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Marianne Frances McNabb
University of Rhode Island

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STRUCTURAL AND SYSTEMIC CHANGE

IN NORMS AND ROLES:

AN ESKIMO EXAMPLE

BY

MARIANNE FRANCES MCNABB

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the integration of Eskimo norms and roles in Northwest Alaska, with particular emphasis on the changing roles of women. The hypothesis states that changes in Eskimo norms and role relations are influenced by Western social factors that impede traditional Eskimo adaptive processes. The principal methodology utilized was participant observation, which involved observation and participation in the full range of summer subsistence fishing, hunting and gathering activities and other elements of women's daily social and economic life in a small Eskimo village, Kiana, during the summer of 1976. Additional data were collected during subsequent visits in 1980 and 1981. Some demographic and socioeconomic data were collected through previously documented research. The methods were designed to consolidate data and concepts necessary to evaluate and reformulate the hypothesis, rather than test it formally. The findings suggest that many Eskimo social practices, norms or roles are not impeded. Successful adaption may be due to the success of traditional Eskimo strategies. Socioeconomic status may not be related to acceptance or rejection of non-traditional Western values. The hypothesis is modified to reflect these data and inferences.

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CHAPTER I.

DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY

A. Introduction to the Problem

The present research will examine and document structural and systemic change in Eskimo norms and roles in Northwest Alaska, particularly in the roles of women. This will be achieved in two ways: (1) by documenting women's traditional roles in Eskimo society and the changes through time that have led to the situation today; and (2) through comparison of a range of ethnographic case studies in other Eskimo communities. Particularly, this research focuses on gender differences in this change and in the roles and norms to be examined. More specifically, this study evaluates the hypothesis that changes in these roles are influenced by Western social factors that impede or constrain traditional Eskimo adaptive processes.

This plan will allow for an examination of both historical trends and Eskimo social diversity throughout the range of their habitation. It will also allow for documentation of changes and similarities through both time and space. Both of these perspectives are crucial to understanding any Eskimo community. We would not hope to understand a particular case without reference to the

historical factors that shaped it or the more general factors that lead to predictable or at least regular or systematic variations from place to place.

To understand why different patterns of social organization emerge, persist, change and sometimes break down it is important to examine the relationship between the individual and society through the concept of role. It is especially crucial if social organization is conceived of as a process rather than as a structure.

The specific area in Northwest Alaska that will be examined is the North Alaskan Native Association (NANA) region. (See Map No. 1) This region, and twelve other regional native corporations, were formed to administer the settlement of lands and funds through the Alaskan Native Land Claims Settlement Act of 1971. This Act was a Federal response to the demands for settlement of aboriginal land claims.

The NANA region is an area remote physically, economically and culturally from the continental United States. The population of the region, which covers about 36,000 square miles, is just over 4,100, making it one of the most sparsely populated areas of the world. There are no road connections within or to the region. Commerce is based on water shipment from Seattle; passenger transport is mainly by air, outboard-powered riverboats and snow machines. The entire region is ice-free only three months of the year. In winter, temperatures average well below

zero near seawater and inland are frequently in the thirty-to-fifty below zero range. The combination of a small population, remoteness and inhospitable (to most people) climate has hampered and will continue to hamper any economic development in the region.

Social life in this setting is far from simple; the following illustrations highlight some of the polarities and complexities that typify life in the region.

The NANA region is one of great contrasts and seeming contradictions. According to U.S. Census information (1981) and a recent report on resources and development in the region (Mauneluk, 1974), the average adult income is below \$5,000 a year, in a region with a comparative price index more than twice that of Seattle. The total value of all regional payrolls and government transfer payments (in the form of welfare and other subsidies) is almost exactly twice the estimated value of subsistence foods, yet regional Eskimos depend on subsistence hunting, fishing and gathering for over 60% of their protein needs.

Twenty million dollars in capital improvements for 1981 were approved by the State of Alaska through direct appropriations, independent of Native corporation investments, military improvements and commercial growth. Contrast that with 75% of all homes lacking piped water and less than 14% with bathroom facilities. A two and a half million dollar office complex and a modern 41 unit apartment complex are currently under construction in

Kotzebue, the commercial and administrative center of the region, as well as its largest city.

Traditional native healers and herbalists are recognized experts in the region and are paid by the Native corporation for their medical assistance in the villages in terms of medical referrals, treatment and diagnosis. A strong native consciousness is growing in the area; some official planning goals include: (1) promotion and protection of subsistence hunting for local Eskimos; (2) local control; and (3) prevention of continued large scale intrusions by white "outsiders." Yet over 60% of the people in the region feel that a college education is a priority for their children. Every village has an elementary school, even a village of only 56 people, and all but one village has a high school. As of 1976, RCA earth stations (satellite communications and television) broadcast in every village. This year, the schools will have a district-wide television system broadcasting a centralized curriculum to every village. Control of education, held formerly by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and later by the State of Alaska is now in the hands of a regional school district (Mauneluk, 1974).

These contrasts and seeming contradictions are evident in the position and roles occupied by women. In a society that has been characterized as male dominated, and whose women are completely dependent upon men for survival (Friedl, 1975: 40), now we see as many women in jobs and

positions of management and leadership as men (Mauneluk, 1974). In addition, we see women providing the bulk of subsistence resources (Burch, 1975), and with perhaps a stronger commitment to maintenance of subsistence activities than the Eskimo men.

Perhaps an example from my fieldnotes will give some indication of the diversity and variety of acceptable female roles. Comparing two village women, twenty-three year old cousins, will be an interesting illustration. Cousin 1 had a child, later married at age seventeen and presently lives with her parents. She has never been employed and did not finish high school. She is actively involved in subsistence fishing and gathering and has those traditional skills necessary for both. Cousin 2 has never been married, is currently supporting her own three children, and lives with her parents. She is an extension student through the University of Alaska. She was the City Clerk for two years, on the Board of Directors of the non-profit arm of NANA for a year, and has been the City Administrator for the past two years. Her participation in subsistence activities is minimal, limited to occasional berry picking and summer fishing. She has no real expertise in either cutting, drying or smoking fish. Looking at these two women without reference to locale, they would appear to come from mutually exclusive orientations. Cousin 1 is very much a traditional village woman, with those accompanying skills and values. Cousin

2, however, would appear highly acculturated, well-educated and motivated in her career. Both women are active in local politics, are on the village council and are regarded by the community as hard working women and good mothers. Both the women and the divergent roles they have chosen are accepted.

An overview of the relevant literature shows that Alaskan, Greenlandic, Canadian and Siberian Eskimos have been as thoroughly studied as any group of people in the world. Burch (1975). Books and articles numbering in the thousands have appeared with increasing frequency over a period of two centuries. The Eskimos of Northwest Alaska have held a prominent place in this literature, from both a qualitative as well as a quantitative perspective. The useful sources for this area alone consist of the works of explorers, missionaries, government officials, historians as well as archaeologists and anthropologists. Despite the quantity and quality of this literature available on Northwest Alaskan Eskimos, there are certain significant gaps. One of them is in the area of social change and the processes of acculturation. Another significant gap is in the treatment of women and their roles. Most references to Eskimo women's roles (Spencer, 1959; Anderson et al, 1976; Giddings, 1961; Oswalt, 1967) have been made within the context of exhaustive and more traditional ethnographic studies. Cruikshank (1979), McElroy (1975) and Briggs (1970) are three notable exceptions. Their

particular observations and conclusions will be explored within this paper. Other anthropologists whose work deals in some measure with culture change are Van Stone (1962) and Chance (1965, 1966) and in greater measure Burch (1975) and Davis (1976).

Eskimo social organization has often been called "flexible" (Honigman, 1963; Wilmott, 1960; Balikci, 1970; Spencer, 1959). As both Spencer (1959) and Oswalt (1967) demonstrated, each Eskimo society must be approached as a "regional phrasing" of a larger, generalized Eskimo culture. However, it is unclear in operational terms (Adams, 1972) what the manifestations and the source of flexibility are. In terms of roles and norms, does this mean that role expectations and norms are clearly and easily defined? Could it mean that Eskimo society offers a broad selection of roles, norms or social constraints that can be variably applied or negotiated? Or does it mean that individuals have wide latitude or personal freedom in selecting social roles or achieving particular status?

These concerns led me to assess the literature on Eskimo society and evaluate these findings against specific data on the research topic I have already introduced: Eskimo women's roles in a small Northwest Alaskan village. How have roles changed from traditional times to the present? What variables have influenced these changes? Are these changes in roles unique to

Alaskan Eskimos or have other Eskimo women experienced similar changes?

