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The psychic life of biopolitics:

Survival, cooperation, and Inuit community

A B S T R A C T
What does it mean for Inuit to cooperate with the (disavowed) desires that emerge in a colonial bureaucracy dedicated to improving Inuit lives? In this article, I consider the psychic life of biopolitics in the context of welfare colonialism in the Canadian Arctic. I suggest that the colonial desire that Inuit cooperate in their own survival is haunted by other desires the colonist can never name and that such unspeakable desires are also at work in the response to the contemporary suicide epidemic among Inuit youth. Attention to Inuit naming practices provides an alternate way of linking death, desire, and community in a postcolonial world. [*psychic life of biopolitics, care, colonial desire, cooperation, death, mournful life, Inuit*]

In 1964, the Canadian government's Subcommittee on Eskimo Housing Programs prepared a report on the state of Inuit housing in the Arctic. The report contributed to the debate over what to do with the Inuit shacks clustered around the Hudson Bay Company and Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) posts scattered around the region as well as over the merits of settlement life versus life in "traditional" hunting camps. Would providing better housing for the Inuit population create relations of dependence on the state?[1] The report argued, "As far as subsidized housing damaging Eskimo character is concerned, this is an extremely questionable assumption. Surely, in any case, it is more desirable to have a live and slightly disturbed Eskimo than a dead one" (Subcommittee on Eskimo Housing Programs 1964:8).[2] (See Figure 1.)

The bureaucrats' musing assumes the form of a thought experiment in which the physical survival of the Eskimo, curiously bereft of kith and kin, is at stake.[3] It has the form of a double bind, in which death and disturbance are weighed against each other. The bureaucrats argue, "Tuberculosis rates, infant mortality rates, and the incidence of environmental diseases can be cut by improving housing. Cutting these rates means that lives are saved: failure to cut them means those lives are lost" (Subcommittee on Eskimo Housing Programs 1964:5). In this equation, Inuit shacks are seen as vectors of disease such as tuberculosis: The construction of colonial settlements is seen as the only way to reduce disease and provide adequate access to medical care.[4] (See Figure 2.)

If, as I have discussed elsewhere (Stevenson 2005), the biological life or survival of the Inuit became the primary object of Canada's northern policy in the postwar era, then "having" a dead Eskimo would be tantamount to bureaucratic failure.[5] I want to better understand what it might mean, in the bureaucrats' terms, to "have" a dead Eskimo—"surely,

AMERICAN ETHNOLOGIST, Vol. 39, No. 3, pp. 592–613, ISSN 0094-0496, online ISSN 1548-1425.
DOI: 10.1111/j.1548-1425.2012.01383.x

Figure 1. Inuit family by tents, Apex, 1959. © T. Yatsushiro.

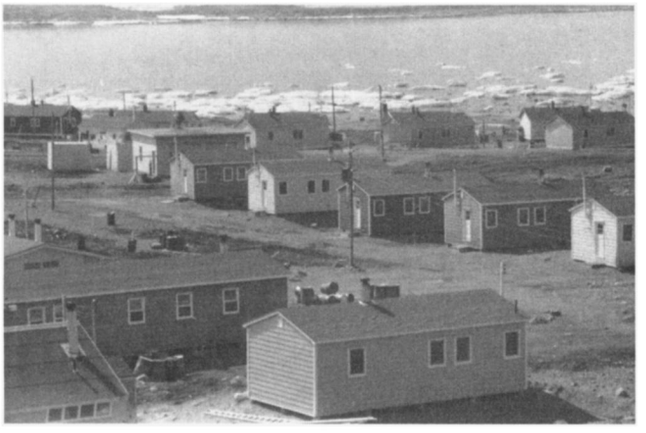

Figure 2. New Inuit housing, Frobisher Bay, 1959. © T. Yatsushiro.

in any case, it is more desirable to have a live and slightly disturbed Eskimo than a dead one"—and how it becomes possible to imagine "having" someone dead without ever knowing who that someone was.

The housing report pleads for political correctness—surely we will do the right thing in this situation, and surely the right thing can be made obvious to all. To convince readers of the correctness of their recommendations, the authors appeal to the sanctity of life itself. Emphasizing the infant mortality rate, they write, "It is difficult to place a 'value' on the 'life' of a child—most would agree that the 'gift of life' is as priceless as our old Masterpieces" (Subcommittee on Eskimo Housing Programs 1964:6). On the one hand, this is a clear example of what Italian philosopher Giorgio Agamben has called the "politicization of bare life" (1998:4). In a certain sense, it has become a matter of good manners for agents of the state to invoke the sanctity of life.[6] But I am also interested in the way the bureaucrats' use of the verb *to have* invokes the other sense of propriety—as the "right of possession or use."[7] Of what use is an Eskimo to the colonial bureaucracy—dead or alive?

Let me elaborate. Although the conundrum of dead versus disturbed Inuit is a thought experiment whose ostensible purpose is to move Inuit out of makeshift shack housing, the bureaucrats imagine (just for an instant) the situation in which, instead, they have a dead Inuk on their hands.[8] How do we adequately come to terms with the pull of such a counterfactual on the imagination?[9] How, further, is this disavowed colonial desire to "have" a dead Inuk experienced by Inuit themselves?

The way that colonial agents prevent but also await Inuit deaths is still important today, in what is often called the "postcolonial" situation.[10] I read the colonial past as a "continuous legend of the present" (Biehl 2008:281) that enables us to better understand the situation in which Inuit suicide presents itself as an emergency requiring the intervention of teachers, psychologists, psychiatrists, and even civil servants.[11] And, in fact, suicide today is at once prohibited *(life is sacred, thou shall not kill thyself)* and awaited *(but, of course, we know you will)*. Each death becomes a node in a larger calculation—through graphs, charts, and statistics—of Inuit despair and, ultimately, Inuit death. The inevitability of each Inuit death is meticulously described, gauged as a symptom of inadequate intervention, inadequate social planning. The state takes responsibility for each death; in this way, the dead Inuk is "had" by the state.[12]

A series of curious logics is at play here. First, one might argue that the "indifference" with which the state has the dead Inuk is simply the affective valence of any biopolitical endeavor of public health—indifference as that "structure of feeling" (Williams 1977) that any such population-level intervention requires. One cares, but indifferently. Yet—insofar as we are able—this attempt to think colonialism and biopolitics together requires us to take account of the simultaneous expectancy—the sense in which we, as bureaucrats and citizens of a bureaucratic regime, are awaiting the death we are indifferently trying to prevent. Thus, the death of the tubercular or the suicidal Inuk comes as no surprise.

What becomes clear through the ethnographic and archival record is that such forms of bureaucratic care, while working to maintain the physical life of Inuit qua Canadian citizens, may also manifest a form of indifference on the part of the state—an indifference that is sometimes perceived by Inuit as murderous, even though it is always couched in terms of benevolence and care.

At the very least, this article is an attempt to open up the question of biopolitical imaginaries—the psychic life of biopolitics—and to question whether our forms of caring are ever as innocent as we want them to be. To highlight the contradictions of such imaginaries, I move through a series of related double binds: A group of Canadian bureaucrats, during the tuberculosis epidemic (that lasted from 1945 to the early 1960s), wonder whether it would be better to have a "dead Eskimo" or a "disturbed," living Eskimo; an

Inuit man of the same time period appreciates the efforts of doctors and nurses to make Inuit live longer but begs them not to take Inuit away to hospital to be cured; a contemporary Inuit teenager wants to die but does not want to be seen as suicidal. In light of these double binds, I ask two related questions: What does the colonizer want and what does it mean for Inuit to cooperate with those (often disavowed) desires? One way out of the double binds that I have outlined is to follow that anathema, the "dead Eskimo," as she or he is folded back into daily life in such a way that survival and the possibility of community entail a sustained relationship with the death of another. Community in this sense is never innocent. To this end, I consider the ongoing Inuit practice of naming children after the dead, and I notice the way our life in language, and in community more generally, depends on an intimacy with the dead, one that means life is never anonymous and never bare—though perhaps always mournful.

Quvianaqtuq's letter

On October 14, 1958, the anthropologist Toshio Yatsushiro received a letter from an Inuit man named Quvianaqtuq.[13] (See Figure 3.) Yatsushiro had first met Quvianaqtuq the previous summer in Frobisher Bay when he interviewed him about the introduction of wage labor into Inuit communities. At the top of the letter, which was written in pencil on thin air-mail paper, is Quvianaqtuq's name and E7-xxx, the government identification number (disk number) assigned to him. The first sentence of his letter states simply, "This will be written on Inuit in hospital."[14]

According to the medical record, in 1958 one of every seven Inuit was in a tuberculosis sanatorium in southern Canada (Grygier 1994:xxi). In one Inuit community, Clyde River, approximately 70 percent of the adult population had spent time in southern hospitals, most of them for tuberculosis (Wenzel 1981:9). Quvianaqtuq, as his letter makes clear, is grateful for the medical care the state has begun to provide. He writes, "The doctors and nurses really work hard and never seem to tire. They don't ever give up no matter how advanced the disease is or get tired of looking after sick people. This is their work and they do it well. Many people would have been dead if they were not given treatment and operated on." But of the policy of removing tubercular Inuit to southern sanatoria (a practice that lasted from 1946 to the early 1960s) Quvianaqtuq says something curious: "We do not fully understand it in our hearts why they do these things but they do it because of their work."[15] Despite the genuine admiration Quvianaqtuq expresses toward the non-Inuit (Qallunaat) doctors and nurses and his acknowledgment of how much they care, he cannot fully reconcile himself to their way of going about things—in particular, their apparent disregard for the length of time Inuit families are separated for medical reasons. He concedes that "sometimes we [the Inuit and the Qallunaat] do not understand each other."

Figure 3. T. Yatsushiro (far right), Frobisher Bay, 1959. © T. Yatsushiro.

Quvianaqtuq ends his letter by acknowledging that the doctor who gives the order for evacuation is not fully responsible for his actions—that the doctor, just as much as the Inuit, is caught by what might be called "bureaucratic ways of proceeding."[16] With resignation and a kind of pathos, he writes, "I know you all have bosses and you are supposed to follow certain rules. Do so, for the good of the people and explain to us what they mean. We will try to cooperate and some of us will write it down so we won't forget."

Although he cannot reconcile himself to the evacuation of Inuit patients to southern hospitals, Quvianaqtuq knows that the doctors and nurses care about their Inuit patients and want to prolong their lives. He notices that the decision about how best to care for the Inuit is not always in their hands—that they too must follow the rules of certain bosses. He also understands that Inuit, like the doctors themselves, are expected to cooperate with these regimes of care, something he ultimately promises to try to do.

One of the central claims of this article is that the twinned themes of care and cooperation, so crucial to understanding the legacy of colonialism in Canada's North, still matter in contemporary postcolonial Inuit worlds. In Nunavut today, where suicide rates are approximately ten times the national rate, suicide is a site of intervention for doctors, nurses, social workers, teachers, and politicians—almost everyone feels moved to do something. Emerging from an interdepartmental meeting on suicide, a Government of Nunavut employee remarked ruefully to me, "It just seems like a competition to see who cares the most." And, as will become apparent below, Inuit youth are expected to cooperate with this regime of care—at a certain point, staying alive and being a good Inuk become almost indistinguishable.

