign of love and respect for other beings. Harvard biologist E.O.Wilson proposes that people foster biophilia, a love of life in other animals and plants:

> We must discover our kin, the other animals and plants with whom we share this planet. We are related to them throughout DNA and evolution. To know our kin is to come to love and cherish them (E.O. Wilson quoted in Knudtson and Suzuki 1992: xxiv).

Thus the loving nature leads people to realization of the interconnectedness of all life forms (Knudtson and Suzuki 1992). It appeared to me that the Nisga'a children showed this loving nature through their way of appreciating the Inuit drawings. Answering the question about which drawing she likes best, Tara demonstrates her love as follows:

> *Tara: I don't know, they all look nice. I like this one (means Eegybudluk's drawing#4).*
> *Yuka: Oh, why.*
> *T: It's because I like the drawing, the drawing has nice colours. Purple and red especially in this. It's because there are hearts on them.*
> *Y: You like hearts? I saw you draw a lot of hearts.*
> *T: Because I love a lot of people, a lot of people here and from where I lived last time. I have three places to live. I used to have three places to live. Now I only have two places to live. I live with my Dad, and up here there are a lot of people I like in town too. Some of them are boys some of them are little girls. I love my grandpa and grandma.*

I believe that children's intuitive nature helps the children to build connection with relatives and with the land. Being sensitive to "the intensity of the emotion which lands and places evoke" (Deloria 1999:251) allows people to learn significant wisdom of life from the

land and their way of life on the land. This connection happens intuitively, because it is a direct experience rather than a logical process (Deloria 1999). Deloria (1999) contends the experience of the land is emotional, and says, "Land has the ability to short-circuit logical processes; it enables us to apprehend underlying unities we did not suspect" (Deloria 1999: 251). He talks about how an emotional response to sacred places is reflective.

> The vast number of experiences we have with land, and in particular with places, are of a reflective kind. We experience the uniqueness of places and survey the majesty of lands. There we begin to meditate on who we are, what our society is, where we came from, quite possibly where we are going, and what it all means. Lands somehow call forth from us these questions and give us a feeling of being within something larger and more powerful than ourselves. We are able to reflect upon what we know, and in reflection we see a different arrangement, perhaps a different interpretation, of what life can mean (Deloria 1999:251).

He also mentions human revelatory experiences in some specific areas (Deloria 1999). Although Indigenous people see all lands as sacred, they experience a sense of revelation in some places more than others (Deloria 1999). Knowing a sacredness of the land requires an intuitive and inspirational perception (Deloria 1999).

Oral histories are land-centered, and thus common knowledge of lands among First Nations people always featured a high percentage of reflective places (Deloria 1999). Even though intuition cannot always be expressed in words or cannot be understood logically, I believe that reflection gained through intuition gives people strength in their faith in the land and culture.

Positive Acceptance of Life

I interviewed the Nisga'a children on September 11th, 2001. It was the very day when tragic events occurred in New York and Washington DC. These acts of terrorism deeply shocked me and discouraged me about conducting the interviews that day. Despite my

gloomy feeling, I decided to pursue my interviews since they were previously planned and I did not want to cancel or postpone the project.

I wondered how the news influenced the children and affected them. When I went to the Gitwinksihlkw School and met the children, they appeared to be the same as the day before. They were cheerful as usual, smiling and laughing as always. Although I did not know if or how they heard the news and understood what was going on, looking at the children with their innocent smiles and talk relieved me and cheered me up. They seemed to live in a different reality from where adults live; one reigned over by a calm and peaceful 'innocence.' It appeared to me that their positive thoughts and imagination allowed them to change the world into one where they can live and love. It seemed that the children held a strength uninfluenced by any delusive events.

Children demonstrate a gift of life by finding joy under any circumstances (Haegert 1983). I believe that this gift is their wisdom, which allows people to view life in a positive way. It seems to me that children's joy reminds people that all people were granted the right to appreciate their lives from birth. Adults cannot stop children from smiling with joy, just because adults think that the situation is not right for smiling or being happy. Adults will naturally return their smile to the children, forgetting their worries or concerns; the reason that they cannot smile. I believe that it is because a sense of joy is more powerful than worries. It seems to me that children through their smile share the way to enjoy the world with adults. It seems to me that children's way of interpreting the world is another way of looking at the world, which gives people joy and appreciation for life.

I believe that children's imagination is a key to gaining this ability of experiencing reality in a positive way. This children's imagination is symbolized in the way that the

Nisga'a children interpreted the figures in the Inuit drawings. This imaginative nature creates wonder and curiosity towards a new world (Oole 1980). In my opinion, the imagination allows the Nisga'a children to view things that they do not know based on interest and acceptance, not on judgment or alienation. The Nisga'a children are interested in being and becoming friends with the animals and spiritual beings alike. It appears to me that this flexibility in accepting something new teaches people a respectful manner when facing a different worldview.

Children's Intuition and Environment

I agree with Devries (2001) that all children have an intuitive perception, regardless of cultures and races. I believe that the Inuit drawings spoke to the Nisga'a children partly because the Nisga'a children and the Inuit artists shared their intuitive and spiritual understanding of the world. I think that Inuit art will speak to any child. However, I have to consider that environment has an influence on how children's intuitive nature is developed.

The Japanese saying, "before seven, among the gods," which inspired me to conduct this exercise with the Nisga'a children, might make people wonder about what happens to the children after seven. I believe that the spirituality of children "after seven" depends on how the adults have succeeded in treating children as gods when children are before seven and how they will create an environment so that the children can maintain their spirituality. In my opinion, since adults have a large control over the environment of children especially those before seven, adults' care for children is essential. Moreover, because adults continue to be responsible for children after seven, adults' understanding and respect is vital to children's proper development of their spirituality (Kamata and Kina 1999).

The exercise with the Nisga'a children suggests that the Nisga'a have provided their children with an environment where they could develop their intuition and spirituality. The environmental influence was distinctive in their responses to the Inuit drawings; their observation and appreciation towards animals showed how Nisga'a culture and the Nisga'a connection with the land has enriched their spirituality. For Nisga'a, children are an important part of their culture (Gosnell 1998 a and b). The Nisga'a school also knows to honour their time picking berries as an important way to learn wisdom from the land.

Land Gives a Life

The interviews illustrated that the connection with the land was a vital part of Nisga'a children's values. The land is a giver of life (Kawagley 1995:12). I believe that interactions with the land create culture, identity, and a meaning of life.

I heard a Gitwinksihlkw child ask her friend, "Where is Canada?" The friend knew the "right" answer, and said, "Here is Canada." This answer could not succeed in persuading the girl who posed the question. This might be one of the examples of child-like innocence, but it struck me and made me ponder. What does "Canada" mean to Nisga'a children, and how much does it benefit them? How does it help them to build their identity and make them happy? What is the point of becoming a Canadian, rather than a human being, a First Nations person, and a Nisga'a?

I believe that what makes a Nisga'a child's life more meaningful is being a Nisga'a who has the Nass Valley as their homeland, rather than being a Canadian that gives children a complex and vague identity. The identification process is primal for human life; it gives us dignity and responsibility for who we are (Alfred 1999). We need to identify ourselves as

part of a culture that we can be proud of (Alfred 1999). As for the Nisga'a child, I believe that the process of developing into herself as a Nisga'a, creates a link between her and the land, and other life forms on that land. It seems that this process is a life journey that all Nisga'a follow, and as long as she is Nisga'a, the journey is supported and guided by teachers: the land, schools, her parents, and her Elders (Haegert 1983). Nisga'a culture thus forms the background of her being and her thoughts. I believe that it is through this culture that she learns about who she is and who she can be in relation to the world.

I believe that when Japanese people lose connection with the natural world, we may lose culture and identity. We are forgetting the tradition where our ancestors appreciated the interconnectedness of all life forms and revered the power of the natural world (Kamata and Kina 1999). Then we may not know who we are, lost in society where we cannot find a sense of connection with the past and a path to the future. For Japanese, what links people to the land and to culture is the land (Kamata 2000). I believe that only through this experience on the land, our ancestors connect to us and teach us who we are.

