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CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY: RETHINKING THE LINKS BETWEEN NATURAL RESOURCES AND POLITICAL VIOLENCE

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CHAPTER 11
CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY AND INUIT PEOPLES

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Introduction

Steve Smith has argued that "silences are the loudest voices."[1] In the world of international relations the state, power and war are privileged and "thus, in the name of enlightenment and knowledge, international theory has tended to be a discourse accepting of, and complicit in, the creation and re-creation of international practices that threaten, discipline and do violence to others."[2] Roxanne Lynn Doty has made similar observations about the power of theory and theorizing:

> Theories have become commodities, adorning us, dangling like gaudy jewels from our intellectual egos. They often say more about the academic community that trades in them than the issues they are ostensibly addressing and the people whose lives are at the center of these issues. Too often they fail to do justice to what is happening in the world to flesh-and-blood people. They almost always fail to recognize and take responsibility for the violence of their own representations.[3]

Too often, through our writing, our theorizing, our 'scholarship' we engaging in acts of silencing.

At its heart, this chapter is about voices – how we as scholars can seek to provide openings for voices while simultaneously engaging in selective silencing as our theories distort people's realities to meet our own ends. Our analytical focus is on the connections between climate change, environmental security and the Inuit peoples. Far too often indigenous peoples and their ways of knowing are marginalized from both the climate change literature and international political processes and practices. The realities of indigenous peoples are lost in analyses of variables affecting state behaviour or buried under the label of 'vulnerable' in policy-makers' summaries of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). First Nations and Inuit peoples in developed states are doubly marginalized as analyses that do include indigenous peoples are often framed as part of broader North-South dialogue, disregarding the experience of peoples in the 'global north.' We firmly believe that the voices of Inuit peoples must be heard. Whether or not we should use the language of environmental security to frame this case is, however, another question.

We ask: it is appropriate to use the language of environmental security when considering the case of the Inuit and climate change? The construction of environmental security as resource scarcity

or environmental security as linked to violent conflict is not the focus of this investigation.[4] We will not discuss debates related to the categorization of the various approaches of environmental security. Rather, informed by a critical environmental approach, we ask whether or not the key words related to environmental security literally appear in the discourse of the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC). We pose the same question of case studies of Inuit perceptions of climate change impacts. We believe that to frame the case of the Inuit, either at the level of transnational organizing or local perceptions of climate change as environmental security is the equivalent to 'putting words in their mouths.' Thus while our intentions may be emancipatory, our analysis becomes colonial. While some may argue that there is inherent political and practical value in labelling the case of the Inuit and climate change as environmental security, we ultimately contend that a rights discourse reflecting traditional knowledge, indigenous conceptions of their own security is more appropriate.

To make our case we begin with an overview of our theoretical assumptions. This is important because our theoretical assumptions inform the shape of the analysis and thus if we are to make arguments about reflective and appropriate theorizing, then we too must engage in that practice. Following the overview of our theoretical assumptions, where we draw on critical theory, feminist international relations, critical environmental approaches and post-colonial indigenous theorizing, we outline our methodology. As will be seen, we engage in a word search of speeches from Inuit Circumpolar Council leadership and case studies of climate change impacts on and vulnerability of Inuit communities. We search a set of nine words – the word choice is informed by previous work on the Inuit and climate change[5] as well as the theoretical framework articulated here. We then assess our findings, comparing the presence or absence of certain words in the ICC discourse and local case studies. We also compare the relative apparent important of certain words. As will be seen, reference to rights dominates the ICC discourse and reference to vulnerability dominates the local case studies. While, at first glance, the two discourses appear to compete, our assessment finds that there is a degree of complementarity. Beyond our findings related to the word search, we also consider the theoretical implications of our findings and reflect on silencing and operationalizing everyday practice.

Theoretical Assumptions

Our analysis draws off of a broad body of interdisciplinary literature including indigenous studies, critical geography, critical theory, critical environmental politics, feminist and post-colonial approaches in international studies. The value of this approach is that it brings together bodies of work that are 'in conversation' even if the conversations are not always clear at first glance. The limitation of this approach is that it is impossible to give full treatment to all interpretations and nuances of the respective literature – such is the risk of interdisciplinary work.