What, then, does it mean to care for another—"care" understood in a dual sense as the way someone comes to matter and as the corresponding ethics of attending to that other who matters—and, in particular, what does it mean to care about the life or death of another? Through a series of stories and images taken from the colonial and postcolonial worlds of the Canadian Inuit of the Eastern Arctic, this article attempts to awaken our sense to the question of when, how, and for whom we care and what it means to require those for whom we care to cooperate in our forms of care. Such a project takes us deep into questions of colonial desire and what might be called, for lack of a better phrase, the "affective undertows" of biopolitics as usual. In what sense do those dead and dying Inuit, whose deaths the campaign against tuberculosis valiantly tried to prevent, take on a life in the colonial imaginary, as that which it is not possible to think? This requires us to imagine the ethnographic differently—to trace out the ethnographic life of a negation, that which is denied, discouraged, expelled from the mind, forgotten, or lost. For instance, one might, as I have suggested, consider the way the disavowed desire for a dead Inuk haunts the colonial enterprise or the way suicide prevention campaigns condition us to expect the very death we are trying to prevent. But I am getting ahead of myself.

Bureaucratic heroes

This article, with its first thought-image culled from the subcommittee's report on housing, enters the scene at a particular moment in Inuit history, a moment when Canada was administering the Arctic according to a logic of "welfare colonialism" (Paine 1977). If Inuit first became visible to southern Canadians through their fascinating and exotic forms of death—starvation, infanticide, and suicide—the postwar period was the moment when Canadian state officials began to intervene and to sanction that death, in an effort, in part, to make respectable Canadian citizens out of themselves—and the Inuit.

R. A. J. Phillips, a senior officer in Canada's Department of Northern Affairs, astutely described this shift: "Those who only a decade before had been regarded as members of an unknown northern tribe now became individual names on welfare files in government offices" (1967:xii). This transition—from a strange tribe, famous for its strange ways of dying, to an underprivileged segment of Canadian society in need of assistance—demanded a new mode of governance. To demonstrate the compassion of the Canadian state for those new names on the welfare files, something had to be done, as quickly as possible, about the forms and rates of their deaths. It is important to note that Inuit emerge as an object of knowledge (from unknown northern tribe to named individuals on welfare files) precisely through their "need" for government assistance and their insertion into the bureaucracy that provided it. It is not farfetched to ask, then, whether there were actually "Eskimo" before there were Eskimo on welfare rolls.

This new awareness of the Inuit in the North brought Canadians "face-to-face with a system of population dynamics that was shocking to them. That the government would intervene in order to 'correct' that system was a moral inevitability from the first" (Paine 1977:12). So, in 1946, P. E. Moore, as acting superintendent of Indian Health Services could suggest that, "although neither law nor treaty imposes such a duty, the Federal Government has, for humanitarian reasons, for self-protection, and to prevent the spread of disease to the white population, accepted responsibility for health services to the native population, and Parliament each year votes funds to supply medical services to Indians and Eskimos" (1946:140).

Very quickly, this language of humanitarianism and self-protection shifted to a rhetoric of citizenship. But the sanctity of Canadian citizenship was reserved for healthy bodies—at least, in the bureaucratic imagination. So, by 1966, discussing the move to provide better health care to the North, Moore wrote, "Only then [once something is done about the high mortality rates] will our northern regions and their people be truly part of Canada" (1966:136).[17] In a curious formulation, becoming Canadian meant, in part, to die at Canadian rates.

How, precisely, to go about lowering the death rate and so bring Inuit into the fold of the Canadian state was a vexing question. In the moment of optimism about Canada's future that followed World War II, the North began to be imagined as a laboratory in which new social worlds might be established, as long as the "filthy" living conditions of Inuit could be improved. Phillips at one point suggested it would be useful to "think of the 9,000 Eskimos [in Canada] as a laboratory experiment and to give the imagination full rein on what might be done to improve their culture" (Marcus 1995:33). This language of experiment and improvement marks a whole generation of Arctic bureaucrats for whom death loomed (at least on the surface) as a kind of defeat.

A romantic vision of the Arctic bureaucrat was developing.[18] Articles in Canada's foremost medical journal exhorted young doctors to "Go North Young Man!" (Willis 1962). The editors of the journal *Canadian Welfare* declared that, although the era of the Arctic explorer was ending, "scientists, technicians and administrators are represented in a new band of adventurers who now are opening up Canada's last frontier" (Harrison 1959:110). The place itself seemed to hold the possibility of transforming those "scientists, technicians and administrators" from ordinary men into heroes. "Of all who traveled north," wrote Phillips, "few have been heroes. Most have been ordinary people, at least until they went. Some have been bureaucrats, and I was one of these." "Successful or not," Phillips continued, almost

Figure 4. Joanasie Aningmiuq, Hamilton Sanatorium, circa 1955. The Archives of Hamilton Health Sciences and the Faculty of Health Sciences, McMaster University.

all who made the journey North, "became missionaries for their cause" (1967:xii–xiii).

The contemporary North is haunted (Good et al. 2008) by the ambivalent imaginary of the bureaucratic heroes. The removal of Inuit from their communities in the 1950s for tuberculosis treatment in the South was conceived as the only humane, compassionate course of action. The only thing that stood in the way of this removal was the lack of cooperation among the Inuit. The contemporary desire to prevent Inuit death by suicide is similarly uncontroversial, and what stands in the way of today's generous and well-intentioned caregivers, similarly, is the lack of Inuit cooperation. As a researcher in the Canadian North, I too participated in forms of anonymous care, hoping desperately to make a difference in reversing the swelling numbers of youth suicides. But here I want to bracket our need to do something and question our assumptions about what it means to care. By examining the Inuit perception that there is something uncaring, even murderous, about such bureaucratic and anonymous forms of care, I am addressing an intractable problem in Inuit scholarship—how to adequately represent the psychic impact of colonialism on the Inuit. The problem can be crudely stated as follows: Given that the development of the Canadian North proceeded through a kind of welfare colonialism, a form of care in which the best interests of the Inuit were, and continue to be, at the forefront of administrators' minds, how can we understand the magnitude of the anger expressed by many Inuit over the actions of the state? Why is it that Inuit do not always experience such interventions as caring when that is seemingly the way they are intended? (See Figure 4.)

To cooperate in survival

Quvianaqtuq was well aware that the project of creating health and extending life had been construed as a mutual one, requiring Inuit cooperation. In 1947, the RCMP produced a slim volume of advice to be distributed among the Canadian Inuit entitled *The Book of Wisdom for Eskimo* (Bureau of Northwest Territories and Yukon Affairs 1947). With simple line drawings and short sentences, it forms an extended plea for cooperation. "People with early lung sickness can get better," Inuit are told, but "they must obey the doctor" (Bureau of Northwest Territories and Yukon Affairs 1947:16).

But the question of cooperation that Quvianaqtuq's letter raises is more complicated than a matter of obeying orders. The Arctic bureaucrats want to build cooperation into their policies, even though they expect failure. The "Report on Eskimo Housing" makes it clear that simply providing "frame buildings" to Inuit is not enough to reduce the rates of tuberculosis. Inuit must be educated about how to use them, as "many Eskimo families lack the skill, the funds, the experience, and above all the motivation to maintain and operate their homes in a manner that is conducive to health" (Subcommittee on Eskimo Housing Programs 1964:9). Phyllis Harrison, one of the first social workers to be placed in Iqaluit, wrote an account of her experiences that was published in *North*, a bimonthly publication of the northern administration, and broadcast over CBC Radio. In the vignette, Harrison (1962) describes the way one Inuit family was grappling with the transition from the "stone age to the atomic age." She describes the father, Anawakaloo, as a respected hunter and the mother, Kelougah, as skilled at making clothing and looking after her children. But one winter Kelougah contracted tuberculosis and was sent South for treatment. Upon her return, she was given a modern-style house by the Canadian government. According to Harrison,

> [Kelougah] wanted very much to please the people who had helped her back to health and provided for her children. She loved her new house with its three rooms-all painted in bright colours. She carefully hung up parkas on hooks instead of throwing them down on a bed. She dumped garbage into the empty oil drum out in the yard instead of just throwing it out the door. Still, she never quite managed the way white women did. [1962:16]

Although the colonial norms of cleanliness, tidiness, and deference were taught and modeled assiduously by social workers, nurses, doctors, missionaries, and others, the Inuit (from the perspective of the colonial agents) could never quite manage to live up to the standards set by their white counterparts. That Inuit cooperate by loving what white women love—brightly painted rooms and coats hung on hooks—was essential. That they succeed in living up to the norm was not to be expected: Kelougah "never quite managed."

So while failure was expected, colonial bureaucrats worked hard to make sure Inuit—at least on the surface—cooperated with their regime of care. At the time Kelougah contracted tuberculosis, the strategy for combating the disease was to evacuate those affected to southern sanatoria for care. Each year, a medical team aboard an RCMP patrol ship would visit Inuit settlements in the Eastern Arctic. The facilities aboard the "Eastern Arctic Patrol" ship included "a complete sick-bay, operating room, x-ray room, dental office and laboratory, and a complete medical party and dentist to staff it" (Moore 1956:232). Inuit would be brought on board, screened for tuberculosis, and those suspected of harboring the disease would remain on the ship to begin their journey to southern hospitals for treatment.