The relationship to the land is fundamental to Aboriginal people (Alfred 1999), and through this connection they keep their culture and spirituality alive. Deloria (1994: 148) mentions two basic themes seen in First Nations speeches: "The earth is alive and everything related to it is also alive, and land consecrates human activities and makes them something more than we have power to produce" (Deloria 1994: 148). Curley, a Crow Indian chief, refusing to sell any more of his land to the federal government, expresses his sentiment towards his land as follows:

> The soil you see is not ordinary soil--- it is the dust of the blood, the flesh, and the bones of our ancestors. We fought and bled and died to keep other Indians from taking it, and we fought and bled and died helping Whites.

> You will have to dig down through the surface before you can find nature's earth, as the upper portion is Crow.
> The land as it is, is my blood and my dead; it is consecrated; and I do not want to give up any portion of it (Seton 1936: 58-59).

He lives for the land, as his life is part of the land.

I feel that I understand the significance of Nisga'a people's continuous challenges in a Treaty process. The land is their life and culture of the past, present and future. The land is where people learn interconnectedness of all life forms and acquire a sense of respect for all life forms connected, including themselves who are part of the whole (Deloria 1999). Chief Gosnell in his "Historic Speech to the British Columbia Legislature," given in 1998, talks about how a Treaty is important for the Nisga'a:

> To us, a Treaty is a sacred instrument. It represents an understanding between distinct cultures and shows respect for each other's way of life. We know we are here for a long time together. A Treaty stands as a symbol of high idealism in a divided world. That is why we have fought so long, and so hard (Gosnell 1998a).

To reconnect the divided world to heal people, society, and history of First Nations and non First Nations is a challenge and the hope of the Nisga'a. It is an important assignment today given by the past and the future. Chief Gosnell also says in his speech at the Nisga'a Treaty initiating ceremony:

> Words can only hint at our feelings: I am talking here about a century of frustration, humiliation and emotional devastation. We lived it every day. Devastated by smallpox, influenza and other European diseases, our ancestors were torn from their homes, exiled to reserves, forbidden to speak the Nisga'a language and practice our own beliefs. In short, subjected to a system of cultural genocide for 130 years.
>
> It still breaks my heart to see our young men and women sentenced to a life of seasonal, dead-end jobs. To see the despair and the disillusionment on the faces of my people (Gosnell 1998b).

Learning through Different Values

The interview analyzing process in Chapter five provided me with an opportunity to learn the difficulty and importance of understanding values behind interpretation. The Nisga'a children's interpretations are based on their values, and to interpret what they say properly requires understanding their values.

The conversation between Paulina and I about killing bears is one of the examples where I faced this difference. We had a different way of understanding about killing animals. We are from a different background of knowing bears. I am not from a hunting culture and I am not familiar with bear country, whereas Paulina is, and I could not initially perceive the interconnectedness with the bear within the context in which Paulina saw her relationship with the bear. However, I appreciate this learning process provided by the exercise with the Nisga'a children. I believe that to discover a gap in our worldviews is a first step for learning something new; to recognize the gap and to learn from it is the base of this cross-cultural study.

I realized that people first try to understand different ideas and cultures from their own perspective, and that this process always has a risk of misunderstanding. This misunderstanding can cause disrespectful attitudes towards other cultures, and sometimes creates a conflict. I believe that we need to appreciate learning from a different perspective to avoid the conflict caused by misunderstanding. If we better understand other ideas through learning, we will be able to accept or to respect the difference relatively easily.

Deloria's (1999) arguments provide non-First Nations people with opportunities to learn First Nations values in order to avoid misunderstanding them. For example, he talks

about First Nations traditional sacred perspective of the land, which differentiates them from New Agers.

> Indians and New Agers part company at the point where New Agers argue that it is possible to create one's own reality---that belief is an avoidance of sacred experiences, and hence detaches one from real relationship with the land (Deloria 1999: 256-257).

This argument suggests that people who do not live on the land cannot fully understand the reality and values of people who live on, with and for the land. Only people of the land know the rules of life which function on their own land. I was not able to understand Paulina's perspective, but I could learn.

At first I thought that I understood the interconnectedness of all life forms as First Nations people suggest, but through the interview analysis I realized that I understood it from my own views, which were close to that of the deep ecologist, but not to that of First Nations. Deep ecologists, Devall and Sessions (1985: 75) say:

> There is a basic intuition in deep ecology that we have no right to destroy other living beings without sufficient reason. Another norm is that, with maturity, human beings will experience joy when other life forms experience joy and sorrow when other life forms experience sorrow. Not only will we feel sad when our brother or a dog or a cat feels sad, but we will grieve when living beings, including landscapes, are destroyed.

Deep ecologists respect interconnectedness of all life forms as expressed in First Nations cultures. They believe that they could share values with a basic intuition. I had this basic intuition to be concerned about animal lives and to see interconnectedness of all life forms based on my perspective. However this perspective failed to see the sense of interconnectedness which First Nations people have built through interactions with animals and the land.

Deloria (1999) also discusses the nuance between "tribal wisdom and insights a person with some degree of sensitivity and awareness about the world could discover upon serious reflection" (Deloria 1999:251).

> Tribal wisdom is the distilled experiences of the community, and not the aesthetic conclusions of sensitive individuals or the poetic conclusions of personal preferences. Tribal insights have been subjected to the erosions of time; they have been tested by uncounted generations, and they have been applied in a bewildering variety of settings in which they have proven reliable. That is to say, tribal wisdom is *communal* wisdom; it is part of the tribal definition of what it is to be a human being in a social setting. Therefore, tribal wisdom differs considerably from the slogans and beliefs of the networks of concerned people that pass for communities in the modern world (Deloria 1999: 251).

I had aesthetic conclusions based on my post-modern Japanese emphasis on a non-violent and poetic perspective. I believe that people who lack experiences with the land such as those from industrialized societies tend to make these aesthetic conclusions. These conclusions separate us from learning tribal wisdom and its profound understanding of the world (Deloria 1999), which includes interconnectedness with animals learned through the real work of feeding the community from the fish and animals such as the bear that live on the land.

Deloria (1999) says that non-Indians fail to see the fundamental distinctions which flow from the Indian attitude of reflection when it comes to understanding the bestowing of dignity on others, even on other life forms:

> The traditional ethical norm for non-Indians is the admission of the brotherhood of our species and the concomitant responsibility to treat others like we would like to be treated. Equality and unity easily become a homogeneity in this ethic. American Indians view ethical relationships with much more sophistication, allocating duties, privileges and respect according to a unique system of family relationships, older people becoming grandfathers and grandmothers, men and women becoming brothers and sisters, wives and husbands, and even strangers occupying the place of cousins within the network of specific relatives who must show concern for one another. Apart from participation in this network, Indians believe, a person simply does not exist. But within the network attitudes and behaviors must be expressed in particular terms, not in general and often unfulfilled rules of conduct (Deloria 1999:132).

The First Nations interconnectedness of life centers on this participation in the network (Deloria 1999). I believe that only through the daily observation of and interaction with animals in real life do people learn an active sense of respect and connection. There seems a tremendous gap in terms of spiritual health and profound understanding behind the logics of taking a life as a gift from the animals and the Great Spirit with gratitude, and killing animals to harm them or to make money. First Nations people perceive spiritual reciprocity in taking animals' lives as an offering (Deloroa 1999). It appears to me that non-First Nations people misunderstand First Nations people, because they judge the First Nations action of taking lives from their own perspective and neglect to learn the profound meaning behind the action.

How about Japanese Children

A study with Japanese children in the Japanese industrialized society would likely reveal the Japanese children's views influenced by their environment and intuition alike. How will the views developed through lack of contacts with the natural world affect children's feelings about the animal, natural, and spiritual themes in the Inuit drawings? How does a children's intuitive quality maintain its role in their spirituality under different environments? I do not believe that many urban Japanese children know how strawberries grow and how chickens that they eat live. They may not know where bears live and what they do, which the Nisga'a children knew. The urban Japanese children may not interpret the Inuit drawings in the same way as the Nisga'a children, since they do not have the background of the First Nations way of life and of the rich natural environment which the Nisga'a children have, nor are the Japanese children members of clans with a deep relation to different animals.