These initial questions are addressed in several parts. First, I will give a brief overview of the literature available on the region in general and on culture change and women's roles in particular. Second, I will examine the theoretical issues that arise in any discussion of roles, norms and culture change.

Flexibility, as previously introduced, is a key element in the understanding of social organization in general, and roles and role availability in particular. This will lead logically to a discussion of roles and subsistence in traditional times. A brief ethnographic sketch of the Northwest Alaskan Eskimos will serve as a basis with which to document subsequent change in contemporary women's roles. Comparison of a range of ethnographic case studies done in other Eskimo communities will highlight those variables influencing change in either a similar or dissimilar way.

A detailed description of my case study will follow from this comparison. The methodology is comprised of active participant observation in a naturalistic setting, combined with directed individual interviews. Fieldwork was initially conducted during the summer of 1976 in the village of Kiana on the Kobuk River. Two additional trips to the area were made in the spring of 1980 and spring of 1981. Because the village was small (less than 300

inhabitants) and many families had moved to summer camps closer to the coast and up-river, I was able to meet and talk with most of the current residents. A household \ census form was prepared in advance (see Appendix 1) and to it were transferred the vital statistics (as far as I could ascertain them) pertaining to each household, with particular information concerning women. Although it was never used in the context of an interview, the census form served as a convenient organizational device for recording data. Kiana is a traditional subsistence based village, with some seasonal wage labor (construction, commercial fishing, firefighting, etc.). The village is in the process of rapid social change, similar in many respects to that change affecting the region in general.

This case study will be utilized to tie together and compare my case-specific example and comparative work done in other Eskimo communities in both Canada and Alaska by a number of researchers.

A summary and discussion focusing on Eskimo women's economic roles in Northwest Alaska will conclude this study.

B. Objectives, Methods, and Procedures

In studies such as this, the choice of research technique has an important bearing on the kind and quality of information obtained. Because theories, paradigms, and methods are linked so closely in the research process, it is essential to be fully aware of the ramifications of the

choice of methods to be employed. Consequently, one purpose of the following discussion will be to orient the reader to the theoretical advantages and limitations of the research method.

The focus of research was the changing roles of Eskimo women, and the principal method utilized was participant observation, which involved observation of the full range of summer subsistence activities through actual participation in them. This meant taking part in all aspects of women's daily social and economic life within the community. Use of this approach was essential in providing an understanding of the village lifestyle, the nature of women's subsistence activities which make that lifestyle possible, and certain cultural traditions which derive from women's involvement in subsistence.

Participant observation serves a variety of research purposes. Used as an exploratory tool, insights may be gained that can later be tested. Another purpose may be to gather supplementary data that may qualify or help to interpret other findings. Participant observation may be used as the primary method of data collection in studies designed to provide accurate description. One of the greatest assets is its immediacy. The ongoing process and dynamics are discernible and accessible to the field researcher.

Smith (1975: 230) discusses some of the problems and limitations associated with this type of field research.

Of greatest importance, perhaps, is the interactive nature of participant observation. There is definitely reciprocity in any transaction that may bias or distort observation; there are, in short, "reactive effects." This reciprocity may however assist in shedding light on behavior and exchanges.

A crucial step in the explanation of human behavior is the ability to specify what conditions give rise to some other conditions (Rudner, 1966: 59). Making such explanatory statements depends on the development and testing of hypotheses. Testing a hypotheses involves exposing it to a situation that can demonstrate its viability.

Dean, Eichorn and Dean (1967) find that the greatest advantage of field methods is the redirection possible during the course of research. Good field methods follow from theory and are flexible enough to adapt to reformulation from emerging theoretical problems. The theory is evaluated in terms of accuracy of prediction, that is, are the statements it generates about the relationships between variables true? Do they lay the foundation for subsequent and more highly focused hypothesis testing? This latter question is most pertinent to this study.

Research oriented to hypothesis testing regarding human behavior, especially in another cultural environment, is difficult. Without adequate prior

research and documentation, it is impossible to conclude that a particular set of conditions (an independent variable or variables) gives rise to (causes or produces) specific consequences (dependent variable). In other words, it is difficult to say that this set of conditions, and not some other, caused or was a contributing cause of some particular behavior. Because this research was constrained to one set of synchronous data, and hence is "time-bound," we cannot legitimately test a causal hypothesis. However, it is possible to integrate available secondary and primary field data in order to assess emergent hypotheses so as to identify and define their key characteristics. This approach is thus one step short of hypothesis testing, but is designed to assemble many of the data and concepts necessary to move toward that end. Nonetheless, the hypothesis can be effectively analyzed in order to better define and interpret its essential dimensions.

The preliminary hypothesis is that changes in Eskimo norm and role relations are caused by social factors (for our purposes, chiefly those of Westernization and acculturation) that restrict or undermine Eskimo adaptive processes. As it is phrased, the hypothesis stipulates a deterministic relation (social factors that cause changes) and a mechanism (restriction of Eskimo adaptive processes) for this change, but does not embrace all potential changes (i.e. only some changes need to be traced to the

mechanism for the hypothesis to be validated). In evaluating the hypothesis, it is therefore important to secure data germane to (1) the facts of norm and role relation changes themselves; (2) the social factors that may impede indigenous, traditional adaptive strategies, and (3) the conditions under which these changes take place.

Some demographic and socioeconomic data could not be gathered through direct observation. To flesh out these areas more fully, much information was gathered verbally and through previously documented research. Part of this information came during the course of daily social interaction, but the remainder was obtained through more formal interviews with especially knowledgeable individuals.

I had an opportunity to accompany my husband for approximately 12 weeks in the summer of 1976. He was doing research for a joint project with the Native Corporation and the National Park Service. He had worked independently on this project the previous summer. This situation provided me an informal entree to the village and made the introduction of my own research relatively easy. Because my family resided in the village during the project, it was difficult, if not impossible, to define my role as either (1) researcher or (2) wife and mother. I suspect that these roles were not distinct or separate from each other for my sample members.

The sample was selected on the basis of cross-generational representation present for the entire summer period. I ceased sampling when it appeared adequate for the project. Each household was asked to participate and willingly did so. My daily log was kept over the entire twelve week period. No exact account of hours was spent with each sample member. Most were seen every day. These encounters ranged from approximately twenty minutes to perhaps 3-4 hours. On an average, there was interaction with every sample family about 80 times during the project period. Most of my time was spent with the female head of household and represents most of that time. There are undoubtedly some members of sample households I spoke only briefly with during the entire course of the summer.

The census form and categories chosen were developed on the basis of my secondary literature review. These were items identified as important sources of information for development of data categories. The census form was a convenient point of departure to elicit further information.

There are six important points that will clarify the data collection techniques utilized in the research. The following six paragraphs, each devoted to an important issue, will describe the major features of the data collection routine. These discussions as a whole will also illustrate the roles and activities I engaged in as a participant-observer.

The family census form was developed to gather both socioeconomic data and observational data. This was utilized early in the research both as a method to gather discrete data and as a point of departure for identifying other areas to explore. The census form was a convenient tool to direct questioning and to elicit basic information about the family.

The second major data source was developed on the basis of direct participation in routine events in the village. These events included checking nets, family meals, attending church, shopping trips, visiting, helping with chores, playing cards. These are the kinds of daily activities that provided opportunities to complete the census form and to record family events.

There are also many special events that also provide invaluable information. These would include birthday celebrations, the quarterly meeting of the Friend's Church elders, long trips to sein^o or to gather berries and other vegetable materials, celebrations like the Fourth of July, and visits from relatives.

A daily log was kept of the day's activities and observations. This was reviewed to identify gaps in information about particular individuals or families. This provided an opportunity to collect information, review and supplement information. In conjunction with the other methods described, this combination of directed questioning and structured data gathering, with more

spontaneous "stream of life" narrative, provided the primary data.

Finally, it would be helpful to describe the typical daily routine of village life and my participation in it. Because of the long hours of daylight during the summer, most families are up well past midnight. Late evening is a good time to check nets along the river, it is a relatively mosquito-free time to cut fish, hang them on racks and start smudge pots and fires to dry them. It is a very special time. The children are usually awake and playing or working with parents. There are frequent bingo games, and occasionally movies in the school gym.

As a consequence of this evening activity, there are few individuals visible in the morning hours. By noon, however, the village is quite active. I would usually circulate throughout the village, visiting every family in my sample. Depending upon what was happening in the various families, this would usually conclude in the mid afternoon. I would help them repair nets, perhaps, or go off in a boat to check a set net. For those who set nets, it would be necessary to check the net frequently during the day. A trip up or down the river might take an hour. There were several times that a motor would break down and we would have to let the river float us back to Kiana, or we would have to paddle to make it back up-river.