Our starting point, as articulated elsewhere,[6] is critical theory. Consistent with the work of preeminent critical theorist, Robert Cox, we assume that "there is … no such thing as theory in itself, divorced from a standpoint in time and space."[7] Steve Smith makes a similar point when he writes that "there is no view from nowhere."[8] Scholars are not and cannot be separate from their social location.[9] We reject problem-solving theory which is understood to be theory which "takes the world

as it finds it, with the prevailing social and power relationships and the institutions into which they are organized, as the given framework for action."[10] Critical theory, in contrast, "stands apart from the prevailing order of the world and asks how that order came about. Critical theory … does not take institutions and social and power relations for granted but calls them into question."[11] Critical theory "allows for a normative choice in favor of a social and political order different from the prevailing order, but it limits the range of choices to alternative orders which are feasible transformations of an existing world."[12] This theoretical position does not cloak itself in the language of 'legitimate social science' and 'objectivity' as a means by which to avoid "normative or moral stances."[13] Thus, consistent with critical theory, this paper adopts an explicitly normative agenda, which is inspired by a "willingness to question all social and political boundaries and all systems of inclusion and exclusion."[14]

These very broad themes of critical theory are related to feminist and post-colonial theory through the work of Cynthia Enloe, Christine Sylvester, Roxanne Lynn Doty and Phillip Darby. The conversations among post-positivist theorists working from different locations may not always be as fulsome as we may wish, but they nonetheless articulate common themes that help us to think about the notion of everyday practice, and more particularly everyday practice and security.

Christine Sylvester has raised the issue of "everyday forms of feminist theorizing" which is understood to encompass "everyday forms of resistance and struggle [which] issue from activities of average people."[15] She suggests that we look at people in their everyday places of action, places that would usually not attract the attention of international relations scholars. An analysis that draws on the idea of everyday practice challenges the dominance of the state and reveals what Cynthia Enloe refers to as "the Jackson Pollack nature" of the world.[16]

Enloe's work reminds us of the Jackson Pollack nature of the world as she seeks to paint for us the wonderful chaos that is a Pollack piece of work. She colours our world with the voices of women who are sex workers, flight attendants, chambermaids, secretaries and Mayan nannies. Roxanne Lynn Doty brings to life the dusty roads of Arizona in her discussion of state-craft and anti-state-craft as she ponders "state-craft in remote places."[17] For Doty, the focus is on migrants on the road and the ranchers 'protecting' their territory. Doty looks at the human face of the undocumented alien (UDA) and observes: "These human beings may not be engaging in political practices as traditionally understood. They are just trying to survive, hoping their hopes, dreaming their dreams, in a world that feeds off those hopes and dreams, then grinds them up and spits them out across spaces of unprecedented wealth and crushing poverty."[18] Phillip Darby, too, seeks to disrupt the discipline, and contribute to the Jackson Pollack vision of our world by exposing the colonial nature of international relations theory and highlighting 'knowledges' excluded from our view. As he says, "[t]he story of the international must be retold from the ground up, emphasizing the local, the ordinary, and the discrete."[19] For Darby, the starting point was to invoke the voices of post-colonial writers to begin to build a more inclusive understanding of knowledges.

Our analysis is further enriched by post-colonial Indigenous thought and an appreciation of Indigenous epistemology, providing an alternate view of knowledge production. Post-colonial Indigenous thought, not to be confused with post-colonial theory, emerges from the inability of Eurocentric theory to deal with the complexities of colonialism and its assumptions.[20] This holds transformative possibilities, as people from dominant discourses come to understand the overlying

processes in which knowledge is legitimated and delimited.

We are reminded, then, to be mindful of several aspects of our research endeavours. First, one must be mindful of the importance of language, for there are "subtle effects [in] the cognitive and linguistic frameworks created and legitimized by imperialism [that] have displaced the systemic discrimination against Indigenous peoples during colonial times, and pose the most crucial cultural challenges facing humanity today."[21] Second, as Igor Krupik notes "too often, efforts to record indigenous ecological knowledge eventually devolve into a process in which Native participants are pressed to follow standard formats for [typical scholarly research]."[22] Third, as Arctic researcher, Shari Fox notes, there is a "need to recognize [the] bigger picture"[23] existing within Inuit communities. Colonialism, forced relocation, encroaching modernity and socio-cultural dispossession challenge Inuit traditional life and increase their vulnerability to environmental change. Being cognisant of the historical context within which Inuit exist and the larger context is essential when attempting to understand the impacts of climate change among Inuit communities.