However, I believe that they can imagine that a mother bear loves her cub, and that they can see an unidentifiable red being as an octopus. I believe that children's intuition and their intuitive lovingness and imagination are shared among all children "before seven." Again, "after seven," the future of children depends on an environment which adults will give. Differences that Japanese children may show will explore what is distinctive about the Nisga'a culture, and similarities will show what is universal about children's intuition.

By emphasizing the intuitive perception of the Nisga'a children, I hoped to show that all children potentially have deep insights into the world from which adults could learn. Western adults often believe that children do not know anything and try to teach them everything, but children have wisdom gained intuitively as well as wisdom learned with keen observation through their life (Devries 2001). Adults have much to teach children, but at the same time, they have considerable things to learn from their younger counterparts (Devries 2001). I hope that this exercise will cultivate adults' respect and understanding for children and will encourage the adults to create the environment where children can develop their spirituality and where adults can listen to what children say. Childhood is not only important for children, but also for adults, as Devries (2001) suggests, "Growing up, then, should not mean leaving childhood behind. The insights of childhood are not illusions that must be replaced with the cold hard facts of adult reality" (Devries 2001:165).

The message can apply to Japanese society, which has learned from the Western education system to become like a Western country. I believe that we need to go back to the traditional teachings, not necessarily traditional ways. I believe that we need to recognize the messages from our ancestors which are forgotten behind the materialist way of life. For example, we need to remember and acknowledge the meanings behind our customs, which

have been performed by our ancestors as an indication of their interconnectedness with the land and with all life forms. I also believe that we have to learn how the connection with the land has a significant role in forming our identity and our culture, and how people and especially children can learn important things for their life through the sense of interconnectedness with the land.

Relationships between First Nations People and Non-First Nations People

By addressing the significance of learning from the wisdom of children, I also hoped to express that respect is crucial in relationships between First Nations people and non First Nations people. It appears to me that there is something wrong with the logic of imposing one's ideas onto others without learning their perspective. I hope that people learn humbly, knowing that there are many things which people cannot understand only through their own perspective. First Nations people have knowledge and wisdom from which non-First Nations people could gain tremendous benefit, if only they learned (Deloria 1999). Chief Gosnell says: "We vowed to obey the white man's laws, too, and we expected him to obey his own law - and to respect ours" (Gosnell 1998a). First Nations people have "learned" enough from non-First Nations people, such as English, laws, and a way of life. I believe that it is time for non-First Nations people to learn a First Nations perspective.

I believe that we need to respect other ideas for our perspectives to be respected. The world is composed of various worldviews. Since we share the land, one planet, we also need to share the values which work for all of us. Appreciation for different cultures from our own helps one to learn. In my view, learning enhances our respect for cultural diversity and respect for our own cultural distinctiveness and ourselves who are a part of it.

Message of Inuit Art

I believe that what I have shown through communication with the Nisga'a children illustrates one of the messages of Inuit art. The Inuit worldview was communicated to the Nisga'a children through their appreciation and sharing. The Inuit drawings evoked all the learning that I have attained: the importance of a sense of interconnectedness of all life forms, a sense of respect towards other animals, and a joy of life. These concepts are voiced through the exercise with the Nisga'a children.

Like all First Nations peoples, the Inuit struggle with a difficult reality in their modern day life (Ayre 1993). Many Inuit people have experienced a major cultural loss and a sense of disillusionment as a result (Ayre 1993, Kawagley 1995). I believe that to revive cultural and traditional values through the connection with the land will continue to be their challenge. It seems to me that the Inuit strive for maintaining traditional teachings through all possible ways, most powerfully through art. Inuit art which shows Inuit traditional ways can be a tool to teach traditional values to the Inuit and broader viewers. I believe that Inuit art serves as a media through which anyone can learn about Inuit culture and an Inuit perspective.

In my opinion the Inuit culture also needs to be respected, interpreted, and represented based on non-First Nations people's learning and understanding of an Inuit perspective so non-Inuit people can also benefit from learning their traditional values. As the Nisga'a children appreciated the Inuit drawings and the values they are based on, people from any culture can appreciate them even though they do not necessarily understand them. As the interviews with the Nisga'a children provided me with learning about different values

and appreciation for a cultural diversity, Inuit art provides us with a chance to learn Inuit values and by extension First Nations values.

Art can be interpreted in various ways depending on the viewer, but I believe that the viewer needs to be open to learning or imagining artists' perspectives and messages. I appreciate the power of art which speaks to human hearts intuitively and allows people to receive its message freely and respectfully. I believe that people can learn and enrich their spirituality especially when people are open to their intuition. This is the way First Nations people have learned from the land and from the Great Spirit. Children are a key part of this learning process.

References

Alfred, Taiaiake

1999 Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto, Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Arai, M

1992 Seigorin [Dictionary of Proverbs and Idioms]. Tokyo: Ohbunsha.

Assembly of First Nations

1989 Report of the National Inquiry into First Nations Child Care. Summerstown, Ontario: National Indian Brotherhood.

Ayre, John

1993 Carving is Healing to Me: An Interview with Manasie Akpaliapik. Inuit Art Quarterly vol.8 (4): 34-42.

Bakar, O.B

1991 The Unity of Science and Spiritual Knowledge. *In* R. Ravindra, ed., Science and Sprit. New York: Paragon House.

Beck, C, T

1992 The Lived Experience of Postpartum Depression: A Phenomenological Study. Nursing Research. May/June 41(3): 166-170.

Bilingual-Bicultural Department

1982 Anhluut'ukwism Xkwsdaksa'askwhl Nisga'a [The Treasured Legacy of the Nisgha]. Terrace: Bilingual-Bicultural Department.

Bouchard, Marie

2000 An Inuit Perspective: Baker Lake Sculpture. Toronto: Itsarnittakarvik: Inuit Heritage Center.

Canadian Dictionary of the English Language

1997 Toronto: International Thompson Publishing Nelson.

Canadian Embassy in Japan

1994 "Masters of the Arctic: Art in the Service of the Earth" in a leaflet for Inuit Art exhibition. Tokyo: Canadian Embassy in Japan.

Chamberlain, Alexander Francis

1896 Child and Childhood in Folk Thought: Study of the Activities and Influences of the Child among [Indigenous] Peoples, their Analogues and Survivals in the Civilization Today. New York: Mcmillan.

Chapman, Laura H.

1978 Approaches to Art in Education. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc.

Crandall, Richard C.

2000 Inuit Art: A History. North California: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers.

Deloria, Vine

1994 God is Red: A Native View of Religion, Golden: Fulcrum Publishing.

1999 For this Land: Writings on Religion in America. New York: Routledge.

Devall, Bill and Sessions, George

1985 Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered. Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith, Publisher Peregrine Smith Books.

Devries, Dawn

2001 Toward a Theology of Childhood. Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology, 55(2):161-173.

Dove, Mourning

1990 Coyote Stories. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Drury, Nevill

1996 Shamanism, Shaftesbury, Dorset ; Rockport, Mass. : Element.

Durning, Alan Thein

1992 Guardians of the Land: Indigenous Peoples and the Health of the Earth. Washington: Worldwatch Institute.

Eastman, Charles A.

1911 The Soul of the Indian: An Interpretation. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Eastman, Roger, ed.

1993 Ways of Religion: An Introduction to the Major Traditions. 2nd edition. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Eliade, Mircea

1974 Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2nd printing.

Finenup-Riordan, Ann

2000 Eye of the Dance: Spiritual Life of the Central Yup'ik Eskimos. *In* Sullivan, Lawrence E. ed., Native Religions and Cultures of North America: Anthropology of the Sacred. New York: Continuum, pp181-207.

Feheley, Pat

1993 Strange Scenes-Early Cape Dorset Drawings. Inuit Art Quarterly, 8(3): 38 -40.

Finckenstein, Maria, ed.