We, in turn, had many visitors at our cabin. The children would frequently spend hours with us, sitting on

the floor watching our activities. A visit by an adult was a more formal occasion. Tea or coffee would be offered, and if available, some food. Women more usually would be visiting, and this would more frequently occur during bad weather. During the summer, most individuals prefer to spend the majority of time out of doors.

(During the berry gathering season, trips might be made out of the village three to five times a week. These trips were frequently family outings, and would include a picnic, and a campfire.

(Twice weekly church meetings were also part of the village routine. There were basically two churches available, the Friend's Church and the Baptist Church. The Baptist Church has summer missionaries that organize a bible camp for the children. This was a popular event, and many of the younger children would attend. The older children would be expected to help parents, or would be off fire fighting.

I participated in all these activities at various times with all the individuals in my sample. Although many of the events and activities could be anticipated and predicted, there were a great many more that could not.

(When a run of salmon or sheefish might come up the river to Kiana, the quantity of fish in the run would not be predictable. All other activities and plans might have to be abandoned if nets needed to be emptied or re-set to accommodate heavier fish runs. In addition, the ripening

of the different types of berries and greens might not be predictable. Consequently, both village life and my life were very flexible.

Smith (1975: 105) defines sampling as a procedure by which characteristics of one group are inferred through experiences with less than all possible elements of that group. Sampling in participant observation is not completely or finally designed and executed in advance of data collection but is continually carried on through the study (McCall and Simmons, 1969: 64). Structural samples, as defined by Smith, are those selected because of some specific quality possessed.

Because the research focused on women's roles, it was necessary to explore the wide range of roles available and the various models available. Households containing three generations of women was the selection criterion, which makes this a structured sample.

To elicit standard information from all households sampled, a household census form was utilized (see Appendix 1). Two major categories of data were developed: socioeconomic data and observational data. The demographic and socioeconomic data were recorded mainly as interval variables on this form although one variable (Frequency of Gathering Trips) is ordinal. Age, education, and income are all examples of demographic and socioeconomic data.

The second major category of data was developed on the

basis of the direct observation of and participation in subsistence activities and the habits and practices related to subsistence. Because participant observation in this case was essentially an exploratory and discovery procedure, variables were not defined in advance. Events were recorded and chronicled in order to discover what applicable variables may occur. Child-rearing attitudes and practices, for instance, might be critical to the economic adaptation a child or a peer group might experience later, but there are no clear socioeconomic data that can be used to typify child rearing. First-hand observation is necessary to assess the similarities and differences and the range of variation present in such a data category prior to the development of specified variables. In this sense, the major methodology, that of participant observation, is a way to discover and typify variables rather than measure them or test their relationships to other variables. Such a procedure is especially valuable when little substantive data exist on a particular subject, and the goal is to determine what testable hypotheses may exist and might fruitfully be addressed, and the way in which this might be carried out. These narrative records, for instance, were most immediately useful in interpreting and analyzing other primary as well as testing; hence, they are rudimentary at best at this stage of the analysis.

In simple terms, the analysis procedure consisted of

the following steps. Journal entries and field notes, which consisted of extensive descriptive and contextual details on each of the sample families, were reviewed and classified. Classification entails sorting the narrative data so as to compare and contrast family information pertinent to any single topic, such as subsistence or partnerships, or family characteristic, such as income or household size. In other words, the text of the narrative field notes was arranged so as to make a variety of cross-sectional comparisons.

Wide-ranging descriptive and contextual information of this type, however, which details both general and unique aspects of family dynamics and history, is often highly idiosyncratic. That is, the family data sets are not entirely consistent. Thus, confident generalizations based on one or some may not be warranted. However, they can be compared and contrasted with these factors in mind, and inferences about these similarities and differences can be drawn. / This is the practice I followed. Next, I sought support, or disagreement, relevant to these inferences through other means. One means entails manipulation of family census and other data that can be easily tabulated, whereas narrative field notes cannot be. Another means consists of literature review. This latter technique is basically interpretative and speculative (since the intrinsic data are inconsistent across secondary sources), but does allow useful

comparisons in order to strengthen or modify the inferences.

The literature is reviewed in the first Chapters of this Thesis, although some reoccurs later. The manipulation of tabulated data is reported along with the general results of primary data analysis. It is important to point out that the general observations reported in the results do not depend on, or follow strictly from, the linear plots of tabulated data that are reported in the same sections. Neither are they independent of the observations. They simply represent a complementary means to summarize data. The observations are in fact these inferences about which I speak, that are based on field notes that document diverse family dynamics and activities. They are supported by the linear, bivariate comparisons. These latter comparisons are based on data that parallel the field notes; they are different in that they are more discrete and easy to tabulate. Just as the notes describe rich detail on family economic activities and kinship, the family census provide a complementary data set including income and number of children, respectively. The latter data lend themselves to manipulation in order to cast light on the entire data base, which includes narrative material. Thus the data are not independent, and are used in a joint and complementary manner to develop the inferences I report in the last two Chapters.

Once observations had been recorded and indexed by

type, topic, family and frequency, and once the generalized range of variability had been determined, the data were categorized provisionally in a way that seemed consistent with the range of data and the clusters of observations. This sort of indexing process does not yield a classification of variables, as it might if we were to be using standardized procedures and data.

Because observational data are relatively idiosyncratic, they are often best used to complement but not supplant other data organized into such categories. The focus remained on a generalizing, typifying and summarizing procedure of data display, not a testing practice. These procedures allow for typologies to be constructed that can later be tested using traditional methods. Categories based on income, family composition or age, for instance, can be compared to categories representing subsistence reliance, child-rearing practices, and attitudes about change.

Once the data were gathered and organized, I created a family socioeconomic data matrix with data categories and their values listed by family. On the basis of apparent ranges of variability in the data sets, the available literature on the socioeconomics of rural Alaskan communities, and my field observations, I created what I hypothesize are discriminate data categories within each data set.

By data categories, I mean topical categories which

include demographic variables and other variables, such as whitefish and salmon harvests. I have refrained from calling them variables per se, since one goal of the research is the identification of useful variables for hypothesis testing; hence, they are rudimentary at best at this state of the analysis. These correspond to the data base of all variable attributes, for example, aggregate income of the entire sample, and all family data on specific harvests. By discriminate data category is meant the sub-classification of data into sets of attributes that may be sensitive to the causal influences stated in the hypothesis; in short, these are promising variables.

The last stages of the analysis were accomplished through an interpretative synthesis of secondary, primary socioeconomic, and primary observational data. Some limited linear plotting of appropriate data was undertaken to complement and supplement other analysis, although due to small sample size, none of these analyses are more than suggestive. Results are reported in the last chapters.

CHAPTER II.

BACKGROUND AND THEORY

Review Of The Literature

In discussing traditional roles and social organization of the Northwest Alaskan Eskimos, Anderson et al (1977), Giddings (1961), Oswalt (1967), Spencer (1959) and Burch (1975) have provided the most comprehensive documentation. Their research data and ethnographic studies have provided a cohesive assessment of the aboriginal culture of Northwest Alaska.

Anderson et al (1977) based their work on a year's research among the Kobuk Eskimos of Northwest Alaska, and it is a rich source of information regarding both traditional and modern subsistence cycles. Giddings (1961) also documents the yearly cycle of hunting, fishing and gathering in the Kobuk River area through first person accounts. Based upon fieldwork conducted during 1949-51, he has attempted to reconstruct the traditional lifeways, from approximately 1870 to 1900.

Oswalt (1967) provides an excellent introduction to twenty-one Alaskan Eskimo "tribes", comparing the similarities and differences in their lifestyles. These twenty-one tribes represent different ecological adaptations and major linguistic groups. His earlier

fieldwork in Napaskiak (1956) on the Kuskokwim River provides an in-depth analysis of an Eskimo community and continues to serve as a basis upon which to observe subsequent changes.

Spencer's study (1959) of the Point Barrow region is an invaluable and much utilized resource for those interested in charting culture change in the region. His is a detailed ethnography that focuses on patterns of contemporary social behavior. It is of further interest to contemporary scholars in that the way of life he documents is now virtually gone.

* Honigman (1963) discusses culture change and suggests that communities be studied not as fixed, static entities, but as evolving and constantly changing communities, perceived in terms of what they are becoming. This is echoed to a limited extent by Steward (1973) in his discussion of the effects of environment on culture, in which he stresses the importance and necessity for a holistic appreciation and examination of culture. Geertz (1967) would encourage historical research in any inquiry into social change.