Finally, our analysis is informed by critical environmental approaches. Scholars assessing international environmental issues such as climate change, from a critical environmental perspective, tend to share a number of theoretical assumptions.[24] First, there is a shared understanding of the power of theory and theorizing to include some voices and exclude others as well as a mindfulness of the power of language to set parameters, invoke closure, or prescribe unintended meanings. This recognition of inclusion and exclusion is coupled with a recognition of multiple sites of insecurity and multiple voices as legitimate contributors to the security/insecurity discourses. This component is important because it provides an analytical space for multiple ways of knowing which we believe is essential for any analysis that seeks to be inclusive. Second, consistent with the central tenets noted above, there is recognition of the importance and existence of structurally-based political, social and economic inequalities and an unwillingness to take world order for granted. The recognition of inequality and unwillingness to take world order for granted relate directly to the next common element: embedded in critical environmental analysis are often questions of accountability and responsibility. Fourth, scholars whose work is informed by critical environmental perspectives also challenge universalizing discourses such as 'the global' or 'vulnerable peoples.' Fifth, the critical theory approach to international environmental issues is skeptical of the role played by the state and of assumptions that the market has the ability to respond to the problems and that sustainable development provides for the necessary environment-development balance.[25] Sixth, by asking these questions, we are able, in the words of Lee Ann Broadhead, to examine "the many ways in which the prevailing order maintains its control of the debate by masking dangerous practices and packaging the debate in ways that obscure the destructive forces at work in the system."[26] Finally, the critical environmental literature is regularly premised on a vision of our relationship with the environment that is based on connection not domination or control.[27] We are reminded that our connection is to the Earth. In the words of Simon Dalby, "humanity [is] of earth rather than on earth."[28]

The combination of critical theory, post-colonial indigenous thought and everyday practice form the theoretical foundations of this chapter. We seek to consider climate change, environmental security and the Inuit from a perspective that is built from the ground up and we privilege the Inuit voice over the theoretical framework.

Methodology

As noted in the introduction, we ask whether or not the key words related to environmental security literally appear in the discourse of the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC). We also assess the degree of correspondence between the key words and local case studies of climate change and Inuit communities.

For the word search, we identified a set of words central to the broader environmental security literature and/or central to the climate change governance discourse and/or identified as key themes arising in the ICC discourse.[29] We searched for each word in a set of 22 speeches and then did the same search in a set of 15 local case studies that covered 43 Inuit communities. We also sought to consider the context in which the word was used.

The words we searched for are:

1. *Security*. In order to consider whether or not the concept of security is central to the ICC discourse and local case studies, we needed to determine if and how security was used in the discourse and case studies.
2. *Environmental Security*. Given that we are interested in the question of whether or not environmental security is a suitable frame of reference for the assessment of the Inuit and climate change we wanted to see if the concept of environmental security had been adopted in the ICC discourse and/or case studies.
3. *Threat*. We include the word threat as it is a concept central to the security discourse. It helps us to understand the construction of who and what is threatened and by whom and what.
4. *Harm*. We are interested to determine if harm is articulated and if so how is it constructed.
5. *Conflict*. Conflict of a variety of forms is central to the literature on environmental security and scarcity and thus we wish to see if this term is used and how it is used.
6. *Vulnerable/Vulnerability*. These words were searched because they are the labels which are used in the local case studies and thus help us to assess the correspondence between the local case studies and the ICC discourse. As well, in the context of international climate change negotiations indigenous peoples are regularly labelled 'vulnerable' and we want to see if this term is adopted in the ICC discourse.
7. *Fear*. The word fear was included because of its correspondence to the human security discourse which often adopted a broader conception of freedom from fear.
8. *Rights*. The word rights was used because earlier work has indicated that rights discourse is central to the Inuit climate change discourse.
9. *Justice*. The word justice was searched because we interested to see if the term was invoked and may be linked to the environmental justice literature.

The speeches were from 2002-2009, predominately those given by Sheila Watt-Cloutier between 2002-2006 when she was Chair of the ICC, but they also include a speech made by Patricia Cochran, when she was Chair of the ICC, and a statement by Jim Stotts (ICC Chair) and national Chairs prior to the climate change meeting in Copenhagen in December 2009. The speeches were selected because of their focus on climate change and in some instances we found that the same content was used in multiple speeches. We also selected speeches with the aim of showing continuity or change over time in the ICC discourse.