1999 Celebrating Inuit Art 1948-1970. Toronto: Key Porter Books.

First Nations Parenting Program

1997 School-Age children, vol. 4. First Nations Parenting books.

Flynn-Burhoe, Maureen

1996 Shamanism in Inuit Art. Inuit Art Quarterly, 11(1): 48-49.

Garbarino, James and Stott, Francess M

1992 What Children Can Tell Us: Eliciting, Interpreting, and Evaluating Critical Information from Children. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Gibson, Jennifer

1996 Qiviuq: a Legend in Art. Ottawa: Carleton University Art Gallery.

Gosnell, Joseph

1998 a. Making History: Chief Gosnell's "Historic speech to the British Columbia Legislature" [12/02/98], http://www.ntc.bc.ca/speeches/speeches.gosnell.html, accessed September 2002.

1998 b. Speech at the Nisga'a Treaty Initiating Ceremony [08/04/98], http://www.ntc.bc.ca/speeches/speeches.gosnell.html, accessed September 2002

Goulet, Jean-Guy

1998 Ways of Knowing: Experience, Knowledge, and Power among the Dene Tha. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Halifax, Joan

1982 Shaman: the Wounded Healer. London: Thames and Hudson.

Haegert, Dorothy

1983 Children of the First People. Vancouver: Tillacum Library.

Hay, Norman

1972 "Colour Drawings by Fifteen Cape Dorset Artists." Cape Dorset: West Baffin Inuit Cooperative.

Hessel, Ingo

1998 Inuit Art: An Introduction, Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre.

Himmelheber, Hans

1993 Eskimo Artists, Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press.

Houston, James

1999 Fifteen Years of Thinking it Over. *In* Celebrating Inuit Art 1948-1970, Toronto: Key Porter Books.

Inuit Tapirisat of Canada

1995 The Inuit of Canada. Inuit Tapirisat of Canada.

Japan: An Illustrated Encyclopedia

2000 Keys to the Japanese Heart and Soul. Tokyo: Koodansha International. Co.

Johnson, Sandy

1994 Book of Elders: The Life Stories and Wisdom of Great American Indians. New York: HaperSanFrancisco.

Johnston, Basil H.

1981 Tales the Elders Told: Ojibway Legends. Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum.

Juniper, Paylig Oltaci

2000 " Songs of Challenge, Songs of Peace" : Nisga'a Cultural Performance in Education. MA dissertation. Prince George: The University of Northern British Columbia.

Kahn, Peter H.

1999 The Human Relationship with Nature: Development and Culture. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.

Kamata, Toji, and Kina, Shookichi

1999 *Shookichi. Reisei no Netwo*rk [The Spiritual Network]. Tokyo: Seikyu-sha.

Kamata, Toji.

2000 *Kami to Hotoke no Seishinshi: Shinshinshugoron Jyosetsu* [The Spiritual History of Kami and Budda: An Introduction to the Japanese Cultural Background of the Integration of Gods]. Tokyo: Shunjyu-sha.

Kawagley, A. Oscar

1995 A Yupiaq Worldview: A Pathway to Ecology and Spirit. Illinois: Waveland Press, INC.

Kirk, Ruth

1986 Wisdom of the Elders: Native Traditions of the Northwest Coast. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre.

Knudtson, Peter and Suzuki, David

1992 Wisdom of the Elders. Toronto: Stoddart

Labinowicz, Ed.

1980 The Piaget Primer: Thinking, Learning. Teaching. California: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.

Lalonde, Christiane

1995 How Can We Understand Inuit Art? Inuit Art Quarterly 10(3) 6-14.

Leroux, Odette with Jackson, Marion E. and Freeman, Minnie A

1994 Inuit Women Artists; Voices from Cape Dorset. Vancouver: Douglas &McIntyre.

Lévi-Strauss, Claude

1976 Jean-Jacque Rousseau, Founder of the Sciences of Man. Structural Anthropology, vol. 2, 33-43. Trans. Monique Layton. New York: Basic Books.

McGhee, Robert

N.d. The Prehistory and Prehistoric Art of the Canadian Inuit. Electronic document, http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/north/nor-i/thule/thu-016e.htm, accessed July 2000.

McDonald, Miriam with Arragutainaq, Lucassie and Novalinga, Zacharassie

1997 Canadian Arctic Resources Committee, and Environmental Committee of Sanikiluaq. Voices from the Bay: Traditional Ecological Knowledge of Inuit and Cree in the Hudson Bay Bioregion. Ottawa: Canadian Arctic Resources Committee.

Miller, Jay

1997 Txmshian Culture: A Light through the Ages, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Miller, Peggy J with Potts, Randolph, Fung, Heidi, Hoogstra, Lisa, and Mintz, Judy

1990 Narrative Practices and the Social Construction of Self in Childhood. American Ethnologist, 17:292-311.

Mills, Antonia, and Slobodin, Richard, ed.

1994 Amerindian Rebirth: Reincarnation Belief among North American Indians and Inuit. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Mitchell, Marybelle

1997a. Inuit Art is Inuit Art: Part One. Inuit Art Quarterly, 12(1):4-15.

1997b. Inuit Art is Inuit Art: Part Two. Inuit Art Quarterly, 12(3):4-15.

Muktoyuk, Mary

1988 Inupiaq Rules for Living. Anchorage: AMU Press.

Nasby, Judith

1994 Revealing the Truth of the Artist's Hand: Contemporary Inuit Drawings. Inuit Art Quarterly, 9(3): 4-13.

Neihardt, John G

1969 Black Elk Speaks: Being the Life Story of a Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux. 8th edition. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Nisga'a Language and Culture Department School District No.92 (Nisga'a)

1996 From Time Before Memory. New Aiyansh: Nisga'a Language and Culture Department School District No.92 (Nisga'a).

Nisga'a Tribal Council

1992 Nisga'a: People of the Mighty River, New Aiyansh: Nisga'a Tribal Council.

1993 Nisga'a: People of the Nass River. New Aiyansh: Douglas & McIntyre Ltd.

1976 Citizen Plus: The Nishga People of the Nass River in Northwestern British Columbia. Brampton: Charters Publishing Co., Ltd.

Okuma, Michiyo Kiwako

1996 Aboriginal Education as a Decolonizing Method –The Nisga'a Experience. MA dissertation. Prince George: The University of Northern British Colombia.

Oole, Eugenia M

1980 Art is for Children: How Parents and Teachers Can Help Develop a Child's Natural Ability in Art. Minneapolis: Augsburg.

Paci, Christopher.
1996 Commercialisation of Inuit art: 1954-1964. ETUDES/INUIT/STUDIES, 20(1):45-62.

Piaget, Jean and Inhelder, Bärbel
1969 The Psychology of the Child. Helen Weaver trans. New York: BasicBooks.

Pitseolak
1971 Pitseolak: Pictures out of My Life. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Qikiqtani Inuit association
2001 Nunavut Map in English, http://www.qikiqtani.nu.ca/nunmap.htm, accessed September 2002

Radin, Paul
1972 Trickster: A Study in American Mythology. New York: Schocken Books.

Ray, Dorothy Jean
1961 Artists of the Tundra and the Sea, Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Reischauer, Edwin O
1993 "Shinto and Japan: An Overview." *In* Eastman, Roger, ed., The Ways of Religion: An Introduction to the Major Traditions. 2nd edition. Toronto: Oxford University Press, pp241-245.

Ripinsky-Naxon, Michael
1993 Nature of Shamanism: Substance and Function of a Religious Metaphor, Albany: State University of New York Press.

Roch, Ernst, ed.
1974 Texts by Furneaux, Patrick and Rosshandler, Leo. Arts of the Eskimo: Prints, Montreal: Signum Press.

Rose, Dan
1991 "Reversal." *In* Anthropological Poetics, ed. Ivan Brandy, pp. 283-301. Savage, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield.

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

1994 The High Arctic Relocation: A Report on the 1953-55 Relocation. Ottawa: Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

Rubin, Allen, and Babbie, Earl

1993 Research Methods for Social Work. 2nd edition. Pacific Groves California: Books/Cole Publishing Company.

Rushforth, Scott

1992 The Legitimation of Beliefs in a Hunter-Gatherer Society: Bearlake Athapaskan Knowledge and Authority. American Ethnologist 19(3):483-500.