Despite the quantity of literature available on the Northwest Alaskan Eskimo, there have been few studies whose focus has been culture change. Van Stone (1962) and Burch (1975) are two anthropologists who have made culture change in the region their primary concern. Van Stone's study of Point Hope attempts to document the historical

agents of change such as the schools, church, government and the introduction of higher technologies. He is interested in how these have influenced patterns of settlement. Burch, however, is interested in culture change as it influences family relationships. Rather than concentrating on one region or community, he examines the impact of culture change on kinship within the entire language group, the Inupiaq speaking Eskimos known as the Inuit. Chance (1965, 1966) examines all aspects of culture change in the area from Point Hope to Kaktovik. Davis (1976) looks at the long range effects of cash and jobs on traditional subsistence activities in rural Alaska and subsequent changes in the social order. Davis examines the indicators of this change as they impinge upon elements that comprise culture in general: language, technology, economic organization, political and social organization, world view, religion and enculturation.

Much of the secondary literature suggests that in many respects the Eskimos of Northwest Alaska cannot be considered a cultural unity. As both Spencer (1959) and Oswalt (1967) demonstrated, each Eskimo society is a "regional phrasing" of a larger, generalized Eskimo culture. Eskimo social structure cannot be easily summed up; it is flexible and diverse and it is impossible to generalize from one group to another. Individually, they are highly responsive and there is a greater latitude and range of roles and activities available. For example,

women had the primary responsibility for child rearing, but they could be successful hunters and trappers. This element of flexibility has been noted as a characteristic of Eskimo culture. Its incidence and effects are widely recognized, in behavior and attitude by Honigman (1965: 106-121), as a factor in acculturation by Balikci (1970: 122-135), in social organization by Willmott (1960: 48-57), and as a by-product of acculturation by Adams (1972: 12). Gjessing notes that "Social systems are always in the process of change...they result from inner developments, from the processes of integrating new cultural or social elements within the existing social system" (1954: 75). Accordingly, change and urbanization that is incorporated into these flexible Eskimo societies is apt to result in similarly flexible adaptations.

The adaptability often said to characterize Eskimo culture is usually mentioned with reference to technical inventiveness and the economic and social flexibility of male hunting patterns. Does this adaptability and flexibility also underlie women's roles? McClellan suggests that women may have always wielded considerable practical influence through manipulating social relationships (McClellan, 1975: 342). If this is so, this ability may have led to considerable social and economic diversification of roles. The cross-cultural literature is inconclusive on this point.

From the work of Margaret Mead (1935, 1947, 1949) and

others, it has become apparent that roles and behaviors considered to be fixed from a static, normative view are varied and diverse in a comparative perspective. In her words, "If those temperamental attitudes which we have traditionally regarded as feminine-such as passivity, responsiveness and a willingness to cherish children can be so easily set up as the masculine pattern in one tribe and in another be outlawed for the majority of women as for the majority of men, we no longer have any basis for regarding aspects of such behavior as sex linked" (1935: 279-280). There are, in fact, groups like the New Guinea Arapesh in which neither sex shows much aggression or assertiveness, and there are societies like our own in which children of both sexes are more egoistic than boys in other parts of the world (Chodorow, 1971). This sort of cultural variability is reflected in almost every kind of behavior.

Returning to the Eskimo case, it seems that in traditional times the domestic and political spheres were relatively undifferentiated, and most crucial decisions were made within the domestic group rather than in a wider political sense. This is because the minimal, kernel unit that dominated and underlay all political, economic and social affairs was and is the elementary kinship organization: the domestic household. Decisions and authority were shared by men and women, although both may be allocated differently, but the focus in these domestic

groups was on cooperation for everyday activities.

Authority within domestic groups was egalitarian, with an emphasis on individual autonomy (Lamphere, 1974: 103).

Although individual Eskimo families were highly independent and decisions affecting the larger group were generally reached by consensus, certain men were often able to influence joint decisions by virtue of their social affiliations, skill, charisma and economic prowess. These men were called "umialik", an Eskimo word that means "large boat owner" and signifies wealth and robust strength. This term and its underlying concept were appropriated from coastal Eskimo whale-hunting groups, in which key men are responsible for conducting and manning whale hunting excursions. Its meaning connotes more than this definition, however. Due to (1) patterns of virilocal residence after marriage (i.e., near the husband's family), which often separated women from the economic assets of her kinship group, and (2) role segregation (which discourages women from commercial trading activities), Eskimo women did not apparently occupy this role. However they might nonetheless accrue influence, within and outside the family, through their own efforts and skill.

It has been argued that although Eskimo women participated in all economic realms, their power was confined to the domestic sphere. According to Rosaldo (1974: 17) male activities in general are recognized as

more intrinsically important than women's. Mead (1935: 302) explores this further in another case and observes that "whatever the arrangements in regard to descent or ownership of property and even if these formal outward arrangements are reflected in the temperamental relations between the sexes, the prestige values always attach to the activities of men." Women may be the primary providers, they may be politically and economically influential, but relative to men of their age and social status, women lack culturally recognized and valued authority (Rosaldo, 1974:18).

As Durkheim (1933) illustrated, the move from undifferentiated social organization to specialization (his mechanical to organic model) is accompanied by the development of a more complicated infrastructure, and changes in the configurations of authority and power result. With changing conditions in both subsistence hunting and gathering, and the wage economy in the Eskimo case, the delicate balance between domestic and political authority has been disturbed. Authority in the domestic sphere has eroded as new Western institutions intrude upon functions previously controlled within the family; likewise, authority patterns beyond the family-level have changed as Western political and economic institutions have placed premiums on skills (such as marketable talents, education, and knowledge of English) that have few counterparts in the traditional "umialik" status.

Thus as the nature of authority and status has changed, so have opportunities and achievement goals and standards. These changing conditions and the concomitant changes in patterns of authority will be explored further in this research.

Issues of culture change, social organization and flexibility particularly relevant to Western Canada have been raised by McElroy (1975), Cruikshank (1979), Honigman (1963), Honigman and Honigman (1965) and by Chance (1965). Utilizing biographical information, Cruikshank (1979) provides data that indicate there is at present considerable economic and social diversification of roles available to Canadian Inuit (Eskimo) women. Chance (1965), however, perceives the situation in a different light. In discussing North Alaskan Eskimo adjustment to Western culture, he reports that women have a more difficult time adjusting to Western culture than do men, since they have less contact with whites and Western culture due largely to less labor participation. He further states that women have a more difficult time "validating" themselves in terms of Western culture than do men due to fewer opportunities to (or fewer instances of) benefit from Western practices, hence fewer success models among themselves. This formulation is one of "relative deprivation," based on gender rather than socioeconomic status per se. His conclusions are at variance with data I collected in Northwest Alaska. These

seeming contradictions and discrepancies will be further explored within the context of this report.

Jean Briggs (1970) spent a year and a half in arctic Canada living with an Eskimo family. Her perceptions and experiences of a remote Eskimo community are very illuminating. Living in a way that is still very traditional, these Eskimos see their roles as very clearly defined and yet perceive them as complementary. The husband-wife relationship was definitely a dominant-subordinate one, in spite of the women's greater contribution to subsistence resources. This perception is very similar to that of Burch (1975:82): "The economic aspects of the husband-wife tie were considered by the Eskimo to be of equal importance to that of child rearing in both traditional and recent times."

McElroy (1975) was concerned with the socialization of Canadian Eskimo children in two arctic settlements located on southern Baffin Island. She examined the changing roles of women and ramifications of this change in patterns of education, marriage and employment choices, vocational aspirations, and in conformity to legal norms.

Given a continued high prestige of the women's traditional skills in the Baffin Island communities during the transition from a semi-nomadic hunting and trapping economy to the town and cash economy, we might expect considerable stability in the adaptive patterns developed by women in the first years of town living (McElroy, 1975:

664). Her expectations are reflected in the following predictions: (1) that the socialization of female children would emphasize traditional skills to a greater extent than would the socialization of male children, (2) that female children would identify with traditional roles more strongly than male children, and (3) that young men would have higher rates of employment and participate to a greater extent in educational programs than young women.

However, McElroy found differential adaptation to culture change by males and females in the reverse of the predicted direction (McElroy, 1975: 664). She found that females tended to identify more strongly than males with Eurocanadian values and life styles, are continuing their education and postponing marriage and are finding steady and high-status employment. Men, on the other hand, experience ambivalence towards the norms and role expectations of Eurocanadians.

McElroy draws on evidence concerning Eskimo socialization practices to explain this pattern. She identified three basic affective themes that are fundamental to socialization, and shows how these themes reinforce and sustain Eskimo women's traditional as well as modern contributions in a way that integrates both. The first theme emphasizes the value of giving and receiving emotional and physical support, and the value and pleasure of nurture and succor (McElroy, 1975: 665). The high level of affection towards infants and small

children has been observed among Eskimos, both men and women, by Briggs (1970: 132), Honigman (1963: 37) and by Chance (1966: 22).