Being transported by ship from a life in Canada's North—either from a small settlement or an ancestral camp on land—to a hospital where none of the doctors or nurses spoke Inuktitut and Inuit patients were largely confined to their beds, was an experience of radical disjuncture (Grygier 1994; Nixon 1988; Tester et al. 2001; Wenzel 1981).[19] Furthermore, the inability of the doctors and nurses and hospital administrators to communicate with their Inuit patients led to confusion over the patients' identities, especially the children's.[20] Inuit who died in hospital were buried in unmarked graves in southern cemeteries. Families were not always informed of these deaths or of the whereabouts of the burial sites.[21]

Not surprisingly, Inuit did not always cooperate enthusiastically with the evacuation effort (Jenness 1964; Schaefer 1959; Tester et al. 2001). Some Inuit families would quickly abandon their settlements when they heard news that the ship was on its way. Others, having permission to return to their camps to collect their belongings, would refuse to return to the ship when their X-rays showed signs of tuberculosis.[22] In his preliminary report to the director of Indian Health Services, John S. Willis, the chief medical officer in charge of the 1955 Eastern Arctic Patrol, described the difficulties the medical staff had in one Baffin Island community, where a woman with a three-month-old baby was found to have "cavities in her left lung." Nothing the medical staff could do or say could persuade her to board the ship. For Willis, "This would seem an instance where legal power to use force might be needed, but the psychological effects on the other Eskimos of the forcible removal of such cases might only delay our program as a whole and I would certainly recommend that we try health education and persuasion first" (1955).[23] As part of this effort to "persuade" Inuit to cooperate in their evacuation, Leo Manning, a longtime northern resident who was much respected by the Inuit, in part for his fluency in Inuktitut,[24] was dispatched by the Department of Resources and Development to visit Inuit convalescing in southern hospitals (Grygier 1994:76; Tester et al. 2001:128–129). After visiting a hospital in Quebec that had several Inuit patients, Manning wrote to his superiors that, "during the course of conversation [with Inuit in hospital,] it was impressed upon the natives that they should accept things as they are and that by doing so they would speed their own recovery" (1952). Despite these measures to boost their morale in hospital, Inuit often found the separation from their families intolerable and difficult to accept. Inuit were encouraged to write letters to assuage the pain of separation (Tester et al. 2001). Some, like Quvianaqtuq, also wrote to government officials to ask for information or a change in government policy.[25] Today, approximately fifty years since the evacuations, Inuit families are still searching for news of their relatives. In June 2008, I received an e-mail from a woman in Ikpiarjuk (Arctic Bay) who has been trying for years to locate her great grandmother's body. "My name is Sarah, a few years ago I was in search of my dad's grandmother that passed away on the train to Hamilton, they unloaded her body before reaching Hamilton." Oqallak—Sarah's great-grandmother—had raised Sarah's father as a son. When I interviewed Sarah's father a month later, he wept as he told me about the last time he saw his (grand)mother. He had been unloading supplies from the vessel *C.D. Howe* when he saw his mother smiling and posing for a photograph as she was taken back to the boat. That fall, over CB radio, the family heard the news that she had died. Nothing more. The only record of her death that Sarah has is an index card with Oqallak's name and disk number typewritten on it. Handwritten in ink are the notations "Dead" and "1956." Is this, then, what it means to "have" a dead Eskimo?

Each time the ship returned, Oqallak's son would go to the beach where people loaded and unloaded its cargo and he would listen. He listened for his mother's name, he listened in the hope that someone would someday mention her or her death or any news of her. He was listening, I would argue, for the end of her life story, for that which was often erased in the Canadian government's effort to deal with the tuberculosis epidemic among the Inuit. This erasure is itself a form of murder—the extinction of an afterlife. I am arguing that such anonymous forms of care, especially when they attend indifferently to the physical lives of others, and not to the texture and uniqueness of those lives and afterlives, can, in a certain sense, be understood as murderous.

Biopolitics and murder

What I am proposing here is a reading of the relationship between biopolitics and murder. I am not by any means the only person working on aspects of this problem; other scholars have asked how to understand state-sanctioned death and genocide within a political formation that seems to privilege the promotion of life.[26] Michel Foucault himself gives one answer to why genocide is the dream of modern power, suggesting that, when "power is situated and

exercised at the level of life, the species, the race," it is not individuals but masses whose lives are at stake. To explain how a state dedicated to promoting life can also destroy it, he points to racism: "a way of introducing a break into the domain of life that is under power's control: the break between what must live and what must die" (Foucault 2003:254).

Agamben sees the murderous potential of biopolitics as ever-present—as inhering in the logic of biopolitics and not contained by racism. And so he introduces the concept of "bare life," figured by *homo sacer,* the "sacred man" who, in his exclusion from the community, can be killed but not sacrificed. Agamben (1998:9) calls homo sacer the "protagonist" of the story he is telling. Bare life is not, then, as some of his readers would have it,[27] simply an impoverished form of natural life—mere physical survival as opposed to thriving—but a life (any life) that is always already exposed to an anonymous death. Bare life is brought into the theater of life (it is a protagonist, after all) rather than remaining only a form of governance. Whereas Foucault could only theorize thanatopolitics as a cut in the human, a form of racism, Agamben's formulation reveals the way bare life has become coincident with the everyday—hence, his contention that the "camp" is the *nomos* of the modern.[28]

The question of whether the Canadian state should, in fact, be described as genocidal vis-à-vis the Inuit is significant. Patrick Wolfe (2006) makes the argument that settler colonialism (see also Cattelino 2010) in the United States was genocidal. As he puts it, "Land is life—or, at least, land is necessary for life" (Wolfe 2006:387). Therefore (and I concur with Wolfe here), the wholesale appropriation of native lands is a form of genocide, and the logic of elimination that structured the dispossession of those lands still structures settler society today. Although it makes sense to designate Canada a settler-colonial state with respect to the native population in southern Canada and although many of its settler-colonial policies and attitudes carried over to the northern administration, it seems important to point out that the early colonization of Canada's Arctic was not primarily focused on the appropriation of land "as life" or on "settling" the land (Abele 2009:20–21; Bovey 1967; Grant 1988:5; Mitchell 1996:50; Paine 1977:7; Zaslow 1971: 251–252).[29]

In fact, in an interesting reversal of the tactics used in southern Canada, Canadian state agents used Inuit presence on the land as evidence of Canadian sovereignty over the Arctic.[30] The provision of medical services to those Arctic "citizens" was, then, seen as one way of securing contested claims to sovereignty.[31] Dr. Helen MacMurchy made this claim forcefully in 1930 in a letter to the prime minister of Canada: "The Canadian Eskimo are perishing off the face of the earth. We have the power and the knowledge needed to save them and a plan for this is now before the Department of the Interior. If we fail them the result will be that the Eskimo will be exterminated and that at no distant rate. If we lose the Eskimo, we lose the Arctic" (Tester 2006:91).[32] Instead of being physically eliminated from their land (cf. Wolfe 2006) or unsettling Canadian claims to sovereignty through their status as a distinct people (cf. Rifkin 2009), Inuit bodies were reinscribed as Canadian to support Canada's international claim to sovereignty over the Arctic.[33]

Insofar as Agamben's analysis is helpful here, it makes visible the ways Canadian administrators imperceptibly shift from promoting life to hastening death among the Inuit. But, because of the peculiar history of Arctic Canada and the colonization of the Inuit, I am not actually asking Agamben's question—which is why, when power's hold is over life, the state can move so quickly from preserving life to eradicating it. Instead, I ask the slightly different question of how and why the drive to preserve life at the population level may be experienced itself as a drive to murder. Thus, it is about the way the biopolitical imaginary works on and through the psyche. How do public-health measures aimed at preserving life come to feel like murder?

Understanding how this happens requires thinking again about the logic of biopolitics. It seems that bare life can only ever be seen in the aggregate (as in Foucault's famous populations) or the indefinite singular (Agamben's homo sacer). These are both what I call "a-nonymous" forms (literally they are forms of life "without a name"). Significantly, the Subcommittee on Eskimo Housing Programs (1964), in laying out the thought experiment I discuss above, uses the indefinite article to mark the dead Eskimo as one of a series—indistinguishable, by name, from any other. (Even the definite article *the* would form a kind of name and call the Eskimo into a community, however modest). This means that homo sacer cannot be thought through relatedness.[34] The way homo sacer matters to others cannot be theorized. His death is not material or proper to anyone, except to the bureaucrat who "has" his death to add it to his calculations. It makes no sense to ask, as Hannah Arendt (1998) insisted we do, "whose" death is at stake and what the unique story of that life might be. Instead, the bureaucrat imagines he has "a" dead Eskimo: a unit in the mundane calculus of risk–benefit. Who the Inuit is or was is irrelevant; this indifference to his or her life as embedded in a series of relationships with the living and the dead is, in a certain sense, murderous.

I am proposing that bare life is best understood as a "failure of community." If community "is constituted through agreements and hence can also be torn apart by the refusal to acknowledge some part of the community (e.g., women or minorities) as an integral part of it" (Das 2007:9), then the failure I am concerned with is the failure to recognize an Other as being embedded in a series of relationships.[35]

I am ultimately interested in finding another way out of the bureaucrats' demonic double bind (disturbed Eskimo vs. dead Eskimo), and I hope to do this, in part, by following that anathema, the "dead Eskimo" as she or he is folded back into daily life, such that survival, and the very possibility of community and perhaps even a self, entails a sustained relationship with the death of an Other.[36]

Question of cooperation

In the 1970s, Bryan Pearson, who was then a member of the Northwest Territories governing council (the precursor of the Legislative Assembly), told a CBC reporter a story about the repercussions of the tuberculosis evacuations of the 1950s. The story concerns a three-month-old baby who was sent south for tuberculosis treatment. Twelve years later, the child returned with a social worker to the family home. Pearson (1973) says:

> On arrival at the house . . . the social worker . . . knocks on the door, says to the Eskimo couple who lived there . . .
> "Here is your daughter we brought her back for you," to which they replied
> "We don't have a daughter. We never had one."
> "Well yes you did but that was a long time ago." And they say,
> "Yes, but she died. The white man took her away and she died. We've never heard of her since."

This story ends with the Inuit family refusing to take the child back. Pearson, a great advocate for the Inuit, insisted that he had heard several such stories and that this story was "true."[37] Bracketing the truth of this particular story, what is important to me is the way the narrator recognizes that being alive or dead is not just a matter of vital signs. As anthropologists have pointed out in different contexts, the death of the body and social death are not always aligned (Lock 2002). In this story, the child is alive to the authorities that have been taking care of her (she has become one of Phillips's "names on a welfare role") and, according to Pearson, dead to her family, from whom she was removed 12 years earlier. Pearson's story both highlights the disturbing practice of removing Inuit from their social networks and calls into question Inuit willingness to cooperate in this mode of survival.

To clarify what I mean by such cooperation, I turn to the work of the South African novelist J. M. Coetzee, a practiced observer and theoretician of the contradictions of the postcolonial.[38] In Coetzee's novel *Life and Times of Michael K* (1998), there is a scene in which a doctor in a South African rehabilitation camp for "subversives" confronts a patient who is refusing to eat. The patient, a man "who looked at you as if beyond the grave" and whose body was little more than a skeleton, had collapsed during physical training. With some frustration, the doctor says, "If we turned you loose, if we put you out on the street in your condition, you would be dead in twenty-four hours. You can't take care of yourself, you don't know how. Felicity [the nurse] and I are the only people in the world who care enough to help you. Not because you are special but because it is our job. Why can't you co-operate?" (Coetzee 1998:145). Notice here that the doctor both requires the patient's cooperation and laments his failure to cooperate. Some time later, the laconic patient, Michael K, responds—but with an oblique question: "I ask myself: What am I to this man? I ask myself: What is it to this man if I live or die?" The doctor retorts, "You might as well ask why we don't shoot the prisoners. It is the same question" (Coetzee 1998:148).

The colonizer's desire that the colonized cooperate in the mutual task of survival is foregrounded in Coetzee's novel. The colonized may fall ill, may die of mysterious diseases, may even be killed in the civil war taking place around them, but they should always cooperate by striving to live. This desire for cooperation turns into an obsession for the doctor in Coetzee's novel, as it was an obsession for the generation of bureaucratic heroes I am describing.[39] Yet when Coetzee's doctor, a kind man and a figure of great ambivalence, says he cares about Michael K, he insists that it is not because Michael K is special but because *he* is a doctor. It is not insignificant, then, that the doctor repeatedly blunders over his patient's name, calling him "Michaels" instead of "Michael." In the end, it does not really matter who the patient is. It matters more that the doctor, qua doctor, can convince him of the importance of cooperation.