Saladin d'Anglure

1994 From Foetus to Shaman: The Construction of an Inuit Third Sex." *In* Mills, Antonia, and Slobodin, Richard, eds., Amerindian Rebirth: Reincarnation Belief among North American Indians and Inuit. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 82-105.

Seidelman, Harold and Turner, James

1993 Inuit Imagination: Arctic Myth and Sculpture. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre.

Seton, Ernest Thompson

1936 The Gospel of the Red Man, New York: Doubleday Doranm.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai

1999 Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples. New York: Zed Books Ltd.

Spalding, Alex

1979 Eight Inuit Myths, Ottawa: National Museum of Canada.

Taylor, Rod

1992 Visual Art in Education. Washington D.C.: The Falmer Press, Washington.

Toye-Welsh, Barbara, ed.

1997a. Txamsem Steals Fire. Terrace: First Nations Education Centre.

1997b. Txamsem and Salmon Woman. Terrace: First Nations Education Centre.

Turner, Edith

1994 "Behind Inupiak Reincarnation: Cosmological Cycling." *In* Mills, Antonia, and Slobodin, Richard, eds., Amerindian Rebirth: Reincarnation Belief among North American Indians and Inuit. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 67-81.

1996 The Hands Feel it. Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press.

Walk, Ansgar

1999 Kenojuak: An Inuit Artist's Life Story. Toronto: Penumbra Press.

Weaver, Jace

1998 Native American Religious Identity: Unforgotten Gods. New York: Orbis Books.

Wenzel, George

1991 Animal Rights, Human Rights: Ecology, Economy and Ideology in the Canadian Arctic. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Videos

As Long as the Rivers Flow: Time Immemorial. Quebec: National Film Board of Canada, 1991.

Ayuuklh Nisga'a: A Common Bowl. B.C. Hydro, 1996.

Inuit Arts vol.1 [Eskimo Artists: Kenojuak/ The Living Stone/ Sananguagat: Inuit Masterworks/ Pictures out of My Life]. Quebec: A National Film Board of Canada Production, 1987.

Inuit Arts vol.2 [Animation from Cape Dorset/ Sikusularmiut/ Up North: Eskimo Art Colony]. Quebec: A National Film Board of Canada Production, 1999.

Inuit Arts vol.4 [Kamik/How to Build an Igloo]. Quebec: A National Film Board of Canada Production, 1999.

Inuit Arts vol.5 [Lypa]. Quebec: A National Film Board of Canada Production, 1988.

Nanook of the North. International Film Seminars, Inc., 1976.

Videos, continued;

Atanarjuat the First Runner. Canadian Television Fund et al, 2002

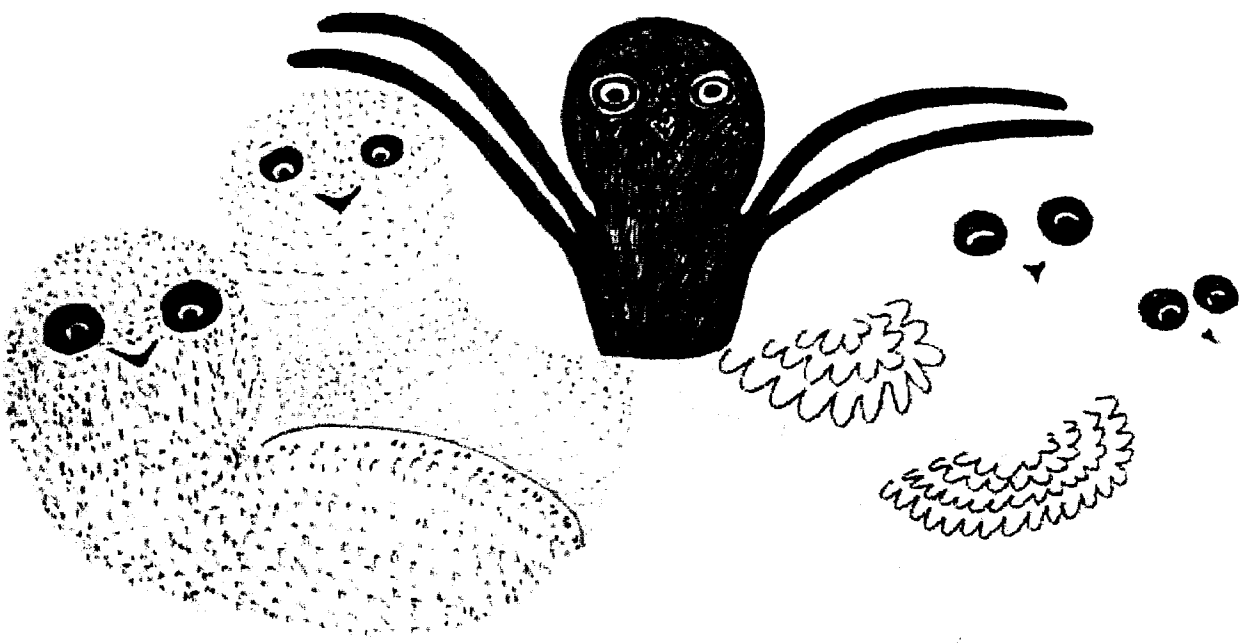
Drawings by Cape Dorset Inuit Artists

Fifteen Cape Dorset Artists: Anirnik, Anna, Eegyvudluk, Elijakota, Ikajukta, Kakulu, Kenojuak, Kingmeata, Kudjuakjuk, Lucy, Ningeeuga, Pauta, Pitseolak, Pitalouisa, Pudlo, Selection of drawings T.Ryan, E. Herzig,
West Baffin Eskimo Cooperative Ltd. Printed in Canada, Toronto: Herzig-Somerville, Ltd., 1972.