The limitations of this approach are that we are limited by our own use of English and limited in terms of access via the internet. In addition, we understand that these speeches are made by

leaders who are political agents in their own right, that the speeches are purposeful, and that the speeches may represent neither the experiences of 'everyday Inuit' nor capture the divisions within communities and within the ICC.

To assess the appropriateness of the language of environmental security at the local level, we turn to case studies. There is widespread feeling among Inuit that changes are presently taking place beyond what they know to be natural climatic fluctuations.[30] Evidence of this is found within statements made by Inuit within case studies, in relation to what they are presently experiencing.[31] They contribute to our understanding of the changes taking place, how they are being experienced by Inuit and what implications they have for Inuit communities. Fifteen case studies were reviewed, including 43 Inuit communities within Greenland, the United States and Canada. Case studies have been divided by article or report, with multiple authors contributing to each piece, with the understanding that there may be repetition between pieces, with the same region or same author being included as part of a larger project being carried out. Case studies were selected based on their focus on Inuit populations, the presence and implications of climate change, and the community-based or community-supported research that was carried out. In ICC member states where minimal research has been carried out, particularly Greenland, case studies were selected based on availability. Case studies from Russia were not reviewed given limited availability. There are methodological challenges present when attempting to acquire local interpretations of, and responses to climate change. Inuit have only recently been engaged in the small number of research projects. This challenge is noted by researchers themselves.[32]

In the next section we report on the findings of the word search. We begin with the findings arising from the word search of the ICC speeches and follow with the findings of the word search for the local case studies. The findings are presented in a way that is largely descriptive. An analysis of the findings follows the descriptive section.

The Inuit Circumpolar Council, Local Cases and Key Words

To begin, we first focus on the discourse related to climate change found in speeches and statements by Inuit leaders of the Inuit Circumpolar Council (formerly called the Inuit Circumpolar Conference). Our focus is on the ICC because as argued elsewhere[33] it is the most important Inuit organization to emerge over the past four decades. Founded in 1977 in response to a series of international and regional issues that have a direct impact on the lives of the Inuit, the ICC represents approximately 155,000 Inuit living in Greenland, Canada, the United States and Russia. (The Russian Inuit, who live in the Chukotskii Autonomous *Okrug*, only became full voting members of the ICC in 1992, after the collapse of the Soviet Union.)

The word search of the 22 speeches[34] revealed the following trends. First, the word *security* shows up only four times in the 22 speeches searched. It is used in reference to economic security,[35] with reference to physical security and thinning sea ice,[36] and physical security as a right[37] and twice used with reference to food security.

Second, the term *environmental security* shows up two times in the same speech in the 22 speeches. It is a speech given by Watt-Cloutier in Ottawa to the Environmental Protection Service.

Speaking to a Canadian audience, she stated that the ICC would engage in the foreign policy review being undertaken by the Paul Martin government to address environmental security issues.[38]

Third, *threat* appears 16 times in the speeches examined. Typically it is stated that the Inuit way of life is threatened by climate change.[39] At a speech to the Conference of Parties meeting in Milan in December 2003, Watt-Cloutier noted that human rights are threatened by climate change but also made an interesting statement that frames climate change as an external threat but also implies other sources of threat. She stated that:

> Human-induced climate change is undermining the ecosystem upon which Inuit depend for their cultural survival. Think about that for a moment. Emission of greenhouse gases from cars and factories threatens our ability far to the North to live as we have always done in harmony with a fragile, vulnerable, and sensitive environment. I am sure you can all see the unhappy irony.[40]

There are also some connections made between the local threat to Inuit culture and ways of life and the global threat of climate change. Typically, the link between the local and the global is made through statements that refer to the Arctic as the barometer of global environmental health.[41]

Fourth, the word *harm* is used once in the 22 speeches. It is used in reference the ICC petition to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and related to harm done by American emissions.