The second theme is the development of a sensitive regard for the approval of others, which often leads to a vulnerable sense of self-esteem and difficulty in expressing hostility or coping with feelings of rage (McElroy, 1975: 666). Hippler (1969: 45) notes a similar pattern of sporadic and unpredictable teasing, particularly associated with weaning and toilet training, among North Alaskan Eskimos. Hippler suggests that the combination of intense early nurture, the frustrations of the weaning period and the experience of ineffectual rage tend to lead to a kind of person who would "alternate his responses between sporadic outrage against impositions on his autonomy and anxious dependence upon the view others had of his worth (1969: 456). Thus, Eskimos may strive for both independence and a cooperative adjustment with others. This traditional ethos is not without some internal contradictions. Westernization has introduced new factors, since modes of independent, autonomous action (be they in domestic, or political and economic affairs) have changed, as have settings for cooperative interaction. For men, these polarities and obstacles may be more problematic since women now seem to enjoy both domestic as well as institutional opportunities of a more diverse nature.

The third theme learned in early childhood is skilled resourcefulness, flexibility and interdependence. The child has learned that approval and support may now be gained through acts of independence and skill in personal and household tasks (McElroy, 1975). For young boys, these acts most often revolve around subsistence hunting and fishing and other activities away from but central to the domestic circle itself. * Girls, on the other hand, find social approval and support in both internal domestic functions (home maintenance and child-rearing), and also economic tasks including subsistence hunting, fishing, gathering, and today, wage labor. * Thus, socialization of children in general emphasizes the importance of an economic contribution to the family, but * women's contributions may be more diversified.

McElroy suggests that in response to a rather uncertain political status and economic future of the towns, socialization agents have channeled male and female children into somewhat different directions (1975: 669). She further suggests that females are making a different kind of adjustment, showing more flexibility than males in coping with changing economic conditions, and that this adjustment may be regarded in long-range terms as a point of strength rather than weakness in the social network (1975: 683). * At present, however, the opposition between young males and females is both a manifestation and a cause of stress in the communities (1975: 683).

McElroy's innovative research and conclusions are extremely pertinent to the current discussion of Northwest Alaskan Eskimo women's roles. In the following chapters, I will compare and contrast evidence that suggests the situation in Northwest Alaska is similar, but for historically different reasons. Through case histories, available figures on employment, education, and leadership, it will be possible to trace the erosion of the male economic contribution and the steadily widening scope of women's roles embracing both traditional and modern opportunities.

In this brief review of source material relevant to Eskimo women's roles, the emphasis has remained on empirical case studies of both Canada and Northwest Alaska. The literature sources cited, as well as the brief comparison between cousins illustrated in the Introduction, ~~seem~~ seem to indicate significant variation between Eskimo groups as well as significant diversity with each group. One researcher (McElroy, 1975) suggests that women identify more strongly with Eurocanadian values than do males, while other research (Chance, 1965) found that women tend to withdraw from contact with Westerners and are uneasy within this social structure. It is difficult to resolve such apparent contradictions without carefully documenting the current adaptation and organization of contemporary Eskimo families.

Theoretical Perspectives

Social theory has attempted to address what Thomas Hobbes has called the "problem of order": how patterns of social order come into being, how they are maintained and how they change. Phrased more scientifically, this problem becomes one of discerning the conditions under which different social processes and patterns of social organization are likely to occur (Turner, 1974: vii). Before investigating the changing processes and patterns of social organization, it is appropriate to begin with some general understanding of culture. Culture can be regarded as possessing four basic elements: (1) values, (2) beliefs and (3) norms (c.f., Ross, 1963). Values and beliefs are the philosophy of a culture and norms are the rules for appropriate behavior. Another unique feature of culture is its reflexive nature, which includes learned (4) patterns of behavior that can be re-learned or un-learned. In order for a culture to survive, it must of necessity remain resilient, flexible and adaptive. The values, beliefs and norms of a culture are arranged in a hierarchy that can and must be sensitive to change ("core values": Steward, 1973).

Patterning is evident in the tendency of cultures to be internally consistent. It is rare in a given culture to find a large number of contradictory elements. This is not to presume that culture is absolutely consistent, as that would imply fixed and static cultural elements.

Consistency is evident in that values are usually supported by several related beliefs and norms. Internal consistency, however, may be apparent only at the most general levels of analysis; a key problem in current ethnological thought is the "organization of diversity" that each culture represents (Barth, 1969: Wallis, 1976).

With some general sense of the nature of culture, it is possible to examine more closely how different patterns of social organization emerge, persist, and change. The many ways in which change is conceptualized involves basic differences in perception of the nature of cultural development. Historical or developmental models postulate that all societies go through similar developmental processes or stages. These stages are easily identified and charted. Cultural relativists, however, consider each society unique and cultural developments to arise from specific, localized circumstances. Steward (1973: 18) defines multilinear evolution as essentially a theory that is based on the assumption that significant regularities in cultural change occur. Multilinear evolution assumes that certain basic types of cultures may develop in similar ways under similar conditions but that few cultural elements will appear in all societies.

Steward develops a method for recognizing the ways in which culture change is indexed by adaptation to environment. This adaptation he calls cultural ecology:

Cultural ecology differs from human and social ecology in seeking to explain the origin or

particular cultural features and patterns which characterize different areas rather than to derive general principles applicable to any cultural-environmental situation ... Thus, cultural ecology present both a problem and a method (Steward, 1973: 36).

By describing cultural ecology as both a method and a problem, Steward is asking how the adaptation of a culture to its environment affects the culture. Does this adaptation to the environment require particular modes of behavior, or is latitude permitted for a certain range of behavior? In a larger sense, then the problem is to determine whether similar adjustments occur in similar environments.

In terms of the specific research problem, cultural ecology offers the most useful and applicable model for looking at changing Eskimo women's roles. It is particularly useful in a comparison of two areas, Canada and Alaska, in which the cultural and ecological processes were for the most part the same. The core areas that Steward (1973) theorized for every society were those centering around the subsistence economy-settlement patterns, the size of groups and so on. These core areas in turn shaped other areas of culture. It has been acknowledged that the environment poses problems and restricts alternatives, but there has been no satisfactory resolution of the extent to which cultural forms are determined by ecological adaptation.

Some societies do not distinguish social classes, and

many do not recognize what we call races, but all societies distinguish between men and women (Ross, 1963: 319). Sex is a biological fact and it is among the most obvious of physical distinctions that occur among members of any society. This physical distinction serves as a basis for assigning ascribed statuses. *In all societies, the norms for the behavior of men differ at least to some extent from those appropriate to women (Rosaldo, 1974: 28).

While acknowledging the biological basis of the distinctions between the sexes, some social scientists (Chodorow, 1971; Mead, 1949; Rosaldo, 1974) are generally skeptical concerning claims that biological differences between the sexes cause significant behavioral differences. Although in a single society the differences between masculinity and femininity are usually very great, what is considered appropriate behavior for a man or or woman in one society may bear little relationship to behavior appropriate for the same sex in a different society. It would appear that these differences in "appropriate behavior" are cultural in origin. Whatever the biological differences between men and women, culture distorts and magnifies them many times (Mead, 1949).

This cultural variability is apparent in almost every kind of behavior. Barry, Bacon and Child (1959) in a study of the relationship between socialization and roles, find that economic elements tend to differ between cultures along dimensions normally thought to

differentiate male from female behavior and socialization. From this study it would appear that most societies (in which the subsistence economy is either pastoral or agricultural) ^{of} train all children to be more obedient and responsible. ^{*} In contrast, societies whose subsistence economy is based upon hunting, fishing, and gathering tend to train their children to be more independent, self-reliant, and oriented toward achievement.

Therefore, in societies that depend on constant care of animals or on the regular tending of crops, it is necessary to teach children to be obedient and responsible, since failure or disobedience could result in serious losses of necessary resources. In addition, experimentation and innovation are seldom risked because of the critical need for more or less "standarized" stewardship of resources. In societies where reliance is upon hunting, fishing and gathering, however, disobedience or irresponsibility does not have such dire consequences, as one person's failure to hunt or fish one day does not doom the society to possible starvation in the months to come. In this sort of society, experimentation is possible and potential rewards for innovation exist. In Durkheim's terms, these latter societies are more "mechanical", hence less specialized and stratified; thus individual divergences do not deprive the society of specialized, critical skills.