But rather than beginning to eat again, or even just explaining why he will not, Michael K instead questions the very ties that bind the doctor to his patient. "What is it to this man if I live or die?" he asks.

"What is it to *these* men if I live or die?" is also the veiled question Quvianaqtuq is asking in his letter on Inuit in hospital. The doctors and nurses take care of us, he suggests, in part because it is their job, and they would be rooted out if they failed to comply. Who are we (Inuit) to you anyway? What guarantee do we have that, in Coetzee's doctor's words, "you won't shoot the prisoners"?[40]

This question of "shooting the prisoners" became material in the Canadian Arctic during the summer of 1959, the year the RCMP began to shoot and kill Inuit sled dogs running loose around the settlement of Frobisher Bay. To gauge Inuit reaction to the actions of the RCMP, Yatsushiro added a question to his interview schedule about the shooting of the dogs. Most respondents expressed their bewilderment and horror over the shootings, as many do to this day. One of the claims that has circulated was that the RCMP killed the dogs as a way to make sure Inuit were not able to leave the settlements.[41] The RCMP still maintain they were responding to a very real public health threat, whereas Inuit contest both the danger the dogs actually posed as well as the

motivations of the RCMP (Taylor 2007; Younger-Lewis 2005). In an article Yatsushiro published several years after the shootings in Iqaluit, he suggested the RCMP had been "exterminating unleashed dogs owned by Eskimos, on the grounds that such animals constitute a menace to the community, especially the white residents" (1962:21).

One man Yatsushiro interviewed in 1959, Jamesie, saw things in an even darker light. Jamesie understood the ominous implications of the event and just how unbrotherly a bureaucracy can be. Jamesie told Yatsushiro that, at first, he considered killing a policeman in revenge but thought better of it. His vision for the future was particularly bleak. He explained to Yatsushiro (in Inuktitut): "Maybe afterwards there won't be so many dogs, since police are shooting them. In five years, maybe none at all. In five years maybe there will be lots of policemen. Maybe kill more Eskimos too. Just like dogs." This is a difficult idea to swallow: that colonial agents might secretly, or not so secretly, desire to kill Inuit, just as they killed their sled dogs.[42] In fact, listening to a tape recording of the exchange between Yatsushiro and his Inuk translator, it was clear to me how hard it was for Yatsushiro to assimilate the affective reality Jamesie was trying to convey.[43] After several attempts to get his point across, the translator finally says,

> "Policemen kill Eskimos, next time."
> "Eskimo ..." begins Yatsushiro, sounding unsure. "Policeman kill Eskimo? Or Eskimo dogs?"
> "The same as Eskimo, same as dogs. Policeman kill," explains the translator.
> Yatsushiro wonders if he has misunderstood the verb, "*Give,*" he says excitedly, "Oh! Give?"
> The translator is firm. "Kill."
> "Oh kill?"
> " Mmhm. Shoot," says the translator.
> " Shoot," repeats Yatsushiro, as if he is turning the word over in his mind.
> " Dogs, same thing, Eskimos," adds the translator emphatically, but Yatsushiro still wonders if he has misunderstood.
> "Oh, Eskimos will shoot their own dogs."
> "Eskimo dogs same thing. One," says the translator forcefully.
> "Same," repeats Yatsushiro, the realization of what Jamesie is saying breaking over him.
> "Policeman kill," says the translator again.
> "Policeman kill . . . dogs," repeats Yatsushiro.
> "Dogs first, next Eskimo, maybe."
> "Next time Eskimos, police will shoot Eskimos?" asks Yatsushiro?
> "Mmhmm."
> "Jamesie say this?
> "Mmhmm."
> "Mmmm."

"Why we don't shoot the prisoners" is an unspeakable question for the doctor in Coetzee's novel, just as the dead Eskimo is an anathema for the bureaucrats considering whether to gather Inuit into settlements.[44] It is, however, a very real question for the Inuit living inside the colonial regime of the postwar period. "Dogs. Eskimos. Same thing," says Yatsushiro's translator.[45] (See Figure 5.)

Figure 5. Inuit children reenacting the shooting of the dogs. © T. Yatsushiro, 1959.

Suicide as noncooperation

Miriam Nowdlak, today a policy analyst in the Government of Nunavut, speaks from her own experience of this time when Inuit were becoming wards of the Canadian state. For her, it is Michael K's question—"What is it to this man if I live or die?"—that is particularly salient. In an interview, she told me the story of her introduction to residential school:

> When I went to school, when I went to residential school, all the messages that I was getting, they didn't have to say it, they took away our traditional clothes, and they gave us clothing, not skin clothing . . . cut our hair . . . prevented us from speaking our language in school, just speak English in school and so on. To me, that was saying Inuit are no good. And that's when I learnt that my name was Miriam.

The disregard for Inuit names in the residential schools was symptomatic of a wider phenomenon. In 1941, the Canadian government initiated a program that would provide Inuit with identification numbers on fiber disks to be worn around their necks (Alia 1994; Smith 1993).[46] Quvianaqtuq's disk number, which appears at the top of his letter to Yatsushiro, was E7-xxx. E referred to the Eastern Arctic and 7 to the south Baffin region. Dr. A. J. MacKinnon, the medical officer who conceived of the disk number system suggested that upon the registration of a birth, each child "be given an identity disk on the same lines as the army identity disk and the same insistence that it be worn at all times. The novelty of it would appeal to the

natives." He added, "As far as the Eskimo is concerned, it does seem to me that this names business is of no great concern to them. They have got on nicely for a long time without cluttering up their minds with such details" (Alia 1994:32). Rather than supplementing the proper name, MacKinnon saw the disk numbers as supplanting them. With the disk list system in place, who an individual Inuit was, that individual's life story and familial connectedness, no longer mattered. In fact, "the only legitimate way for a person designated as an Eskimo to interact with the state was as a solitary individual identified by a unique Disk List number" (Smith 1993:43).

For Miriam, the erasure of her name was the beginning of a process of becoming someone other. Before entering school, she had only Inuktitut names. Now she was far away from her parents, from the sod house where nine people slept together on one platform, from a winter camp where she could name every occupant of every igloo. As she learned to speak English, as she was taught to read and write and count, she also learned that her Inuktitut names had no currency. She learned her name is Miriam.[47] She says,

> I remember—when was it?—I don't exactly remember what time of year it was but I think it was spring—anyway we had gone for a walk and we were trying to get at the berries under the snow, frozen berries that had grown—so it must have been in springtime ... I was walking home and I fell down and I didn't want to get up. I wanted to freeze to death.

One of the persistent questions of this article is, what does it mean to cooperate in survival? To see life as a value in itself? To get up out of the snow and go back to the residential school where a "rehabilitation" program was in full swing? To eat, as the doctor urged Michael K to do—so that he could resume the jumping jacks and flag salutes of his reeducation center? (See Figure 6.)

And what does it mean to resist such cooperation? The irony, of course, is that by the 1970s, after Inuit health had undergone increasing surveillance, when fewer Inuit were dying in childbirth, of starvation, and of tuberculosis, a suicide epidemic among Inuit youth erupted. On some level, Inuit youth were not willing to cooperate.[48]

In fact, Inuit are never fully made over into biopolitical subjects. They frequently fail to cooperate with the regime of life and often live or, better, die beyond its grid of intelligibility (Dreyfus et al. 1983:120–121). Are Inuit today still asking why the prisoners are not being shot?

A-nonymous care

In the Canadian Arctic, specifically in the territory of Nunavut, suicide is seen today as a massive public health problem, one that, it is hoped, will respond to reeducation campaigns set up by the territorial government. Pro-life slogans appear on posters around the community reminiscent of those extolling the virtues of quitting smoking and saying "no" to drugs. The baldness of their message is striking—one distributed by the Nunavut government reads, "Inuit Pride, Stay Alive, Inuit Survive." Such posters, like Coetzee's doctor, spread their message of cooperation indifferently: It matters not who you are but that you stay alive. Could not the young Canadian Inuit also ask, "What is it to this government if I live or die?

When life becomes an indifferent value, it no longer matters who you are—simply that you cooperate in the project of staying alive. Remember the disk list system of the 1940s and the bureaucrats who imagine a dead "Eskimo." And remember the way that the doctor in Coetzee's novel keeps tripping over Michael's name. He cares for Michael because he is a doctor, not because of who Michael is or what the story of his name might reveal.

The "regime of life" I have been describing vis-à-vis the tuberculosis epidemic quickly began to attach itself to this new problem of Inuit youth suicide. And the indifference to the situated identity of the individual who must live is the implicit structure of suicide prevention in Nunavut, just as it was in the assault on tuberculosis and the imposition of the disk list system. Care becomes "a-nonymous."

Today, the anonymous structure of care is revealed most explicitly in the local suicide hotline. Started in 1989 by a group of volunteers, the hotline is the longest-standing suicide prevention initiative in Nunavut. Its brochure advertises a "discreet and anonymous service" provided by "thoughtful people who care" for anyone experiencing emotional distress. In the context of a suicide hotline, the first step in caring for the Other is to discard the name. As one volunteer explained to me, even if you recognize the voice on the other end of the phone, you treat the person as if you do not; you even come to believe on a certain level that you do not know the individual. One result of this is that the suffering of the other is circumscribed by anonymous relations in such a way that no claims are made on the volunteer or the caller after the call ends.

To care anonymously also requires being able to care intransitively. There is no direct object of care, except for the class of a-nonymous individuals. One comes to experience oneself as a caring person, caring such that it matters not for whom. Thus, one woman reflected on her motivations for volunteering on the hotline: "For me, it's just to help in general. I'm happy to help in any way!"

But what does it really mean to care anonymously? What does it mean to take this intimate affect, "care," and apply it indiscriminately, anonymously? When I asked one of the hotline volunteers this question, he responded,

> It's more an abstract caring. It's not the same as caring for someone I know. It's like—if I was driving along

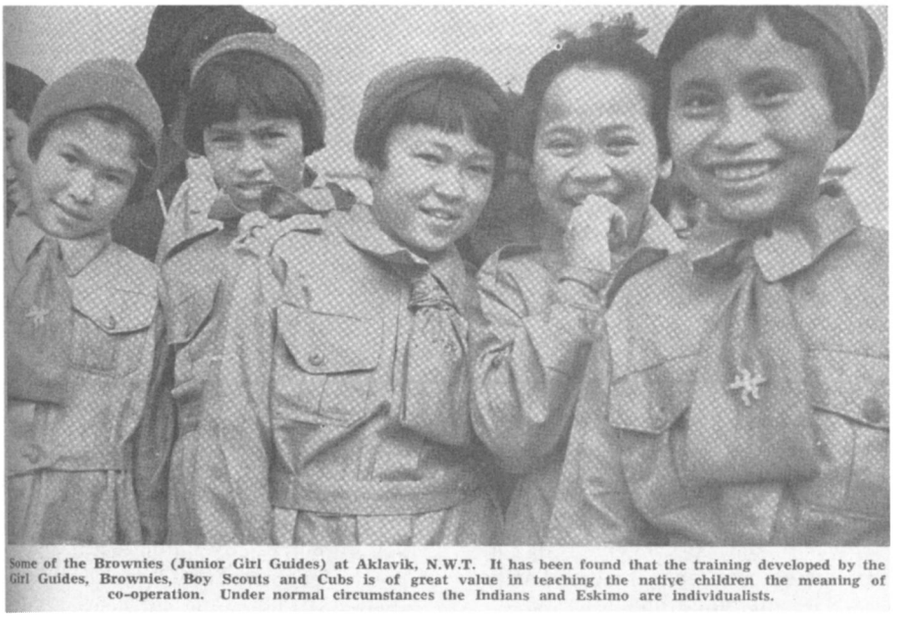

Figure 6. This captioned photo first appeared in *Arctic Advance,* Archibald Fleming's 1943 report of his trips to the western Arctic and Hudson Bay. Fleming was then Anglican Archdeacon of the Arctic (see, especially, Geller 1998). Reprinted by permission of the General Synod Archives, Anglican Church of Canada.