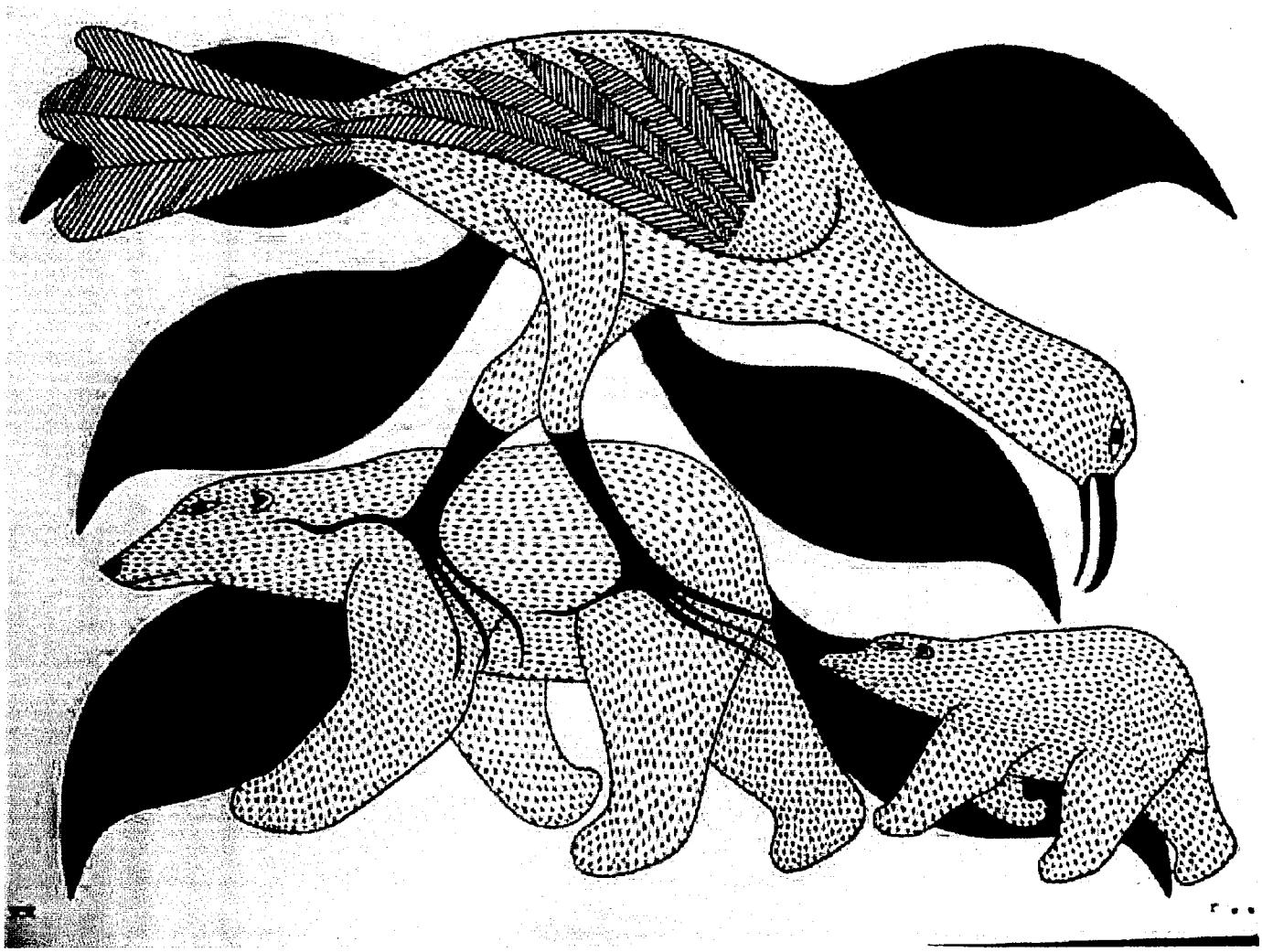
APPENDIX A: FIVE INUIT DRAWINGS

Drawing #1 by Pitseolak

Drawing # 2 by Lucy

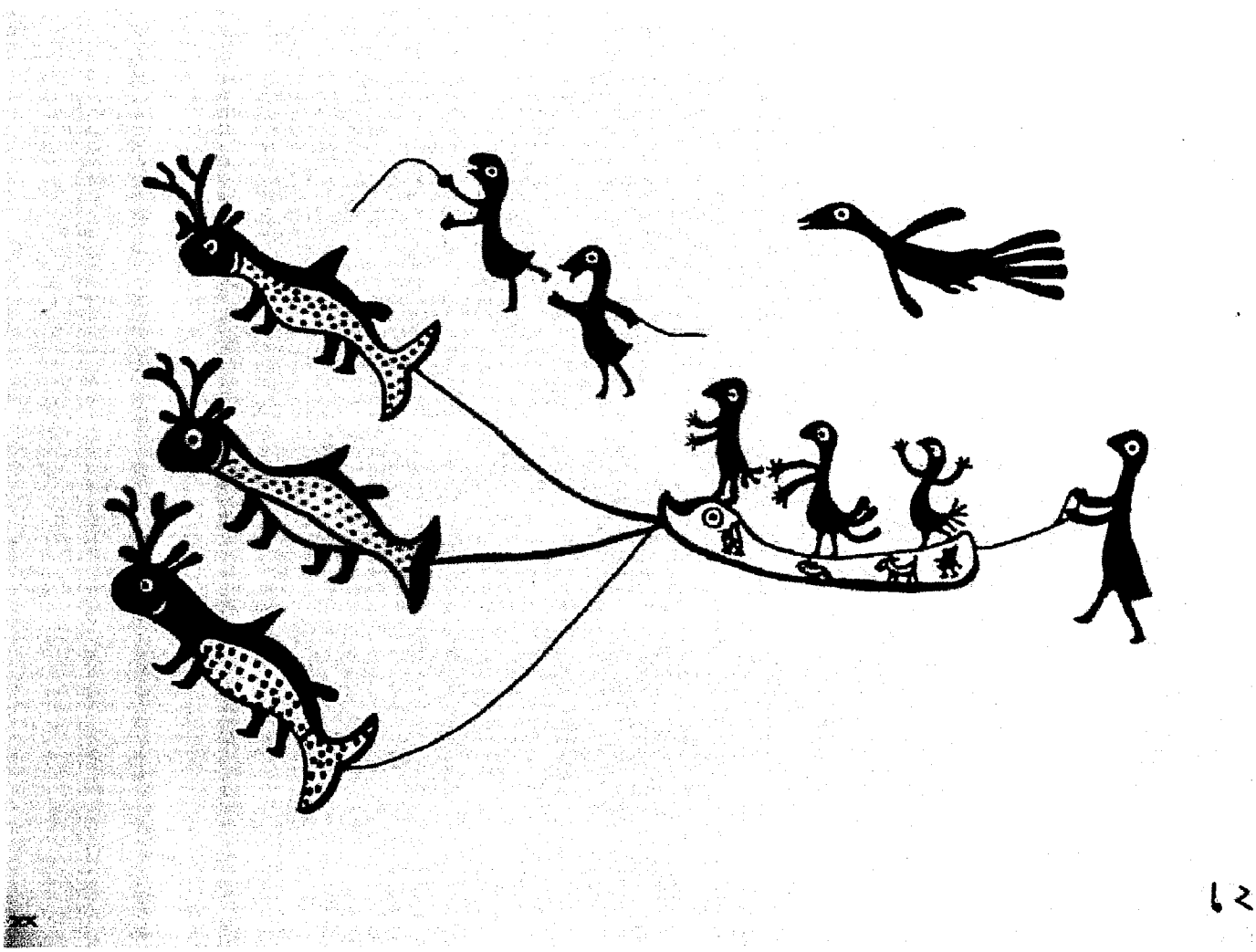


Drawing # 3 by Kenojuak



Drawing # 4 by Eegyvudluk

Drawing #5 by Kudjuakjuk



APPENDIX B: LETTERS AND CONSENT FORM

Dear Wilp Wilxo'oskwhil Nisga'a Board of Directors,

I am conducting research in the Nass Valley for my graduate thesis in First Nations Studies focusing on Nisga'a children's interpretation of Inuit art. The title of the thesis is *What does Inuit art mean to Nisga'a children*? This research is supervised by Dr. Antonia Mills. My committee has four members, including Dr. Antonia Mills, Deanna Nyce, Perry Shawana, and Margo Greenwood. The research consists of individual interviews with four children at the school in Gitwinksihlkw. The Interview will be held at school during school time. The four children have been selected through consultation with the First Grade teacher of the school.

This letter is to ask for your consent to interview children at the Gitwinksihlkw school. This consent letter is required by the Ethics Committee of the University of Northern British Columbia. You can request a copy of your signed consent form. Your signed consent form will be submitted to the Ethics Committee. If there are any complaints about the project, please contact the Vice President Research UNBC at (250) 960-5820.

Each interview includes four questions that I will ask and it takes each child about 20 minutes to answer them. In the interview, I will show each child five Inuit drawings from the UNBC library holdings. By asking the four questions, I will obtain the child's responses to Inuit drawings. The interview will be videotaped and tape-recorded. The results will be transcribed and interpreted. Videotaping aims at recording the body languages of the child. Tape recording is necessary for me as a person who speaks English as a second language to help me transcribe the interviews. I am Japanese, and Japanese is my first language. These transcriptions and interpretations of the interview results will be edited based on the research questions, and will be documented in the thesis.

The four children will each be asked the following questions about each Inuit drawing:

1. What is the drawing about?
2. What do you see in this drawing?
3. How do you feel about this drawing?
4. Can you tell me some story about this drawing?

If you consent to the four school children participating in an interview, the children will be asked the four questions above. I would like to document this interview in the thesis, and desire to use children's name in a respectful manner. I am seeking children's parents' guidance about whether they would prefer that I use their child's actual name, or use names that are made up so that their child's identity is masked.

Note that copies of interview videotapes, cassette tapes, and transcriptions will be submitted to the WWN, and will be stored in a secure and protected place. Copies will not be made available for the public unless parents of the children interviewed give their permission to have them available.

Your school children have a right to refuse to answer any questions or to withdraw from the interview at any time. The children also have the freedom to be not identified or not videotaped.

If you agree that the children at your school may participate in an interview, please sign the attached consent form, and return it to me. If you have any questions, please contact me. Information on how to contact me is given below.