The fifth word, *conflict*, does not show up in any of the speeches. And while conflict may not show up in our word search, the sixth word – either *vulnerable* or *vulnerability* – appears in 10 separate speeches. It first appears in a speech in 2001, in which the use of vulnerability is related to collaboration with vulnerability researchers such as the authors of many of the local case studies, in the next section. Beginning in 2003, we start to see regular references to the Arctic as a vulnerable environment.[42] By 2004 we also see the emergence of the use of the word vulnerable in ways that explicitly link the Arctic and low-lying states as vulnerable regions. This linkage is a reflection of the international politics of climate change whereby some regions are deemed vulnerable within the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).[43] The absence of the Arctic as a vulnerable region in the UNFCCC is especially noted by Watt-Cloutier in a speech given at the time of the meeting of the Conference of Parties in Montreal in 2005. As she says, "[t]he convention mentions by name certain regions within the developing world that are vulnerable to climate change. It does not mention the Arctic. In view of what we now know, this is a glaring omission."[44] In a statement produced by Inuit leaders in advance of the Conference of Parties meeting in Copenhagen in November 2009, vulnerability is also included. In this instance, vulnerability in the Arctic is again linked to the situation of developing states and there is an explicit call for funding to support adaptation, consistent with articles of the FCCC that apply to developing state parties. The November 2009 statement declares "[b]ecause Inuit communities in the Arctic, alongside other indigenous communities, are among those most affected by climate change, adaptation mechanisms must be directed not only towards developing countries but also vulnerable populations within developed states."[45] The statement by Inuit leaders also problematizes the assumed location of those who are vulnerable, as it says "[a]lthough wealthy nations have a moral responsibility to assist vulnerable countries with adaptation efforts, they also have an obligation to

ensure that vulnerable communities *within their own borders* have the resources, knowledge, and technology needed to adapt."[46]

In the 22 speeches, the word *fear*, our seventh word, appears twice. In the first instance there is an expression of a fear of loss of traditional knowledge and connection to the land. Following this expression of concern, Watt-Cloutier goes on to say "the changes to our climate and our environment will bring about the end of the Inuit culture."[47] While the use of the word fear is not common, expressions of concern of the dire impacts of climate change on Inuit culture is a common theme. The second use of the word fear relates to fear for the future of Inuit young people[48] and thus suggestive of concerns about intergenerational equity.

In the ICC discourse the word that is most prominent is our eighth word, *rights*. References to rights show up in almost every speech and often multiple times in each speech. The rights discourse really gained prominence in the ICC statements with the drafting of a petition to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. It was stated in October 2003 that the ICC was "seeking a declaration that destruction of the Inuit culture and economy as a result of human induced climate change is a violation of our human rights."[49] The petition is framed as not confrontational, rather in a February 2006, the petition is described as a gift. As Watt-Cloutier phrased it, "[i]n a very real sense our petition is a gift from Inuit hunters and elders to the world. It is an act of generosity from an ancient culture deeply tied to the natural environment and still in tune with its wisdom, to an urban, industrial, and modern culture that has largely lost its sense of place and position in the natural world."[50] Finally, the human rights theme links directly to the emphasis in the ICC discourse on putting a human face on the issue of climate change. Watt-Cloutier stated in June 2005 that "it is because climate change is a human story that we have connected climate change and human rights."[51]

Finally, the word *justice* shows up a couple of times in reference to the environmental group Earth Justice. There is also a direct and identical references to justice in two separate speeches by Watt-Cloutier, one on 15 December 2004 at the Conference of Parties in Buenos Aires and the other on 21 September 2005. In both speeches, Watt-Cloutier states "Inuit have contributed little to the problem of climate change, yet we are being asked to bear its heaviest impacts. Can this satisfy anyone's sense of justice?"[52]

Overall, the word search of the ICC speeches shows that the word rights is most prevalent and is the dominant frame for the assessment of climate change impacts and Inuit peoples. Environmental security shows up twice in one speech and security is not a term used regularly. Vulnerability and vulnerable are important themes in the speeches. There are fears for the loss of traditional knowledge and the Inuit way of life is threatened by human-induced climate change. Read as a whole, the speeches emphasize a holistic interpretation of climate change impacts where the land and the Inuit peoples are connected and in turn the world is connected to the Arctic. The Inuit local becomes the global. What happens, however, to our analysis when we turn specifically to the local – away from the speeches of Inuit political leaders? Does the framing of climate change alter? With this question in mind, we turn our attention to the local case studies.

Within local case studies, and consistent with the list provided above, we searched for the same nine words: security, environmental security, threat, harm, conflict, vulnerable/vulnerability, fear, rights, justice.

Starting with *security*, the word was found within seven case studies in relation to climate change.[53] Within the community of Igloolik, Nunavut, for example, it is noted that "with changing climatic conditions making certain areas inaccessible to people who do not have the equipment, knowledge or time, the availability of shared food underpins their country-food security."[54] The use of the term security in relation to food security is the dominant framing of security. And while security was found, the second term, *environmental security*, is not found within any of the case studies.