> a highway and I saw an accident, I would stop even though I don't know the person because as a human being I would care that there is somebody who is hurt. You get affected by some of the calls you get and you hear how hurt the person is. Sure, I don't care about them personally, but I do care as a human being.

The contradiction of anonymous care is highlighted among the Inuit, a context in which "visiting" friends and relatives often sit for hours on the sofa saying nothing, simply being in the presence of one another: It is an inversion of the sociability on the suicide hotline, where one speaks but is not copresent.

Gradually, I came to see the hotline as a strategic exemplar (Rabinow 1989) of a particular form of sociability—anonymous care—that a regime of life makes possible. By calling it a "strategic exemplar," I mean that the suicide hotline has a concrete existence in the world, but, at the same time, it reveals something important about the relations of power and affect at play in the Canadian Arctic and in humanitarian interventions more broadly.

Anonymous care highlights the simultaneous intimacy and distance of a welfare state—a structural distance combined with an intimate affect. As the image of an RCMP officer from *The Book of Wisdom* illustrates, the ability to care intimately—not for a particular person but anonymously (and nonspecifically)—characterizes a particular form of sociability, one that I think Quvianaqtuq was trying, respectfully, to question.

Some fifty years after Quvianaqtuq wrote his letter, when I asked an Inuit friend why, in the end, so few Inuit youth call the hotline, he said, "I think people just need to talk to someone, but at the one-to-one level. One time my cousin called me up. Had a gun in his hand. Said he's gonna kill himself. I went over there, I confronted him and I was there with him. Everything is so anonymous in Western society."

The indifference I am tracing here is subtle. What is fascinating about anonymous care is that it becomes a privileged mode of care, even in situations in which one does or might have face-to-face relations with others. Anonymous care becomes the prototype of modern care, perhaps its purest (most sublime) form. But it leaves unanswered the question of who is dying and how that death actually matters beyond its tabulation. It also leaves us wondering about Jamiesie's impression that the regime that is so intent on promoting and extending life might also want to kill the Inuit. At the very least, Inuit death is rarely surprising.

Counterfactuals

The anticipation of Inuit suicide—coupled with its prohibition—is evident in the remarks of a filmmaker in the Canadian Arctic town of Igloolik: "According to Igloolik's yearly suicide rate there are at least five or six young people walking around town today who will probably be dead by next Christmas. This is a horrible thought. We don't know who they are . . . Our goal is to keep some of

them—hopefully all of them—alive at this time next year" (Cousineau 1999). The goal is to keep Inuit alive, but the truth of the yearly suicide rates makes their death inevitable. Inuit are tentatively imagined as the walking dead, and yet even that thought is proscribed: It is a "horrible thought."

The absence of surprise is significant. Suicide is at once prohibited and awaited. Suicide, as a counterfactual, evokes ambivalence. Future suicides are imagined and the thoughts then suppressed. Suicide, too awful to think about, is a possibility that is articulated and then denied. Statistics play an important role in making suicide—even suicide as a counterfactual—real (cf. Kaufert and O'Neil 1990). The possibility that any Inuit youth will commit suicide is tabulated, that person's death thereby measured. However, as Sarah Lochlann Jain points out in the context of cancer prognosis—the "you" who either will or will not die and the "you" who has a 5 percent chance of survival are not seamlessly aligned. She describes the experience of living this misalignment phenomenologically as "living in prognosis" (Jain 2007:78). All young Inuit live in prognosis, all live the misalignment between statistical probabilities of their death and the existential fact of their life or death.

I am reminded of a teenager in Iqaluit who confessed to me, some months after the murder of her best friend, "It's not that I'm suicidal, it's just that I don't want to live anymore." This girl, then 13 years old, had lived her whole life within a postcolonial state that simultaneously bans and anticipates her death, a state that wants her death—if she is going to die—so that it can tabulate rates and predict future deaths.[49] How does such an anticipation of death (on the part of the state and its agents) enter youthful imaginaries? The colonial commandment (Mbembe 2005) not to commit suicide effects an uncanny doubling, in which the postcolonial state both does and does not want Inuit youth dead, just as the RCMP's public health efforts to kill dogs are reinterpreted as having murderous designs. My friend, who sometimes wants to die, is holding at bay that whole suicidal apparatus, by saying, in effect, "Although I want to die, I am not suicidal, I do not belong to your calculations, I want at least to own my own death, and my pain." She is trying to escape her life lived in prognosis, in which her death is never a surprise to anyone, least of all herself.

As Foucault famously suggests, death itself "is outside the power relationship. Death is beyond the reach of power, and power has a grip on it only in general, overall or statistical terms. Power has no control over death, but it can control mortality" (2003:248). There is definitely a sense in which the bureaucrats "have" the dead Eskimo in statistical terms—whether in the context of tuberculosis or suicide—and their power is a power over death rates, as Foucault suggests. But to leave the analysis there renders us deaf to the overtones of the bureaucrats' voice, the way that "having" speaks of something beyond a diffuse disciplinary power of which bureaucrats are merely mouthpieces. It speaks to the way that, as Frantz Fanon (1967) suggested, colonialism works on and through the psyche, in the way the colonial imagination infuses everyday relationships. Is it possible that death may escape power's grasp but not the everyday economy of desire that characterizes colonial regimes?

There is certainly a way that biopolitics gets experienced as murder. Is there a sense in which the colonial agent and the postcolonial bureaucrat also want a dead Eskimo or an Eskimo dead?[50] To better hear these overtones, we have to ask what happens when attention to the welfare of populations is combined with a colonial imagination and desire. What happens when staying alive (the secular sacred) and being a good, deserving Inuk become one? What happens when staying alive becomes not only a normative injunction but also, like every other colonial norm, one that you, as an Inuit, can only ever be expected to imperfectly live up to? In the case of Inuit suicide, coming to terms with the ambivalent command "Do not kill yourself, but, of course, you will" requires that biopolitics and colonial psychology be thought together.[51] Do we, in our policies, programs, exhortations, ask Inuit to live while also expecting them to die?

The life-of-the-name

It is in the face of such anonymous care that Michael K's question of the doctor—"What am I to this man? What is it to this man if I live or die?"—comes as an accusation from beyond the grave. It returns me to an important problematic: how to reconcile the sociality of anonymous care (in which it does not ultimately matter who lives or dies) with a sociality of Inuit communities, in which survival depends on being given a name—usually the name of someone who has recently died (Balikci 1970; Guemple 1965; Nuttall 1992; Saladin d'Anglure 1977). In the passing of a name from the recently dead or dying to the newly born, it is understood that the life-of-the-name will come to reside in that newborn. From that moment forward, family members and friends address the child with the kinship terms, and with the degree of intimacy, previously reserved for the deceased.

A child without a name cannot survive, and a child who does survive is enfolded, for better or worse, into a social life that extends forward and backward in time, linking all those with the same name in an ever-expanding nexus of relations. Speaking of North Alaskan Iñupiat, Barbara Bodenhorn calls this "the *who* of the name" (2006:140, emphasis added). At the very least, one can see that "*what* am I to this man" is no longer a relevant question.

The Inuit elder Aupilaarjuk explained to a class of Inuit college students, "Aupilaarjuk is my name and I try to use it to keep me alive . . . It is my name. It keeps me alive" (Saladin

d'Anglure 2001:19). This life force of the name continues to matter to the younger generations as well. For example, a young friend of mine, Jesse, tells me the story of her Inuktitut name, Ittuq: "My mom was pregnant with me, and this old guy died, his name was Ittuq. And my mom had a dream, she saw him and he was asking her to *amaq* him, like put him on her back like a baby. My mom was like, holy cow, you're too heavy!" Jesse's mother knew she had to call her baby "Ittuq" and that, only then, when the old man's *atiq* (name-soul) came to be in the young girl's body, would she be able to amaq him as he requested.

Death, rather than simply a failure of medical bureaucracy, asserts itself also as the possibility of new life. The name—in this case of the old man Ittuq—can be imagined as a gift from the dead. Death becomes not the rupture of a being-in-common but its very possibility. And survival becomes not so much about cooperating in a world of anonymous care as it is about being marked by the death of an Other.

In Inuktitut, the word used to translate "survival" has itself many valences. The word *annaktujuniq* literally means the state of one who escapes from sickness, hunger, danger. And in another context, the base *annaktuq* is used to describe an animal or quarry that gets away, escapes a death. Survival is linked to escape. The intimacy of the other's death, the death that one escaped, is crucial—the other's death is imagined as one's own. There is no Eskimo "dead or alive" to be "had" by a colonial agent. Just as with the name, someone else has died and you survived, you escaped.

Jesse, my young friend who is also known as Ittuq, tells me the story of the night her brother died. She is forever marked by this death, a death she narrowly escaped and one she turns over and over in her memory:

> I had nowhere to go so I went [to find] my brother. They were drinking at this place. And I was just watching them drinking. I was waiting for my brother to go home so I can walk with him or whatever. Get a ride or something. And when the bottle was gone, my brother didn't look very drunk, but when he stood up, he almost fell. *Whoo.* That's when we all realized how drunk he was.

One of the kids who had been drinking had his parents' snowmobile, and so a bunch of the kids piled on. Jesse's brother got onto the side. Jesse wanted to get on too, but she had a crush on one of the boys on the snowmobile, and felt very shy toward him, so she decided to wait for the next ride. Her friend Kakkik waited with her. She tells me about that moment:

> So I said, "I'll wait. I'll wait until the second trip." Jimmy [the driver] was supposed to drop off my brother [Isaac] at home, and then drop off [the others] and come back . . . My brother [Isaac] didn't have a helmet on. He was just laughing and saying, "*Ajaii*"—like, being scared. He said, "Go Slow!" And Jimmy was like, "Don't worry I'm going to go slow."
>
> And me and Kakkik watched them drive off and as soon as they drove off it started raining, like lightly, and then it started to get heavier and heavier. I asked Kakkik to borrow five bucks [for a cab]—but I think there was no more cabs on the road. We waited for like an hour. And Kakkik was joking around saying, "They crashed" and we just giggled a bit and then Kakkik said, "Fuck this I'm walking home!"