^{*} Such studies of cultural differences in socialization

are important in the exploration of Eskimo women's roles. As indicated earlier, it is necessary to remember that each Eskimo society is "regional phrasing" (Spencer, 1959) of a larger, more generalized Eskimo culture. There is, however, general consistency in the subsistence economy and technology. Because the subsistence economy is one of hunting, fishing and gathering, the socialization of children in that society will tend to emphasize self-reliance and independence. In the case of Eskimo children, in both Northwest Alaska and Canada, as previously noted, the child has learned that approval and support may be gained through acts of independence and skill.

An important lesson learned in early childhood, then, is skilled resourcefulness and flexibility. We have seen that in societies whose subsistence economy is based upon hunting, fishing and gathering, a premium is placed upon innovation, experimentation and adaptability. These elements of flexibility have been noted as characteristics of Eskimo culture. These qualities often said to characterize Eskimo culture have usually been associated with technical inventiveness and economic and social flexibility of male hunting patterns. I would suggest that the adaptability and flexibility underlying female roles are of equal importance.

Adams (1972) suggests a reformulation of the notion of Eskimo social structure and flexibility. He argues that

flexibility should be approached as a by-product of acculturation. He states that flexibility is functional "... and related to the ethos of traditional Eskimo culture; it has also been perpetuated and possibly emphasized by contact with Eurocanadian culture" (1972: 16).

Flexibility and those qualities associated with it are embedded in traditional child rearing and socialization and are further enhanced by contact with outsiders. This serves to clarify the central research problems: 1) What are the manifestations of this flexibility in terms of women's roles; 2) does Eskimo society offer a broad range of roles or "rules" that can be variably applied or negotiated; and 3) what are the regional variations in these roles and rules?

Before these questions can adequately be addressed, a brief description of traditional social organization and subsistence roles is necessary. Comparing and contrasting traditional and contemporary women's roles will serve to highlight the interplay between the individual and society in relation to the concept of role, and hopefully, give us some understanding of a particular pattern of social organization. As Whiting (1963) notes, our search for perfect correlations of what-goes-with-what-under-what-conditions may be doomed to failure if we continue to perceive social structures as static. We need to connect

the abstract formal structure of the system with the dynamics of social process and of individual psychology.

CHAPTER III.

ROLES AND SUBSISTENCE IN TRADITIONAL TIMES

A. Background

The traditional period has been defined by Burch (1975) and others as the time when the Northwest Alaskan Eskimos were operating in terms of an essentially indigenous system of action. Northwest Alaska is that area stretching roughly from Norton Sound to the Canadian border, including the Brooks Range in the North. The inhabitants referred to themselves as Inupiat, roughly translated as "the people." The Inupiat speak dialects of the Inupiaq Eskimo language. Linguistically, they were different and distinct from the Yupik Eskimo speaking peoples in Southwestern Alaska and Siberia, and from the Athapaskan-speaking peoples in the Yukon area, to the south and southeast (Oswalt, 1967: 28).

Although the Eskimos have always exhibited considerable regional variation in both geographic mobility and resource exploitation patterns, in general terms all can be considered semi-sedentary, central based wandering groups (Oswalt, 1967: 93). Oswalt differentiates four types of subsistence patterning for the Alaskan Inupiaq Eskimos. First, the caribou hunters, typified by the Eskimos in the Brooks Range and the upper Kobuk and Noatak Rivers. These groups depended largely on

caribou and showed high individual mobility for the interception of caribou ranging widely in those areas. The second type, the arctic hunters and fishers, is characterized by the Eskimos of the Selawik River and lower Kobuk and Noatak Rivers. Winter settlements were small but permanent for the season and individual or group mobility demands were nearly as great as for the caribou hunters. Dependence upon fish during the late spring and summer was great, more so than dependence on land fauna. Choice of a settlement site would depend on a variety of factors, rather than on the availability of a single resource. Arctic whale hunters, the third subsistence category Oswalt differentiated, represent the patterning found from Kivalina north, including all coastal sites from Point Hope to Barrow and Barter Island. Whale hunting was the focus of subsistence, although pursuit of other land and sea mammals and fish figures heavily in the overall pattern of resource use. Settlements of the arctic whale hunters were among the largest of any Eskimo group, and often show the greatest historical depth of occupation (Oswalt, 1967). Settlements were occupied continuously through the summer and spring, and the summer months were often spent far from the settlement in the pursuit of fish and caribou or trade. The fourth type is termed sea hunters and fishers, and representative groups were heavily dependent upon seals, but enjoyed a flexible economy that emphasized caribou, salmon, and whitefish as

well. Their settlements were normally less sedentary than the arctic whalers but more so than the arctic hunters and fishers (Oswalt, 1967: 102).

Although these subsistence categories are not currently represented by the life-styles of modern Eskimo villages, the communities of today can be traced to these types. The discussion that will follow in the remainder of the thesis focuses largely on the mid-Kobuk River area, and should be appreciated as a general introduction to traditional Eskimo economic forms in a broad sense. However, because the mid-Kobuk represents a transitional zone with overlap of more than one subsistence classification, and because both traditional and contemporary ties in this area extended to many villages typifying a number of economic regimes, this coverage is more than an introduction. This coverage is a necessary step in the development of a profile of the people I will discuss.

B. Traditional Lifeways

In the remainder of this Chapter, I will illustrate traditional subsistence patterns in both the upper and lower Kobuk River areas. The term "traditional" refers to life at or soon after the mid-point of the nineteenth century. Using the convention employed in many ethnographic discussions, I will refrain from fixing specific years to this period. The purpose of such a convention is not to speak to specific historical facts,

but to summarize a general condition of life before sustained contact with Western agents of social change. In addition, this approach will allow me to distill the essentials of Eskimo social life prior to the first major and catastrophic impacts of Western contact: epidemic disease and massive relocations that permanently changed the complexion of settlement and livelihood in the area at about the turn of the century. This "traditional" horizon, then, represents an amalgam of facts that refer to life before massive changes to the indigenous adaptation; the modern condition will be easier to assess.

The following discussion is based on Anderson, et al. (1976), Oswalt (1967), and Giddings (1961). The yearly cycle among the Kobuk Eskimo was one of extensive movement. With the longer days of spring approaching, Eskimos in the upper Kobuk area began to leave their winter settlements and began wandering in small family groups as early as February. It was at this time that available resources at the winter sites were most scarce, and so separation and dispersal were demanded by conditions. Isolated caribou herds might be pursued individually at this time. Families commonly headed for lakes where fish could be caught through holes in the ice, or for stands of trees and shrubs where rabbit and ptarmigan could be trapped. Typically, these families would have also cached food supplies at selected sites from more abundant times earlier in the previous season.

Eskimos wandered during this early spring time living in caribou tents until the days became warmer, at which time they commonly shifted to residing in teepee-like huts of saplings. As full spring approached, resources became more readily available. The first migrating fowl would be hunted with bow and arrow, sling or snare; bears and beaver would be taken from their dens, and the first muskrats would be hunted. As the ice began to break-up and clear, they made plans to move to their summer camps.

After the ice had cleared and summer was close, Eskimos built rafts and floated down the river to summer fishing sites or simply hiked west. At preferred sites the men and women would work together constructing shelters of spruce and birch bark that the women, children and older men would live in throughout the summer. Upon completion, the men and older boys would rendezvous and trek north to the Brooks Range and the headwaters of the Noatak River. Here they would remain all summer, hunting caribou that had migrated north to their summer grounds. The men and older boys would usually consume all or most of the meat themselves. They saved the antlers, hides and sinew to be used throughout the year for implements and clothes. Back on the river shores, the women and others remaining would prepare nets of willow-bark thread and collect edible plants and bird eggs. Some fishing would be done early in the season, but by July fishing became a full-time occupation for all. Salmon especially were

abundant at this time, and would be taken by gill-nets set at eddies in the water where fish would congregate or at the mouths of sloughs and creeks that the fish would be approaching on their way to the spawning grounds. Salmon, pike, whitefish and sheefish would also be caught by seining with willow-nets. With this method, fish are encircled with birchbark kayaks and pulled onto shore. Fish might also be taken by spear or barbed trident at eddies and pools.

The catches of fish, except for those immediately consumed, would be cut and hung on racks for drying and later used throughout the year. The internal organs were boiled down to produce fish oil, a necessary commodity used for both flavoring food and as fuel for lamps. The late summer saw an increased activity in the collection of berries that would be dried or preserved in fish oil for use later in the year. Moulting waterfowl, unable to fly at this time, were commonly snared or driven into shallow pools or lakes where they could be captured manually.