Our third word, *threat*, was found in eight case studies[55] and once solely in the case study title.[56] Tristan Pearce, et al., note that the health of the Arctic "ecosystem is under threat."[57] Within the Greenland community of Thule, Kirsten Hastrup notes that the livelihood of the community of hunters "is currently threatened by the changing climate and the concurrent instability of the sea ice, upon which both the hunt of marine mammals and the communication between settlements have depended."[58] It is also noted that climate change is a "story of threats to a well-established way of life"[59] and with pre-existing vulnerabilities, the "threats multiply."[60] Scot Nickels et al. refer to climate change as a "major threat to the Inuit way of life," but note that "[Inuit] have lived through periods of major change."[61] In the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (ISR) of Canada, Inuit are "afraid for the loss of culturally important sites, such as graveyards, old whaling beaches and lookouts already threatened by melting permafrost, increased erosion and lost of land in the region."[62]

The word *harm*, the fourth in our list of words to search, is found in three case studies. In Gita Laidler et al., and Pearce et al., its use is in relation to the vulnerability approach. According to Pearce et al. the word vulnerability refers to the "susceptibility of a system (community) to harm relative to a climate stimulus or stimuli, and relates both to sensitivity to climate exposures and capacity to adapt.[63] Laidler et al. uses the word harm in a similar manner, by defining vulnerability as "the susceptibility for harm in a system in response to a stimulus or stimuli, they conceptualize vulnerability as a function of exposure and adaptive capacity."[64] Harm is used within Nickels et al. more frequently and in closer association with the impacts of climate change, for example to describe "harmful UV rays."[65]

The fifth word searched for was *conflict*. Conflict was used in three case studies. However, in all instances its use is not directly in relation to climate change, but rather, in relation to present vulnerabilities within Canadian Inuit society for reasons other than climate change.[66] For example, James Ford, Barry Smit and Johanna Wandel note that the "functioning of social networks has been affected by a decreased importance of the extended family unit, the emergence of inter-generational segregation, a decline in the practice of traditional cultural values, a concentration of resources in fewer hands, and the emergence of social conflict."[67] In the Igloolik case study conflict is said to exist because of the changing Inuit society. The incursion of new belief systems, technology, and 'Westernization' has strained once strong and integral, social relationships.[68]

The words *vulnerable* or *vulnerability* were the most commonly used words within the case studies reviewed, and when used, it was always in relation to climate change. Seven of the 15 case studies reviewed contain the word vulnerable and/or vulnerability.[69] Four case studies use the vulnerability approach within the case study. A full analysis of the vulnerability approach, also known as the vulnerability analysis[70] or vulnerability framework is beyond the scope of our analysis, however it is important to note its existence as prominent in the case studies reviewed.[71] The

vulnerability approach, is important as noted above, because it is used by the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and Canada's national assessment on climate change report, *From Impacts to Adaptation: Canada in a Changing Climate 2007*.[72]

The seventh word, *fear*, is found within the Aleutian and Pribilof Islands case study[73] and "Unikkaaqatigiit: Putting the Human Face on Climate Change: Perspectives from Inuit in Canada,"[74] a case study covering 17 Inuit communities. In this case study, former Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK) President, Jose A. Kusugak, stated:

> Inuit, who are already being deeply affected by changes to the climate, must play an integral role in studying climate change and in any efforts to curb and adapt to it. Our millennia-old traditions are already being altered because of the warming Arctic, and we face the possibility of having to completely reinvent what it means to be Inuit. This is a prospect that we fear.[75]

Other examples of the use of fear include "fear of getting stranded in unpredictable or dangerous conditions"[76] and fear regarding possible diseases that new insects may carry.[77]

In all the local case studies, there is only one instance of the use of our eighth word, *rights*. The word is used in relation to property rights[78] and has no relation to climate change or its impacts. There are no references to human rights in the case studies included in this analysis. It does serve to note, however, that one of the key scholars contributing to several of the case studies assessed here, James Ford, does actually move to include the language of human rights in a 2009 article on dangerous climate change and adaptation. This is a significant move and will be discussed further below. The ninth word, *justice*, does not show up in any of the local case studies.