At the time of the crash, Jesse's best friend, Sila, was pregnant. When the baby was born, Sila gave it Isaac's name. Jesse told me that the first time she went to visit her friend's baby in the hospital, she realized that the whole right side of the baby's face was paralyzed, just as Isaac's right side had been "wrecked" the night she visited him in the morgue. Moreover, Jesse tells me, "[Isaac] always done what he always wanted to do and said whatever he was thinking. Every time someone would take a picture of him he would put up his middle finger . . . And you know when newborns move their hands? When we went to visit [Sila's son] in the hospital he put up his middle finger. For a couple of seconds!"

Although anonymous care may be a dominant mode of being together, and one that structures politics as usual, it certainly does not, as can be seen from the story of Isaac and his namesake, exhaust the possibilities for attention and care for others. Adriana Cavarero contends that philosophy, like the discourse of humanitarianism, asks what the human is. Biography, an alternate way of conceiving the self in politics, asks who an individual is. For Cavarero, following Arendt, one becomes a unique individual by being caught by the stories of others.[52] That is, the self is constitutively exposed to the other, dependent on the storytelling capacity of the other, and life in community is not a given but a recurring gift of narration. Such a mode of caring—one that conceives of life both in its exposure to another and in its narrative relation to the other—is also what was lacking when Oqallak's body and her story went missing.

Mournful life

My question here is whether we can imagine a kind of survival that becomes less about an individual body, hungry, destitute, lacking (thinking here about Michael K and the "dead" Eskimo), and more about bodies existing in a circulation of names. Because if "I" survive by being called into community by another, then the guarantee of my existence must reside with another, even in the body of another. And if my name will outlast my physical body and will come to rest in another body, how essential is my (proper) body to my life? (In what sense is it even possible to talk about my life?) We can begin to imagine life unmoored from the physical presence of a particular body, as future children are named

in dreams and remembered after death.[53] Names and bodies are continually being realigned.

Inuit naming practices do seem to displace the primacy of the biological in modern definitions of life and may help us to consider the possibility that the life of the name is ontologically prior to physical life. Here I follow Judith Butler, who claims that there is "a certain kind of surviving [that] takes place in language" (1997:4).[54] That is, as the baby Isaac grows up, he will be addressed through the kinship terms reserved for his namesake. His friends and relatives will watch for manifestations of their brother, son, friend in this new life. To a certain degree, throughout his life, Isaac will have to refer to himself through "the language given by the Other."

If we are truly social beings, then, in some sense, who we are depends on the ways we are called. Butler takes Louis Althusser's notion of "interpellation" seriously and notices the way name calling can be traumatic: As an act that precedes my will and is out of my control, it positions me in a particular way within the social. The sense in which a self is always also someone else—a young girl but also an old man—is reinforced by the "skewing" of kinship terms that follows the namesake relationship. The life-of-the-name (in which the other who dies is not forgotten but comes to have a new life) can also be understood as a kind of prolonged mourning. Freud (1957:126) describes the work of mourning as the withdrawal of libido from a loved object that has disappeared. The inability to fully decathect from such a lost loved object he calls "melancholia," but we could also consider it the condition of linguistic life. We live by virtue of being called, being hailed, by our loved ones. Melancholia, like naming, is a refusal to cease interpellating, a refusal to cease hailing the loved object, whether or not the original body is manifest. Traditionally, if an Inuit child died before it was named, it was not mourned. In the rare cases when infanticide was to be practiced, the child was not named.[55] The-life-of-the name provides a way of imagining life—perhaps we could call it "mournful life"—that refuses to ignore the dead or our desire for the dead.

Conclusion

This point returns me to the claim I made at the beginning of this article, that bare life in Agamben's sense exists only through a failure of community. Bare life exists when "who" someone is, is ignored.[56] The disavowed desire to "have" a dead Inuk on one's hands is an anonymous business, and the dead Inuk in question is not so much mourned as tabulated. However, as I have demonstrated, to mourn is to reclaim one's stake—in the Inuit case, through the name—in another's being.[57] What I am suggesting here is that bare life might productively be thought of as life that has not been, and is not allowed to be, mourned. What it is possible to mourn—that which has been loved, that which has a name—is never bare. As a young friend said to me, "That's why we have namesakes. I was named after my grandpa, Salamonie, he died, so I was born, it's my turn." Love and desire and the dead are connected in a constellation that is anything but innocent. My friend needs the dead to be dead so he can have his turn.

I intend this phrase "failure of community" in a political sense.[58] I am arguing that we become part of the human community (and thus legible as human) through being named, through "being called." This means that being alive in the specifically human sense and being in community are terrifyingly linked—firstly, because there is no guarantee that we will be called at all, and, secondly, because there is no guarantee that the mode of address will not prove unlivable (cf. Butler 2004). This is terrifying because the stakes are so high, and there does not seem to be a bureaucratic way of proceeding that can ensure that no one is excluded from community. In fact, bureaucratic modes of proceeding often lead in the other direction—to the formation of collectivities devoid of biography and, thus, devoid of human life in the Arendtian sense. Community, then, depends on our terrifying ability to call on each other and, thus, to bring human life into existence.

The particular violence of bare life, then, is that one conceives life as artificially severed from community, from the call, and from death and our desire for the death of others—as if life were not always linked to community through the dead. I am suggesting here that the Inuit life-of-the-name provides an image of what Agamben describes as "a life in which it is never possible to isolate something such as naked life" (2000:2–3). For, as I say above, in the Inuit case, life becomes less about a single body—hungry, destitute, lacking—and more about bodies linked through the circulation of names.[59]

Among the Inuit, one is literally called into community by being called a name. This focus on "being-called"—rather than on a static identity—has important implications. First, the call can always be contested or reinterpreted. And, in fact, in Inuit communities, one is forever engaged in interpreting the meaning of the name one is called and the way it links one to others. Thus, what precisely it means to be called "Ittuq," or "Isaac," for example, is always in question and something people continually reflect on and wonder about. "She's just like Ittuq, or he's nothing like Isaac."[60] Second, because the name indexes different people at different times and can always be used again in the future, the community it creates is never fixed. Community thus inheres in the potential to be called—and to be called again.

Recognizing that bare life cannot be mourned, that mourning and a relationship to the dead is in some sense constitutive of community, and that a community thus always has an indeterminate character changes the stakes of intervention. Recall the image of the bureaucrats arguing

that it is better to have a live and disturbed Eskimo than a dead one. What is at stake in that bureaucratic double bind is the physical survival of an anonymous Eskimo. In a community based around the *saunik,* or namesake, relationship, by contrast, what is at stake is living out one's specific commitment (Cohen n.d.)—the way one is called by both the living and the dead. It is through an ethnographic practice—a descent into everyday life—that one hears the murmurs of another way of living, which is not always happy, or just, or necessarily healthy, but it is definitely never bare.

For many Inuit, then, "life" as an abstraction has little value, yet specific relationships to others, both dead and alive, matter profoundly. Biopolitical models of aid (i.e., aid that focuses on the bare life of a population), such as anonymous hotlines aimed at preserving the life of the Inuit population, ignore the pull of these personal ties and, in so doing, fail to acknowledge that, for Inuit, death has not yet become anonymous or clinical. To understand their daily struggle with life and death, we need to reimagine the political as something beyond biopolitics and beyond the ethics of professionalized caring. This calls for a vision of community in which the question "What is it to this man if I live or die?" is not equivalent to "Why don't we shoot the prisoners?"—a vision that threads life and death together into a politics that refuses to be constrained by the hegemony or abstraction of "life."

The ethnography of a negation pushes in many directions at once. It pushes us to understand how a disavowed desire for death (articulated in a thought experiment buried in a report on Inuit housing) might work on the imagination of the colonizer and might be experienced by the colonized themselves. It pushes us to notice the way the forgotten death of a good woman lives on in the imaginary of her great-granddaughter as well as that of the ethnographer. But, like Yatsushiro, who struggled to understand his Inuit interpreter, if we keep working and listening, we may finally hear what is also being said: the ways that death is desired, acknowledged, and remembered and the way it makes life possible in the first place.

Listening to suicidal youth implicates all of us in their deathly imaginations and forces us to question what kind of communities we are forming and want to form. I suggest that, by allowing suicide to remain a wound rather than becoming a "problem" to be resolved through cooperation, we can experience the suicidal imagination, its desires and its negations, rather than circumscribe it with understanding. We are wounded by the pain of the other, who is also part of us. Suicide, like tuberculosis before it, becomes a predicament of community—of the failure to articulate a way of being together that recognizes how our existence is bound up in others. So this is perhaps the task before us: to describe a way of living—a mournful life—in which the dead are borne along.

Notes

Acknowledgments. Field research was supported by a Social Sciences Research Council (SSRC) International Dissertation Field Research Fellowship, a National Science Foundation (NSF) Dissertation Improvement Grant, and a grant from Fonds québécois de la recherche sur la société et la culture (FQRSC), établissement de nouveaux professeurs-chercheurs. Without the continued support and encouragement of Romeyn Stevenson, Madeleine Allakariallak, Myna Ishulutak, and Margaret Karpik in Iqaluit and Anna Qaunaq and Sandy Attagutsiak and her family in Arctic Bay, that fieldwork would not have been possible. Although I cannot name them here, the youth with whom I worked are always my inspiration. Earlier versions of this argument were presented in the anthropology departments at Cornell University, Harvard University, Johns Hopkins University, and Carleton University. I am very grateful for these opportunities. I wish to thank Jaypeetee Arnakak, Felicity Aulino, Greg Brass, Gillian Chilibeck, Lawrence Cohen, Qajaaq Ellsworth, Cristiana Giordano, Byron Good, Mary-Jo Good, Nelson Graburn, Clara Han, Joshua Moses, Carolina Piñeda, Lucinda Ramberg, Nicole Rigillo, Liz Roberts, and Pamela Stern as well as three anonymous reviewers for comments, questions, and conversations that have helped me clarify my thoughts. In addition, a presentation in the STANDD speaker series at McGill—and especially comments from my colleagues Nicole Couture, John Galaty, and Kristin Norget—helped me to sharpen my argument in important ways. I would also like to thank Linda Forman for her extremely helpful copyedits and Angelique Haugerud for her support. I would also like to thank Anne McKeage, archivist at the Archives of Hamilton Health Sciences and the Faculty of Health Sciences, McMaster University as well as my remarkable research assistants, Ariel Appel, Megan Atkinson, Megan Galeucia, and Sheehan Moore, whose insight and doggedness have made this a better article. And, finally, I want to thank Aloshua Aningmiuq, for allowing me to use the photograph of her father, and Toshio Yatsushiro, for generously sharing his research notes, photographs, and home with me when Nelson Graburn and I visited him in Hawaii in 2004. This article is for Eduardo Kohn, whose continued faith in me and my work never ceases to surprise.