Yours sincerely,

Yuka Izu, Interviewer

A graduate student in First Nations Studies,
University of Northern British Columbia
Address: 1072 Babine Cres. Prince George,
British Columbia, Canada V2M 3X4
Phone: (250) 563-4296
Fax: (250) 563-4253
E-mail: yukaizu@hotmail.com

Consent Form

Do you understand that your school children have been asked to participate in a research study?

Yes No

Have you read and received a copy of the attached information sheet? Yes No

Do you understand that the research interviews will be recorded and videotaped?

Yes No

Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study? Yes No

Do you understand that your school children are free to refuse to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time? The children do not have to give a reason and it will not affect any medical or other kind of care the children are receiving.

Yes No

Has the issue of confidentiality been explained to you? Do you understand who will have access to the information you provide?

Yes No

This study was explained by me by: _____

I agree that school children participate in the interview under the conditions described above.

_____	_____	_____
Your signature	**Date**	**Witness**
_____		_____
Printed name		**Printed name of witness**

I believe that the person signing this form understands what is involved in the study and voluntarily agrees to participate.

_____	_____
Signature of Investigator	**Date**

Dear Gitwinksihlkw school,

I am conducting research in the Nass Valley for my graduate thesis in First Nations Studies focusing on Nisga'a children's interpretation of Inuit art. The title of the thesis is *What does Inuit art mean to Nisga'a children*? This research is supervised by Dr. Antonia Mills. My committee has four members, including Dr. Antonia Mills, Deanna Nyce, Perry Shawana, and Margo Greenwood. The research consists of individual interviews with four children at the school in Gitwinksihlkw. The Interview will be held at school during school time. The four children have been selected through consultation with the First Grade teacher of the school.

This letter is to ask for your consent to interview children at your school. This consent letter is required by the Ethics Committee of the University of Northern British Columbia. You can request a copy of your signed consent form. If there are any complaints about the project, please contact the Vice President Research UNBC at (250) 960-5820.

Each interview includes four questions that I will ask and it takes each child about 20 minutes to answer them. In the interview, I will show each child five Inuit drawings from the UNBC library holdings. By asking the four questions, I will obtain the child's responses to Inuit drawings. The interview will be videotaped and tape-recorded. The results will be transcribed and interpreted. Videotaping aims at recording the body languages of the child. Tape recording is necessary for me as a person who speaks English as a second language to help me transcribe the interviews. I am Japanese, and Japanese is my first language. These transcriptions and interpretations of the interview results will be edited based on the research questions, and will be documented in the thesis.

The four children will each be asked the following questions about each Inuit drawing:

1. What is the drawing about?
2. What do you see in this drawing?
3. How do you feel about this drawing?
4. Can you tell me some story about this drawing?

If you consent to your school children participating in an interview, the children will be asked the four questions above. I would like to document this interview in the thesis, and desire to use children's name in a respectful manner. I am seeking children's parents' guidance about whether they would prefer that I use their child's actual name, or use names that are made up so that their child's identity is masked.

Note that copies of interview videotapes, cassette tapes, and transcriptions will be submitted to the WWN, and will be stored in a secure and protected place. Copies will not be made available for the public unless parents of the children interviewed give their permission to have them available.

Your school children have a right to refuse to answer any questions or to withdraw from the interview at any time. The children also have the freedom to be not identified or not videotaped.

If you agree that the children at your school may participate in an interview, please sign the attached consent form, and return it to me. If you have any questions, please contact me. Information on how to contact me is given below.

Yours sincerely,

Yuka Izu, Interviewer

A graduate student in First Nations Studies,
University of Northern British Columbia
Address: 1072 Babine Cres. Prince George,
British Columbia, Canada V2M 3X4
Phone: (250) 563-4296
Fax: (250) 563-4253
E-mail: yukaizu@hotmail.com

Consent Form

Do you understand that your school children have been asked to participate in a research study?

Yes No

Have you read and received a copy of the attached information sheet? Yes No

Do you understand that the research interviews will be recorded and videotaped?

Yes No

Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study? Yes No

Do you understand that your school children are free to refuse to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time? The children do not have to give a reason and it will not affect any medical or other kind of care the children are receiving.

Yes No

Has the issue of confidentiality been explained to you? Do you understand who will have access to the information you provide?

Yes No

This study was explained by me by: _____

I agree that school children participate in the interview under the conditions described above.

_____	_____	_____
Your signature	**Date**	**Witness**
_____		_____
Printed name		**Printed name of witness**

I believe that the person signing this form understands what is involved in the study and voluntarily agrees to participate.

_____	_____
Signature of Investigator	**Date**

Dear interview participant's parent,

I am conducting research in the Nass Valley for my graduate thesis in First Nations Studies focusing on Nisga'a children's interpretation of Inuit art. The title of the thesis is *What does Inuit art mean to Nisga'a children*? This research is supervised by Dr. Antonia Mills. My committee has four members, including Dr. Antonia Mills, Deanna Nyce, Perry Shawana, and Margo Greenwood. The research consists of individual interviews with four children at the school in Gitwinksihlkw. The Interview will be held at school during school time. The four children have been selected through consultation with the First Grade teacher of the school.

This letter is to ask for your consent to interview your child. This consent letter is required by the Ethics Committee of the University of Northern British Columbia. You can request a copy of your signed consent form. If there are any complaints about the project, please contact the Vice President Research UNBC at (250) 960-5820.

Each interview includes four questions that I will ask and it takes each child about 20 minutes to answer them. In the interview, I will show each child five Inuit drawings from the UNBC library holdings. By asking the four questions, I will obtain the child's responses to Inuit drawings. The interview will be videotaped and tape-recorded. The results will be transcribed and interpreted. Videotaping aims at recording the body languages of the child. Tape recording is necessary for me as a person who speaks English as a second language to help me transcribe the interviews. I am Japanese, and Japanese is my first language. These transcriptions and interpretations of the interview results will be edited based on the research questions, and will be documented in the thesis.

The four children will each be asked the following questions about each Inuit drawing:

5. What is the drawing about?
6. What do you see in this drawing?
7. How do you feel about this drawing?
8. Can you tell me some story about this drawing?

If you consent to your child participating in an interview, your child will be asked the four questions above. I would like to document this interview in the thesis, and desire to use your child's name in a respectful manner. I am seeking your guidance about whether you would prefer that I use your child's actual name, or use names that are made up so that your child's identity is masked.

Note that copies of interview videotapes, cassette tapes, and transcriptions will be submitted to the WWN, and will be stored in a secure and protected place. Copies will not be made available for the public unless you give your permission to have them available.

Your child has a right to refuse to answer any questions or to withdraw from the interview at any time. Your child also has the freedom to be not identified or not videotaped.

If you agree that your child may participate in an interview, please sign the attached consent form, and return it to the school. If you have any questions, please contact me or the school. Information on how to contact me is given below.

Yours sincerely,

Yuka Izu, Interviewer

A graduate student in First Nations Studies,
University of Northern British Columbia
Address: 1072 Babine Cres. Prince George,
British Columbia, Canada V2M 3X4
Phone: (250) 563- 4296
Fax: (250) 563-4253
E-mail: yukaizu@hotmail.com

Consent Form

Do you understand that your child has been asked to participate in a research study? Yes No

Have you read and received a copy of the attached information sheet? Yes No

Do you understand that the research interviews will be recorded and videotaped? Yes No

Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study? Yes No

Do you understand that your child is free to refuse to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time? Your child does not have to give a reason and it will not affect any medical or other kind of care your child is receiving. Yes No

Has the issue of confidentiality been explained to you? Do you understand who will have access to the information you provide? Yes No

This study was explained by me by: _____

Are you willing to have your child be identified? Yes / No

I prefer that my child's actual name be used. Yes / No

I prefer that my child be referred to (in the written report) by a made up name. Yes / No

I agree that my child participates in the interview under the conditions described above.