The results from the word search of the local case studies highlight the significance of the word *vulnerable*, although, as noted above, the way in which the word is used varied depending on whether one focuses on terms linked to the approach used or words used as description of conditions. Environmental security is not used, and security is used in seven case studies typically linked to food security. Unlike the speeches, rights is not a commonly used word in the case studies. Overall, the case studies highlight the impacts of climate change on Inuit communities, but the case studies do not obviously engage in the politics and politicization of climate change.

Analysing the Word Search: So What?

When we compare the word search from the speeches and the word search from the local case studies we find that neither *environmental security* nor *security* is prominent. Environmental security shows up in one speech in the ICC discourse and not at all in the local cases studies. The ICC discourse makes passing reference to economic, food and physical security whereas there are references to food security in the local case studies. These findings are important because a key aim of this analysis was test the appropriateness of framing the case of the Inuit and climate change using the language of environmental security, and security more broadly.

As noted above, the ICC discourse is dominated by rights and not security. Vulnerability is

central to the local case studies. Given these findings, we believe that using the language of environmental security to assess or describe the case of the Inuit would effectively be forcing our language and framework onto their experience and that to do so would be a colonial practice. We do not wish to suggest that the impacts of climate change are anything less than catastrophic for Inuit peoples. Nor do we wish to imply that the well-being and livelihoods of Inuit peoples are not being dramatically affected by climate change. Neither the ICC discourse nor the local case studies play down the urgency with which the impacts must be addressed. However, we need to respect the power of language and the rights of Inuit peoples to define their own visions of climate change and to use the language of security is to disregard the way in which Inuit leaders are framing the issue.

It may be argued that if we reject the imposition of frameworks that focus on security, by virtue of the absence of particular words, that we consequently exclude a host of frameworks, including the critical environmental approach we adopt as our own framework. Our intention is neither to throw out all theory nor to dismiss critical environmental approaches. There is a complementarity between the ICC discourse and critical environmental approaches. Critical environmental approaches interrogate power, question assumptions of universalized language, recognize the power of language, embed their assessments in understandings of inequality, and question segmented assumptions about our relationship to nature. A careful and critical reading of the ICC discourse shows that elements of the discourse can be read in the same way. Moreover, critical environmental approaches have the theoretical flexibility to incorporate multiple actors and multiple voices as they do not put the state first. What we suggest, however, is that further consideration and some self-interrogation with regard to decolonizing methodologies would serve to enhance the critical literature. Finally, critical environmental approaches would also be well served by a careful examination of critical indigenous theory.

Besides the finding that environmental security is not used in either the ICC discourse or the local cases studies, the finding that reveals a different dominant frame in each body of evidence merits further consideration. The ICC has framed climate change as a human rights issue whereas the case studies focus on vulnerability. The simple explanation for this difference lies in the source of the respective bodies of evidence. The ICC speeches represent a transnational body that is committed to the promotion of Inuit rights, interests and culture. The holistic nature of the rights discourse is a reflection of the fact that their claims for self-determination are not only about political autonomy, but also about cultural autonomy or what Jessica Shadian refers to as "cultural sovereignty" which is understood as "the right to maintain an historical relationship with the Arctic land."[79] The way in which human rights are linked to the human face of climate change is also consistent with discursive practices in the ICC speeches related to persistent organic pollutants.[80]

The local case studies, in contrast, are written by scholars typically located in the discipline of geography, many of whom have connections to the University of Guelph and many of whom worked on the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment, and some of whom have worked in association with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Both the ACIA and the IPCC use vulnerability frameworks as part of their analyses. Thus there is a common analytical framework and a shared epistemology. The epistemology is positivist insofar as one rarely finds self-interrogation about the scholarly endeavour, there is no or little assessment of the implications of the use of the language of vulnerability, and the approach assumes a neutrality on issues such as rights. What is interesting

is that this scholarly enterprise, while drawing on participatory research, functions simultaneously to silence the broader political discourse in which Inuit perspectives on climate change appear to be embedded, if we contrast it to the ICC discourse. The scientific project dominates the analysis of Inuit vulnerability. For example, the 2008 case study by Ford et al. is formatted in a traditional scholarly way, including a literature survey, a discussion of the vulnerability framework, methodology and then a discussion of findings. While the research includes interviews, one will not find the voice of an Inuit hunter or elder in the entire article. While a local case study, the experiences of the Inuit become compartmentalized and indigenous knowledge is made legible through charts and data collection.[81] It is vital that the vulnerability framework be situated in the broader global political and social context. The vulnerability approach still needs to be examined and subject to a critical analysis, drawing off of indigenous critical theory and critical environmental approaches.