1. However, the subcommittee's report suggests that the fears of damaging Inuit character were unfounded and that "the modern Eskimo abandons the uncomfortable aspects of his former life with alacrity, if he is given the opportunity to do so." To bolster its claims, the subcommittee describes the common features of traditional Eskimo housing as "lack of privacy for copulation and defecation, a shared family bed, absence of furniture, shortage of storage space, cramped, cold, poorly-lit and badly ventilated quarters" (Subcommittee on Eskimo Housing Programs 1964:8). In reality, there was a great deal of ambivalence among Arctic administrators in the post–World War II era about moving Inuit into settlements. They foresaw the end of a way of life and the beginning of Inuit dependency on the Canadian state. But that generation of bureaucrats often emphasized the costs of doing otherwise. On the attempt to bring Inuit into fixed settlements, see, especially, Tester 2006 and Thomas and Thompson 1972. The latter states that "the [Eskimo] housing program initiated by the Canadian government is of particular interest since it is one of the most ambitious programs of its kind undertaken by any government. It can be looked upon as part of a massive effort to acculturate a people who have lived by entirely different values, into the mainstream of Canadian society" (Thomas and Thompson 1972:9).

2. In November of 2011, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK; an organization created in 1971 to lobby for Inuit rights) held a conference entitled, "From Eskimo to Inuit in 40 Years." In ITK's words, "Inuit is the contemporary term for Eskimo." Canada officially adopted

the term in 1978 in response to Aboriginal-rights-based activism (Collignon 2006:5). But the reference to a period of "40 years" seems to indicate that ITK views becoming recognized as Inuit was a process—the process of gaining recognition as an Aboriginal people with a right to self-determination. In this article, I retain the term *Eskimo* when I am quoting from historical sources and also when, in the context of a historical discussion, I am trying to capture something of the alienation of colonialism. For instance, when the Arctic bureaucrats who wrote the housing report assert that a "disturbed Eskimo" is preferable to a "dead one," I retain the word *Eskimo* to highlight the multiple ways in which colonial agents interpellate Inuit into an alien identity. In such cases, replacing the word *Eskimo* with *Inuit* would seem to efface some of the violence of colonialism.

3. I call it a "thought experiment" because it calls on the reader to imagine two scenarios—having a "disturbed Eskimo" (who has been cut off from a way of life and livelihood by insertion into settlement life) or a dead one. Of course, like many thought experiments, the result (creating or not creating a comprehensive housing policy) had material consequences.

4. A report published by the Department of National Health and Welfare in 1960, entitled *Eskimo Mortality and Housing,* conducted a similar thought experiment through visual images. The cover of the publication juxtaposes an igloo with a string of crosses behind it and a cozy-looking frame house with a single cross nearby. The text of the report states, "This report on Eskimo housing is presented by means of photographs taken over the past five years, in the belief that 'a picture is worth ten thousand words.' The conditions shown are fairly typical of Eskimo housing across the Canadian Arctic today" (Department of National Health and Welfare 1960:5). By looking at the photos and reading the mortality statistics, the reader was expected to come to the same conclusion as the authors—that Inuit housing kills.

5. That this was not always the case—that the figure of "the dead Eskimo" was not always a sign of failure—is significant. In the early part of the 20th century, titillating stories circulated of Inuit suicide not subject to legal or bureaucratic sanction. Such stories functioned largely as fabulous tales of the death of a radical Other. "Eskimo death," therefore, occurred largely outside the scrutiny of the Canadian state. Indeed, between 1937 and 1941, 84 percent of Inuit deaths in Canada occurred without the attention of a doctor of nurse (Wherrett 1945:58). And, perhaps more to the point, by 1945, it made sense to tabulate how many deaths occurred without such attention.

6. As Mark Rifkin puts it, "'Bare life,' therefore, serves as an authorizing figure for decision making by self-consciously political institutions while itself being presented as exempt from question or challenge within such institutions" (2009:92).

7. I am playing with two meanings of *propriety:* (1) "Conformity to accepted standards of behavior or morals, esp. with regard to good manners or polite usage"; and (2) "The fact of belonging or relating specially to a particular thing or person; right of possession or use; ownership, proprietorship" (*OED Online,* s.v. "propriety," http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/50190330?single=1&query_type=word&queryword=propriety&first=1&max_to_show=10, accessed March 2009).

8. *Inuk* is the singular form of *Inuit.*

9. That is, although the bureaucrats are, indeed, responding to extraordinary death rates among Inuit and an ongoing tuberculosis problem, the issue at hand is a future housing policy and its imagined consequences. In imagining the future, two mutually exclusive scenarios are considered: having a disturbed or a dead "Eskimo." Compare Jain 2007 on counterfactual pasts and futures. On the unstated, unconscious desire to kill the other, Sigmund Freud remarks, "But it would be wrong so completely to underestimate this *psychical* reality in comparison with *factual* reality. It is significant enough. Every hour of every day, in our unconscious impulses, we remove everyone who gets in our way" (2005:191).

10. I take very seriously Audra Simpson's (2007) point that Aboriginal contexts are never properly "postcolonial" but are situated within what she calls "colonialism's living consciousness" (2000:115). Similarly, Patrick Wolfe (2006) points out that viewing settler colonialism as a structure rather than an event makes it clear that we are still living within that structure and, therefore, are not yet in a "postcolonial" era.

11. For important work on the suicide epidemic among Inuit in Nunavut and Nunavik, see Hicks 2007, Kirmayer et al. 1998a, Kirmayer et al. 1998b, Kirmayer et al. 1996, Kral 2003, and Kral et al. 1998.

12. In his discussion of welfare colonialism, Robert Paine suggests that "the Inuit were even 'useful' to the Canadians, so long as they did not possess the health and educational services which Canadian society is geared to provide its citizens ... [This] also prompts the question, what is going to happen (how can the Inuit be kept 'useful'?) should the Arctic be TB-free and should all Inuit complete grade school?" (1977:47). Paine is pointing out that a lack of health and education among the Inuit justified any intervention the colonizers made—thus allowing them to maintain a sense of moral superiority. It was in this sense that the Inuit were "useful" to the colonizers and in this sense that the colonizers, the Canadian state, "had" ownership of the Inuit.

13. I have changed individuals' names throughout the article. I have also masked Quvianaqtuq's identifying number to protect his identity.

14. Nelson Graburn and I visited Toshio Yatsushiro in his apartment in Hawaii in 2004. Yatsushiro was then 94 years of age. Yatsushiro had asked Graburn if he would become responsible for his Arctic materials, which included boxes of correspondence, field notes, photographs, films, and so on, related to his research in the Canadian Arctic. Quvianaqtuq's letter was among this material.

15. In Africa, by contrast, the WHO treated tuberculosis in the home and put its resources into training indigenous health care workers (Hodgson 1982:508). Frank Tester (Tester et al. 2001:137) also questions whether the mass evacuations of Inuit were necessary after the use of streptomycin and isoniazid was introduced in 1952, reducing the need for bed rest and surgery.

16. As Charles Taylor argues, "Within bureaucratic rule certain decisions are taken away from individuals who are required to follow sets of rules. The requirement that rules be followed precludes the possibility of scrapping the rules, finding alternative ways of making decisions, or taking a shortcut to a decision" (1994:175).

17. In a fascinating, study, Pam Stern details the relationship between Inuit citizenship and alcohol policy. She argues that, in 1903, "alcohol control became the first step in the colonial administration both of northern indigenous peoples, particularly Inuit, and of their lands, and the incorporation of both into the Canadian state" (n.d.:6).

18. Tester and colleagues suggest that, "until the mid 1950s, the paternalistic treatment of Inuit was common. Inuit were 'children' needing to be saved by the *heroic deeds* of people still living with the residue of World War Two" (2001:129, emphasis added).

19. By 1959, Otto Schaefer, a doctor involved in the Eastern Arctic Patrols of 1955 and 1957, would write that "the situation has improved greatly almost everywhere, but many old Indians and Eskimos are still more afraid of evacuation to the white man's land than of death" (1959:249).

20. According to Pat Grygier, in 1950 the governmental list of Inuit in southern hospitals had 119 names. Patient identification

details for 42 of those listed were "either omitted or incomplete, or wrong" (Grygier 1994:27). The Anglican bishop of the Arctic from 1950 to 1973, Donald Marsh, dramatized this confusion in a collection of stories he wrote about the Inuit, "Cry the Beloved Eskimo." In one story, an Ottawa bureaucrat wonders what to do with 15 Inuit children who are ready to return home from hospital, "'They can't speak a word of English,' says the bureaucrat helplessly, 'we don't know who they are or where they came from'" (Marsh 1991:187).

21. An Anglican minister who served in an Inuit community of northern Quebec in the 1960s commented on the lack of communication between hospitals and the Inuit: "They did not think the Eskimo people were worthy of being informed of where they precisely were, and didn't think it important that relatives should be informed, that parents should be told where their children were. There was none of that. The authorities didn't think it important that they should get their names right" (Grygier 1994: 123).

22. The anthropologist Diamond Jenness wrote that "very few tubercular Eskimos at that period left their homes willingly" and that the "situation was fraught with tragedy" (1964:88). Further, "there were occasions when the Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer had to use his authority, and a number of families deliberately kept away from any settlement when the hospital ship was due to make its call" (Jenness 1964:88). Schaefer believed the situation to be much improved by 1959, when he wrote that the "discovery of advanced tuberculosis in Northern natives meant, in most cases, parting from their lands and peoples forever to whither away in a strange environment and with a disagreeable type of food. No wonder they fled over the hills in some places when our x-ray equipment was landed" (1959:249).

23. In an article published eight years later, entitled "Disease and Death in Canada's North," Willis would suggest that "it is not a difficult matter to have a nurse give an injection of penicillin or a dose of diptheria toxoid to an Eskimo, and have an X-ray technician make a film of his chest, once they are on the spot. It is the business of getting them there at the right time with the facilities they need that presents the major problem" (1963:764).

24. Manning joined the Arctic Division of the Department of Resources and Development in 1952 as a translator and interpreter specifically to help with translation on the Eastern Arctic Patrol (Grygier 1994:32).

25. Minnie Aodla Freeman, an Inuit woman employed in the hospitals to translate for Inuit patients, described just how difficult it was to communicate the depth of Inuit despair. In the process of translation, the urgency of such letters was lost. "Altogether [the message in the letter] does not sound very important to the receiver because we translators lack many important words in English, though we know them in the Inuit language." She cited a letter inquiring about a child in a southern hospital in which one passage is translated "I have not heard where he is. I would like to hear." What should have been conveyed, she asserted, is closer to "I would be pleased to hear as I worry about him a great deal. My mind does not rest from worry" (Freeman 1978:54).

26. Achille Mbembe (2005) is interested in what he calls "necropolitics" and Stuart Murray (2006) in thanatopolitics; Didier Fassin (2010) thinks about the possibility of a politics of life that does not disqualify survival.

27. Anthropological writing that engages Agamben often seems to make a similar move: Bare life is equated with *zoe,* or natural life, an equation that Agamben explicitly challenges at points (e.g., Agamben 1998:88), although he occasionally uses the two terms interchangeably (see also Caldwell 2004).