_____ _____ _____

Your signature **Date** **Witness**

_____ _____

Printed name **Printed name witness**

_____

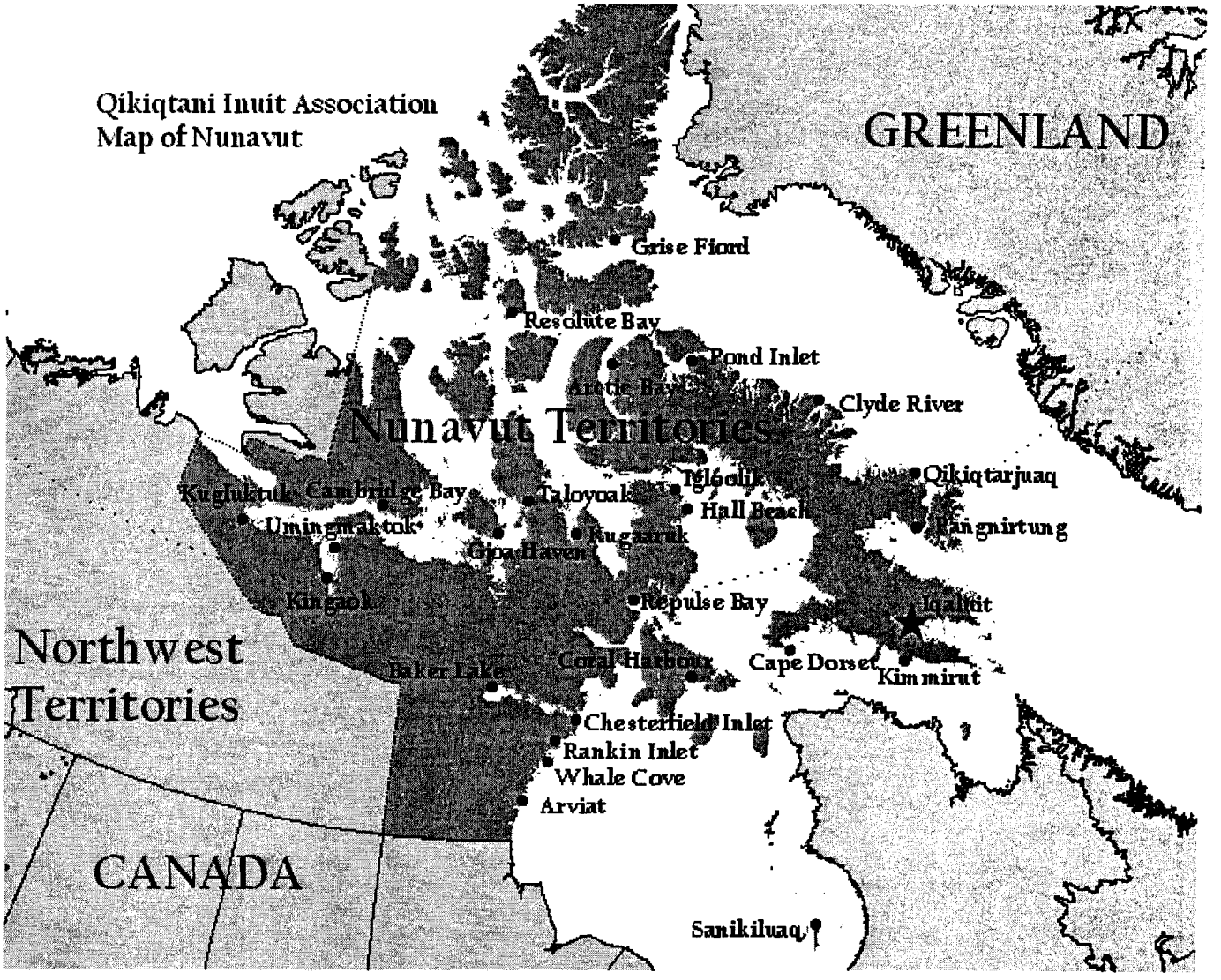
Interview participant name

I believe that the person signing this form understands what is involved in the study and voluntarily agrees to participate.

_____ _____

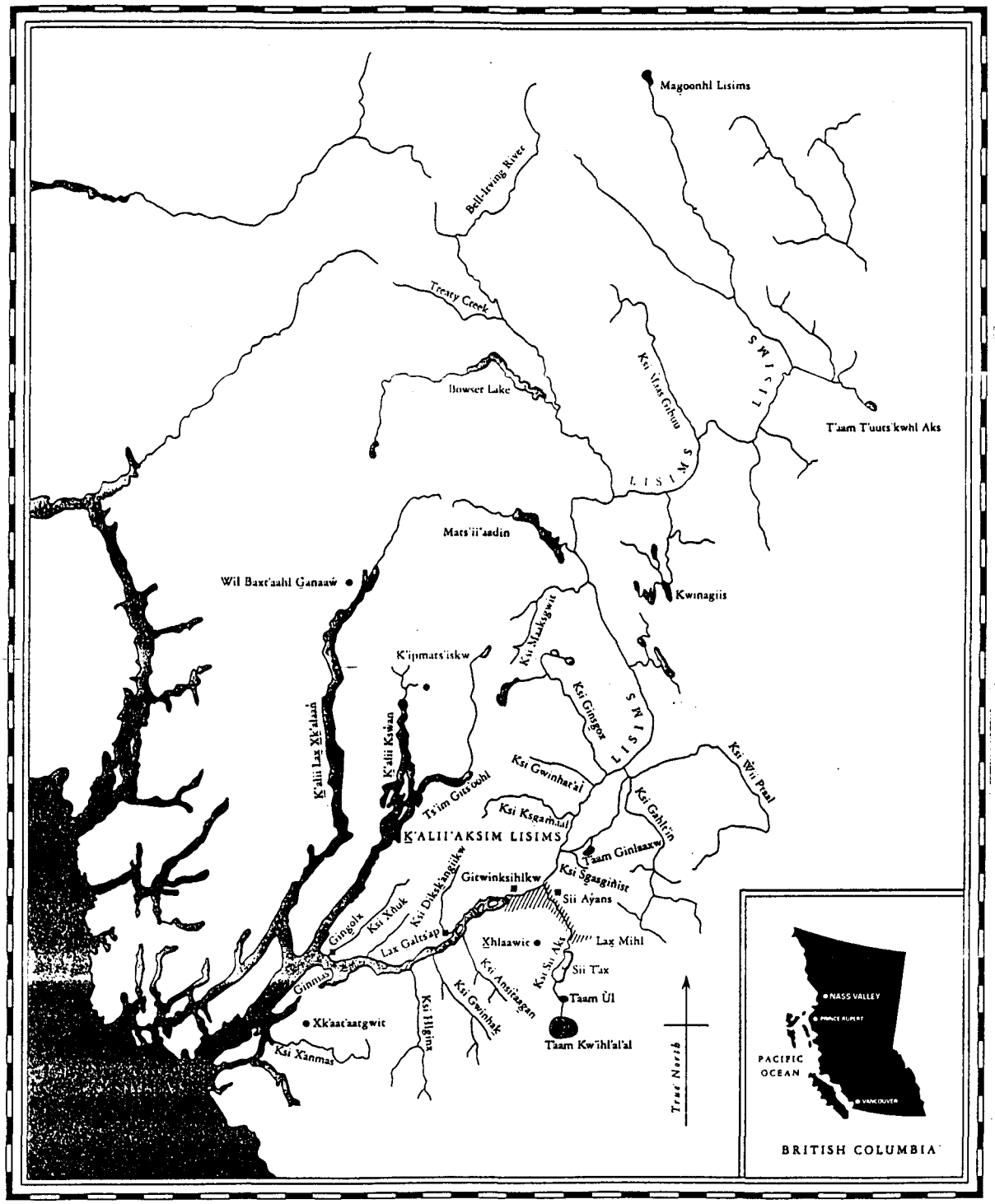
Signature of Investigator **Date**

APPENDIX C: MAP OF NUNAVUT



This map was created using ArcView software by ESRI Canada, by Susan Ell, Geographic Information Systems Administrator, Qikiqtani Inuit Association. This is a graphical representation only. (Source: Qikiqtani Inuit Association 2001)

APPENDIX D: MAP OF NISGA'A TRADITIONAL TERRYTORY



*All Nisga'a names, common spelling at the time ■ Nisga'a villages ● Sacred mountains //// Lava beds Note: Map is representational, not to scale

(Source: Nisga'a Tribal Council 1993: 3)