At the close of the summer (late August), the men and older boys would return from the caribou hunt with hides, sinew, antler and prime pieces of meat. Through the summer-fall transition the families would remain at the summer site while the last of the fish and berries were collected. As temperatures dropped and fall began in earnest, and as the caribou (now on their southern migration away from the Brooks Range) were anticipated at

certain routes to the west, the summer camps would be disbanded and families would begin their return to the upper Kobuk area. New camps would be formed to the west along the river, often consisting of many families residing in caribou tents.

At known caribou crossings, the animals might be hunted in an individual fashion, or through cooperative techniques used to herd the caribou into prepared caribou trapping areas. The meat was frozen or dried, and all parts of the animal were used for food or other utilities. Fall is a very short season, and soon after the annual fall caribou hunt, preparations are made for the winter.

At or just before the time of freeze-up, families again separated from the larger group and moved down river (east) to return to their sod houses or found a new location to build one. The sod house was a semi-subterranean structure covered with a thick layer of tundra sod. The sod house might be used consistently year to year, or be used in a more transient manner. Oil lamps were used for light during the winter, and in contrast to other Eskimo groups, heat was provided by an open wood fire centrally located under an open chimney. During the winter many fur-bearing animals would be hunted and trapped, and ptarmigans would be snared and caribou would be hunted on a limited basis where isolated herds could be found to the south and southwest.

Soon after freeze-up, winter fishing would begin with the preparation of fish traps. Of many different designs, fish traps were buried under the ice and with a weir effect funneled fish into traps where they could be picked out or captured with hand nets. Fish, especially sheefish, could also be caught through holes in the ice with hand lines. Fishing was done through midwinter, when the fish decreased their food intake.

Winter provided relatively fewer subsistence resources and was a time for gathering firewood, making and repairing clothing, making preparations for the next year, and communal visting and ceremony.

This yearly cycle was one of extensive movement and periodic aggregation in multi-family groupings (Anderson et al, 1976). The size of these multi-family groups varied according to a number of factors: season, location on the river (upper or lower), and availability of food resources from year to year. The picture presented one year may or may not replicate itself the next, and the noted shift in caribou concentrations documents the fragile quality of the subsistence balance and the massive changes in population density and resource exploitation demanded by such shifts. Historical figures on demography serve to highlight seasonal changes. For example, in the 1880 census which was performed in the summer, there was a figure of 250 individuals for the entire Kobuk River, this population being scattered all along the waterways. For

the same period, Ray (19~~75~~⁴⁵) and Oswalt (1967) agree on an overall estimate for the Kobuk River of 500 individuals. It is reasonable to suggest that the previous estimates for the Kobuk River failed to incorporate those individuals on the coast for summer sealing and trading.

Although the Kobuk Eskimos may show unique patterns of subsistence exploitation and demographics, they, like all Eastern (Inupiaq as opposed to Yupik, or Western Eskimos who inhabit Alaska south of Unalakleet and Saint Lawrence Island and Siberia) Eskimos share the most prominent and pervasive organizational structures in a fairly consistent fashion (Oswalt, 1967). For this reason, the discussion of the traditional organizational forms typical of the Kobuk River Eskimos will be supplemented, where necessary, with other Eskimo examples. Although real differences among Eskimo groups may be found, especially comparing long-standing coastal communities to those of the interior like the Kobuk, it is apparent that these differences represent what Spencer referred to as "regional phrasings" (Spencer, 1959) of the same basic structural type.

The nuclear family now as in the past, is the primary unit of Eskimo social groupings, based on the fundamental husband-wife dyad (Burch, 1975). The economic aspects of the husband-wife tie were considered by the Eskimos to be of equal importance to that of child bearing in both traditional and recent times (Burch, 1975: 82). The division of labor along sex lines was sharply drawn in

traditional times and it was most evident in the husband-wife relationship. Although the residential unit and cooperative economic unit may have been the extended family, the nuclear family retained a real separateness in family organization. The Inupiaq Eskimo kinship system favored neither the wife's nor the husband's connections in reckoning kinship, and was thus bilateral (Oswalt, 1967). Often the extended family based on the bilateral structure would include the husband and wife, in addition to the married daughter and husband with children; married son with the same; grandparents; siblings of either sex with or without spouses and children; or even dyadic affines with or without spouses and children (Spencer, 1959). Other more exotic and varied combinations, according to Oswalt, were not uncommon. Sometimes the extended family gains special recognition and value because it circumscribes a most basic level of authority, cooperation and distribution of resources, and because it is the unit often identified as the family by the community; this is more characteristic of Canadian examples (Damas, 1971: 199).

Social integration and group sentiment were strongest within the nuclear family. The Eskimo band Oswalt describes was simply that aggregate of households that normally lived in close proximity during much of the year and exploited approximately the same range of territory. Individual families were extremely independent, both

ideally and in practice. Authority was vested in the family and little if any authority outside that unit was recognized—certainly none was institutionalized. Expertise and wisdom were qualities demanded for authority within the family, and thus authority was loosely distributed to normally more than one family member: the vigorous adults (who were more productive) and the elders (who were wise with age and experience). From literature, it would appear that more often than not, men were the final authorities. However, given the patterns of male and female responsibility during the seasons and the separation of men and women for long periods, both exercised this prerogative in varying degrees and in varying arenas.

It has already been seen that the husband-wife relationship was one of both economic advantages and child bearing and rearing. According to Burch (1975: 85), the complete absence of ritual recognition of the establishment of the basic marital relationship in the traditional society indicates that the relationship in the Eskimo view of their cooperative labor was weak and functioned as basically a utilitarian arrangement. Church weddings were introduced into Northwest Alaska around 1890 by the missionaries. By 1940, church and civil weddings were the only means by which one could establish a marital relationship through institutional procedures (Burch, 1975: 88).

Women in traditional times were responsible for the acquisition and storage of all vegetable products-berries, greens, leaves and roots-which constituted a more important resource than is usually acknowledged (Spencer, 1959: 153). Women were in charge of operating the oil lamps which constituted the only source of light and one of the primary sources of heat in traditional times. It was the wife who collected the wood for the one cooked meal of the day, and who fed and cared for the dogs. Finally, the wife of a rich man or "umialik" had a number of important ceremonial obligations to carry out during the course of the year (Spencer, 1959: 177).

Construction and maintenance of skin garments occupied a great deal of time for the woman. She was also in charge of game practically from the moment a kill was made until the meat was eaten. Her duties included retrieving, skinning, butchering, storing, distributing and exchanging foods with close and more distant kin and neighbors (an important economic role), cooking and serving. If the meat were to be dried, it was her duty to set the drying racks and maintain the fire. In addition, the woman brought in a fair amount of small game herself (Spencer, 1959: 88). The woman hooked fish, snared ptarmigan and rabbits in all seasons. Along the Kobuk, the woman was in complete charge of the crucial summer fishery. According to Giddings (1961: 129), salmon usually reach the middle Kobuk by the middle of July and from that time until late

August or early September the women are continually busy with their seining, cutting and drying. In traditional times, seining was strictly a female enterprise. As we have seen in the yearly round of subsistence activities, men and older boys went away hunting in the mountains during the seining season. A fish camp was the women's temporary village.

Sheefish, whitefish and salmon were the fish most abundant in the Kobuk, although pike and grayling were occasionally caught. Those fish not eaten immediately were cut and dried, and in the case of salmon and whitefish, smoked as well. The fish is sliced lengthwise for drying, and cutting is done with an "ulu" (a curved woman's knife). A few deft strokes separate the head, viscera and eggs from the body--these three parts are thrown into separate containers. The split fish were hung on racks, tail upwards to dry. The eggs were also hung to dry. The viscera were placed in a large tub to be boiled for their oil and the heads were buried in the sand to become half rotten as a special treat for the men upon their return in autumn (Giddings, 1961: 129).

The subsistence resources women contributed made up the bulk of diet most of the year. During those periods when caribou were unavailable, the dried or smoked fish and preserved vegetable material provided the mainstay of their diet.

Even though the Eskimo families were very independent,

some influential men and women played an important role in affecting community decisions and in the supervision of communal activities by virtue of their recognized skills, wisdom and charisma. It should be noted that these are communal affairs, for seldom if ever did these persons intrude in family affairs. These individuals, as was briefly noted in the Introduction, were called "umialiks," and their roles provided a degree of social and economic cohesion. The position was strictly an achieved one, and depending upon circumstances several umialiks or none would reside in any one area (Gubser, 1965; Oswalt, 1967: 177). In cases of dispute or conflict, the greatest effort was made to resolve the problem within the bounds of the family concerned. If a settlement did not materialize, the situation might be discussed in the community. No official arbitration ensued, but the opinions of the umialik probably played an important part in the final reconciliation. However, the opinions of the umialik were not binding and often the final settlement might bring direct action on the part of affected family relations from far away. Such action, even if leading to bloodshed in extreme cases, was deemed appropriate since it revolved around kin (Spencer, 1959). Whether or not this action was in accord with the expressed opinion of the leaders was not an issue, although the umialik may counsel retaliatory or further reconciliatory gestures as a result of such dire actions. The choice to listen to

such counsel was always seen to be the prerogative of community members, and the final responsibility theirs. Continued bad counsel, though, might well remove a man or woman from the ranks of the umialiks.