28. Agamben makes this quite clear when he says,

> If there is a line in every modern state marking the point at which the decision on life becomes a decision on death, and biopolitics can turn into thanatopolitics, this line no longer appears today as a stable border dividing two clearly distinct zones. This line is now in motion and gradually moving into areas other than that of political life, areas in which the sovereign is entering into an ever more intimate symbiosis not only with the jurist but also with the doctor, the scientist, the expert, and the priest. [1998:122]

29. The colonization of the Canadian Arctic was more intermittent than in the South and generally occurred much later. However, by the 17th century, traders were coming and going from the Arctic (Williamson 1974; cf. Crowe and Arctic Institute of North America 1991), and, although some established trading posts at various locations, they never intended to "settle" the land the way they did in southern Canada. Because it was most efficient and economical, Inuit were often encouraged to continue living on the land according to their custom (Abele 2009; Graburn 1978; Williamson 1974). In fact, in the early stages of colonization, Inuit lands were not perceived as particularly valuable. So, in 1874, when a U.S. miner made a request for land that would have impeded Canadian expansion northward, the Canadian response was telling—officials dragged their feet. In 1879, Edward Blake, a Liberal politician, reported to the Colonial Office that "the object in annexing these unexplored territories to Canada is, I apprehend, to prevent the United States from claiming them, and not from their likelihood of their ever proving of any value to Canada" (Zaslow 1971:252).

30. See, especially, Grant 1988. See Tester and Kulchyski 1994 for a discussion of Inuit relocations to the High Arctic as a means to bolster sovereignty claims.

31. In 1964, Jenness noted that, "today," neither discovery nor propinquity nor proclamation could confer sovereignty; instead, "to receive international recognition possession, possession demands the acceptance of two responsibilities, continuing interest in the territory, *and a concern for the welfare of its inhabitants*" (1964:17, emphasis added).

32. So, although I agree with Wolfe's observation that settler colonialism is "inherently eliminatory" and often, but not always, genocidal, I think the historical contingencies of the Arctic complicate the question of colonial genocide. Arctic administrators sought to keep Inuit alive (if just barely) to demonstrate sovereignty with respect to other states. See also Tester and Kulchyski 1994:20 on the relationship between relief and sovereignty.

33. It is important to note that Inuit were never subject to Canada's Indian Act of 1876, which "gave the State the power to define who a Native person was, took away the right to vote, banned specific important cultural practices, prohibited their free movement, imposed an official, patriarchal leadership structure on bands, and gave the State specific controls over the use of Native lands" (Kulchyski 1993:24). This also meant they were never subject to Canada's reserve system under that act (Hicks and White 2000). In fact, reserves were something Arctic administrators were loath to reproduce in the North.

34. Catherine Mills (2005) suggests that Agamben overlooks both the relationality of the subject in language (we use pronouns to situate ourselves with regard to others) and criticizes him for asking "what" instead of "who" speaks. I discuss this point in depth further on in the article.

35. In ways that I cannot adequately address here, this entails "learning to think outside of sovereignty" (Jennings 2011:53), when

sovereignty is understood to rely on the self-identity of the liberal individual. For Inuit, the who of the name links the individual to the past and to ancestors, and community can be thought of as a political act rather than an empirical given.

36. Stuart J. Murray asks, in a provocative article entitled, "Thanatopolitics: On the Use of Death for Mobilizing Political Life," "What would it mean, then, to speak in the name of death? Is such speech possible?" (2006:193). As will become evident in my continuing discussion, the name and death are woven into the possibility for political life in important and not always obvious ways, and speech, or linguistic life, depends on the names of the dead.

37. Robert Williamson tells a similar story, in which the misrecognition is reversed: the Inuit child, socialized for many years in a hospital in southern Quebec, does not recognize his parents or speak their language (Grygier 1994:125). Dr. B. Sabean, medical officer at Pangnirtung, also describes the homecoming of several patients from hospital. He takes pains to show how well most of them are adapting. He comments at length on the case of a young boy from Resolute, in hospital from the age of three to seven, who "openly stated that he did not like Eskimos because they would not talk, 'only jabber.' He had forgotten, (if indeed he ever knew any) all of his Eskimo and spoke and read English well for his age" (Anonymous 1958:3).

38. I speak of "the postcolonial" in the sense Byron J. Good et al. have outlined in their introduction to *Postcolonial Disorders* (2008). They use the term "to indicate an era and a historical legacy of violence and appropriation carried into the present as traumatic memory, inherited institutional structures and often unexamined assumptions" (Good et al. 2008:6). It is their contention that our contemporary worlds are often haunted by the colonial in ways we do not fully understand. By invoking Coetzee's work, I am implicitly accepting the idea that it very often makes sense to speak of "the postcolonial" in the singular, thus gesturing to the traction of the analytic "postcolonial" in a variety of historical contexts. I am not, however, suggesting that the South African and the Canadian experiences are identical or that their differences are insignificant but, rather, that something critical about the force of anonymity, the act of transposing the individual and the population, holds in situations in which medical bureaucracy and colonialism intersect. See Good et al. 2008:13–14 for a discussion of the way scholars engage the question of diversity with regard to the colonial project. See also Stoler 2001 for an extensive discussion of the possibility of comparative work in (post)colonial contexts, including North America, and especially for her discussion of how to think about the commensurability of analytic categories in comparative postcolonial histories.

39. The desire for Inuit cooperation was so great, I would argue, that despite all the evidence to the contrary, Dr. Percy Moore, then director of the Indian and Northern Health Services, wrote in 1956 that "the Eskimos are most cooperative and will gather at the posts and when asked to do so will leave their families and friends, climb on board an aircraft and start off for a destination 1500 miles away, knowing that they will probably have to remain 'outside' as they call it, for a year or more" (1956:232).

40. Arendt describes this dilemma by saying that "contemporary history has created a new kind of human being—the kind that are put in concentration camps by foes and in internment camps by their friends" (Arendt and Feldman 1978:56).

41. What the intentions of the RCMP were in shooting the dogs, and what kind of threat the dogs actually posed, is now very much in contention. There is also a growing scholarly literature on the subject (e.g., Laugrand and Oosten 2002; Lévesque 2008; Tester and McNicoll 2010). The question for many Inuit is whether the dog shootings were part of an organized campaign to bring Inuit into fixed settlements and to end their way of life centered on hunting and trapping. In testimony before the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, Inuit elders observed that, at that time, the dogs were their only mode of transportation and, without them, hunters had to abandon their fishnets and traplines and subsequently became dependent on government welfare checks (Koneak 2005:2; Watt 2005:2–3). In 2006, the RCMP published a final report on the subject in which it maintained that allegations of mass slaughter of Inuit dogs carried out by the RCMP or any government agents were misleading. Instead, the report claimed, the RCMP did shoot dogs at times but for health and safety reasons, to control canine diseases, to abide by applicable dog ordinance laws, and at the request of dog owners. The RCMP has responded to the contention that it conducted an organized slaughter of Inuit sled dogs on many levels, perhaps the most interesting being the protestation by retired RCMP officers they had amicable relationships with the Inuit and had no motive for slaughtering the dogs (RCMP 2005:16). One of the reasons that Inuit and the RCMP may have such different understandings of the events is that Inuit are responding in part to an unstated or unspeakable colonial desire and not always to explicit policy.

42. Jamesie is not the only Inuit who sensed an unspoken, perhaps unspeakable colonial desire to be rid of the natives. George Koneak, an elder from northern Quebec, testifying before the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, charged, "To try to diminish our numbers as Inuit, our dogs were being killed" (2005:2). In the documentary produced by Makivik Corporation (2004), *Echo of the Last Howl,* one elder suggests, "It seems they just wanted to wipe out the Inuit by getting rid of their livelihood."

43. As Mills points out, such affective knowledge is not always easy to put into words. She writes, "Focus on affectivity suggests that ethicality cannot and indeed should not be constrained by the limits of discursive intelligibility" (Mills 2005:208).

44. See Good et al. 2008:14–17 for a discussion of the unsayable in relation to subjectivity.

45. See Yatsushiro 1962 for his discussion of this incident.

46. It is not surprising that this Eskimo Disk List System began as a medical patient identification system (Smith 1993:54).

47. Also relevant to this discussion is what Simpson describes as the "the structure of grief that now organizes the gendered questions of political recognition" (2008:252).

48. See Lee and Kleinman 2003 for an important discussion of suicide as resistance in China and Tester and McNicoll 2004 for a discussion of Inuit suicide as resistance.

49. Phillips, the bureaucrat who described how Inuit became citizens through inscription in the welfare rolls, understood early on the way numbers can become a mode of being. He wrote, "Eskimos, in their short recorded history, have been all things to all men" (1967:219), adding that "Indians and Eskimos are also statistics" (1967:220).

50. The idea that one can have both loving and murderous impulses toward the same person or thing is something Freud pointed to (see, especially, Freud 1989:754, 2005:176).

51. Mitchell Dean (2001:42) notes that the intersection of biopolitics and colonialism is often ignored.

52. For Cavarero, the unique individual is not the atomized individual of modern political doctrines. Instead, the individual is unique "not because she is free from any other; on the contrary, the relation with the other is necessary for her very self-designation as unique" (2000:89). The individual, for Cavarero, is "constituitively *in relation* with others" (Kottman 2000:x).

53. Tester and McNicoll suggest that, partly as a result of Inuit naming practices, "individuals were not, in Inuit cosmology, discrete bodies" (2006:101).

54. Butler writes that naming is "an act that precedes my will, an act that brings me into a linguistic world in which I might then begin to exercise agency at all . . . This is what I have been called. Because I have been called something, I have been entered into linguistic life, refer to myself through the language given by the Other" (1997:38).

55. "The name!" wrote a missionary in 1929, "For the Eskimo this means everything. If the infant dies before it is given a name, there is no mourning" (Turquetil 1968:43).

56. See Fanon's claim that colonialism leaves the colonized asking, "Who am I in reality" (1966:182).

57. Homo sacer is not sacred in any everyday sense. His sacredness is derived from his being set aside, artificially banished from the human community, such that his death is not a sacrifice. However the question I ask of homo sacer is not so much about his claim to the sacred but about the possibility of mourning his death.

58. Compare Veena Das here: "The sense in which I use the term 'community' is not as something already given or primordial (and hence opposed to the state). Rather community is constituted through agreements and hence can also be torn apart by the refusal to acknowledge some part of the community (e.g., women or minorities) as an integral part of it" (2007:9). For Arendt, the *polis* "arises out of acting and speaking together, and its true space lies between people living together for this purpose, no matter where they happen to be" (1998:158).

59. As anthropologists, we have made productive use of Agamben's work—but we have been less attuned to the question of community that runs through it. To risk simplifying a particularly dense argument around what he calls the "coming community," I note that Agamben is trying to think about community not as essence but as potential. That is, he is not trying to recuperate a lost gemeinshaft but to highlight the "necessarily potential character of any community" (1993:10). Community is not a way of instantiating a kind of identity politics, in which, for example, one must be "Inuit" to belong. Instead, one is called into community.

60. As Agamben puts it, "Being-called—the property that establishes all possible belongings (being-called Italian, -dog, -Communist)—is also what can bring them all back radically into question. It is the Most Common that cuts off any real community" (1993:10).

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