And while we believe that many of the local case studies included here need to be problematized and examined, it must also be acknowledged that there are elements of correspondence between the ICC discourse and some of the case studies and there is some movement by one of the key vulnerability framework scholars that merits attention.

In the ICC case, the word *vulnerable* has instrumental value as a means by which to globalize the Inuit case, build alliances with developing states, link to global governance mechanisms and assessments, and call for financial support for adaptation. However, Inuit leaders regularly state that they are not victims. There is an implicit rejection of the embedded negative connotations of vulnerable as weak or powerless or vulnerable as in need of help from outside sources. There is a sense that they are not the source of their vulnerability and they seek to be central to all means by which to reduce their vulnerability. In many ways the ICC discourse put a human face on the concept of vulnerability.

There are some similarities between the ways in which vulnerability is used in the Inuit leaders' discourse and the Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA), which is included in the local case studies analysis. In fact, the ACIA is mentioned multiple times in the ICC speeches. There is a correspondence in this instance that shows a collaboration in messaging between Inuit leaders and scholars – a shared messaging that according to Mary Beth Martello, "buttresses indigenous peoples both as objects of scientific inquiry and as advocates of climate change mitigation."[82]

We also found an instance where a scholar associated with the vulnerability framework, James Ford, has recognized the broader context and made arguments consistent with the ICC discourse. This piece is not included in the case studies as it does not focus on local impact. In this piece, Ford highlights "how international human rights obligations and climate change treaties establish a strong case for action on climate change by States with Inuit populations and the international community at large"[83] and argues "that policy to stabilize and reduce greenhouse gas emissions is urgent if we are to avoid runaway climate change but unlikely to prevent changes which will be dangerous for Inuit."[84] These arguments lead him to focus on the need for appropriate adaptation strategies for northern communities and the argument he makes is similar to the argument made by the ICC leadership in advance of the Conference of Parties meeting in Copenhagen in 2009.

Our emphasis on complementarity and correspondence between scholarship and the ICC discourse is indeed rooted in our own theoretical predispositions. We acknowledge that there is a political project underpinning our analysis and our intent is to work as scholars in ways that do not

simply make Inuit voices part of a scientific project, understanding that the scholarly project itself is infused by Western ways of knowing. As scholars we seek to position ourselves as allies as opposed to independent neutral observers of the impacts of climate change on Inuit ways and lives.

Concluding Thoughts

This piece began as an effort to show that the language of environmental security or security was an inappropriate way to categorize or analyse the case of the Inuit and climate change. To make our case we did a word search of nine words. We searched for these words in the ICC leaders' speeches and in a set of local case studies. We found that *security* and *environmental security* were used in neither bodies of evidence. Consequently, we have concluded that our initial argument is sound. To use the language of environmental security in the context of the Inuit and climate change is akin to putting words in their mouths.

Our findings, however, have also led us to interesting and unexpected places. The correspondence between the language of vulnerability in the ICC discourse and some of the local case studies illustrates an interesting political collaboration between scholars and Inuit peoples. It merits further investigation. Moreover, further analysis into the respective meanings of vulnerability adopted by particular actors is necessary. The notions of vulnerable and vulnerability are central to international climate change politics and thus the various ways in which 'vulnerable' becomes an instrument of politics is worth investigating further.

We also struggled with the methodological and positional questions. Can we actually call this 'everyday practice' when we included secondary sources such as speeches? Are the local case studies too often reflections of scholarly interest or are they a reflection of Inuit needs? There is no question that climate change is having a profound impact on Inuit lives and ways of being, but do the speeches or case studies do justice to their experience? Some of the cases in the ACIA are significant given the authors included indigenous peoples, but has this analysis really looked at security or vulnerability from the ground up?

Ultimately, and in spite of our own concerns, we believe that the key point of the article is made: scholars need to be mindful of how they frame their work. We need to reflect on our scholarly practices if we want to avoid engaging in colonial practices. It is not sufficient randomly to label a case to be about 'environmental security' because it fits into our framework. We need to be mindful of who and what we are securitizing and whether or not our scholarship contributes to or disrupts colonial practices.

Notes

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