Trading partnerships were considered extremely important to all Eskimos, and productive trading relationships lent additional prestige and wealth to the umialik, and such factors were also considered to be signs of a potential or upwardly mobile umialik. Trading partnerships were formalized agreements between parties, either women only or men only. There were no indications that these trading partnerships were ever between men and women. Scarce goods or trade items from the coast found their way to Eskimos along the Kobuk River by this mechanism. No trade sanctions or limiting agreements were implied, but the trading partnership implied that one agreed to be a go-between for goods for another. In this way, coastal goods scarce in the interior were assured, and the interior goods such as caribou hides and sinew were guaranteed to coastal dwellers or those far from access to such commodities. A sentimental attachment was also implied, and trade partnerships might stem from or lead to other types of cooperative relations and agreements. In general, these trading partnerships served to expand the group of kin or quasi-kin that Eskimos might draw upon for support in time of need.

In many parts of the world shamans or similar types of

religious or supernatural specialists exercised significant social control. In the case of the Eskimos, this control was slight at best. Shamanistic power was limited to the supernatural and ceremonial realm, and rarely would the shaman have need to intrude into the mundane matters of day to day life. Shamans (or, to the Eskimos, "angatkuq") were seen as being simply better versed in the lore of extrasensory and supernatural phenomena (Oswalt, 1967: 221) than their normal neighbors. Shamans were generally men, although women could exercise shamanistic power. In times of scarce resources or illness, the shaman would often serve a divining purpose, discovering unseen sources of food or discovering the reason for disease or scarcity. Often the remedy for these problems would involve supernatural means that only the shaman could accurately gauge or diagnose, but the shaman had few real sanctions to shore up his/her authority in such matters outside of threats and dire prophecies. Only in rare cases would the shaman interfere in non-supernatural affairs, and only then with the argument that "unseen" powers that only s/he could sense are responsible for a situation of real concern invisible to the uninitiated. In cases where shamans began to take on too much power and demand too much, they were sometimes killed in communal efforts or they were simply abandoned, the group moving on to live outside the shaman's sphere of meddling (Oswalt, 1967; Spencer, 1959).

Henrich (1972: 83) notes that:

"Many of the features of most Eskimo social systems operate to maximize the number of connections in the group and also with neighboring groups ... dance and song relationships, trading partnerships, spouse exchange relationships and the kinship statuses that are set upon them...namesake relationships and others all operate to widen the network of connectedness of the individual."

Even though childhood betrothal promises on the part of parents have very low fulfillment rate, the betrothal promise itself obligates the respective parents to continued cooperation between families that quite often shared some resources and work even before the promise (Guemple, 1972: 59). Guemple also reports that "exchange relationships (spouse exchange) are founded on cooperative effort. Such a union may lead to a temporary establishment of a joint household for the season, and it may become an arrangement confirmed annually during the hunt. Other exchanges seem to be associated with joint ownership of some major form of property, such as a whale boat. Still others are formed on the basis of religious considerations" (1972: 61). Although this practice is often called "wife exchange" in the literature, it is clear that the exchange was reciprocal and balanced: two dyads or households were involved, hence we could as easily speak of "husband exchange." The available data provide only a very murky picture of this exchange relationship, and so I will refrain from probing the weak data in the literature for more substance and depth.

Nonetheless, I feel we can conclude from those sparse accounts that are available that this relationship, like many others in the Eskimo social order, served to extend kin boundaries and draw multiple persons into cooperative economic bonds. This relationship did not appear to diminish the prestige of either male or female participants. Further, the relationship was imbued with many positive values and even today the distant Eskimo descendants of these mixed unions fondly refer to one another as "cousin."

Namesake relationships ("atiq" which means name) are established at birth when infants are given the name of either someone else in the community or a deceased relative, generally the latter. As the traditional Eskimo cosmology imbued the name with personal spirit and personality, a link of affinity or likeness was set up. Namesakes were considered equals in kinship and thus the custom created a fictive set of relations for the namesakes. The name chosen for a child is conceived of as a really supernatural prerogative based on a hidden affinity and the history of recent deaths, but strategic choices by adroit parents could recruit allies to the family unit (Guemple, 1972: 64). Because the rationale behind a name choice would be essentially hidden once the child began growing up and earlier deliberations over names would be forgotten (or never known to the child itself), other people with the same name encountered in

day to day life, close or far from the family region of residence, would also be accorded similar "namesake" hospitality and responsibilities. These accidental namesakes formed a pool of additional and unplanned links that also expanded the range of friends and near-family. Even today people with the same Eskimo or even English name, regardless of their past histories or biographies, are seen to be in some special kind of affinity relationship.

An intimate bond was apparently established between a ritual sponsor and a child. Although it prescribed no formal or even informal connections between families, informal connections of economic cooperation, friendship and trust were often present before sponsorship, which in turn strengthened them, or appeared afterwards in the form of more household visiting and the tendency to exchange goods (Guemple, 1972: 66). The sponsor would often be a respected older man or woman, one who exemplified the Eskimo way of doing things, and who was skillful, wise and wealthy. The sponsor might well be an umialik, who through the sponsorship not only gained prestige, but also obligations to the child and his or her family. The sponsor, again obliged technically to do nothing, would in fact often take some responsibility in child-rearing and in reality would be drawn in most cases into further and more explicit cooperative relations with the child's family.

Adoption has always been extremely common in Eskimo

societies, and requires periodic compensation for the original parents, as the child is looked upon as a gift. Adoption also requires that the original parents be obliged in some way to repay the adopting parents for their kindness to and interest in the child (Guemple, 1972: 67). Regardless of the form of the compensation, both sets of parents usually maintained a long-term interest in the child that linked them together. Thus linked, they are naturally more apt to be drawn into other sorts of relationships.

One very important point to be made here, and is obvious in all these cases, is that most of these relationships that serve to create and perpetuate community cohesion and long term ties are somehow articulated through the kinship system. People become "like" brothers or sisters or cousins, gain new parents, become like others with the same name (and thus the same kin relations) and so on. Traditionally, too, the measures of social integration and group solidarity and sentiment are, as noted earlier, coincidence of kinship ties and proximity. Such a system, as demonstrated earlier, again replicates and transforms such kin-like ties throughout the community, weaving families closer and closer together, and where proximity is not possible, far-flung Eskimo families can be linked closer by similar kinds of ties that promise affection and sharing and demand obligations in return. Although these

semi-sedentary wanderers may be atomistic in a classical sociological sense, their flexible yet pervasive affiliative mechanisms provide lasting cohesion and real identity (Oswalt, 1967).

CHAPTER IV.

CONTEMPORARY LIFE IN KIANA

Roles and Subsistence

In the preceding section, the emphasis has been on establishing the yearly round of subsistence activities and accompanying roles in traditional times. Regional variations as they relate to this subsistence exploitation have also been discussed. In this section, the focus will be on changing subsistence patterns and roles in recent years. Seasonal charting of these patterns will parallel the treatment of the traditional period. A review of secondary literature provides the basis for the following discussion, although research observations are included too; my own research findings per se are outlined more extensively in the next chapter. The first part of this chapter outlines contemporary roles and subsistence, while the latter section describes the sample population.

Resource exploitation has changed from the traditional period to the present. Seasonal availability of some resources, shifts in climate and population, coupled with changing life patterns, have resulted in varying modes of exploitation. There have been two significant changes in the availability of natural resources in the last one hundred years. There has been a normal cyclical change in the migration patterns over decades which moves the larger

herds of caribou from the southwest (Selawik area) far to the northeast (Brooks Range area). For this reason, the large number of caribou in the northeast prevented a substantial population density in the lower Kobuk area. The second significant factor upsetting the caribou resources was the over-killing of the caribou by American, British and Portuguese whaling crews. This meant in essence that two populations were relying on a very limited resource. It is only in fairly recent times that the depleted herds have begun to increase and equal their original numbers.

As previously mentioned, the yearly cycle among the Kobuk Eskimos was one of extensive movement. Although there is evidence of periodic population shifts, the character and degree of this movement has been altered by several factors. With the establishment of trading posts, churches, schools, employment opportunities and changes in the local availability of resources, the Kobuk Eskimos were drawn into tighter and larger living units, and Noorvik, Kiana, Ambler, Shungnak and Kobuk villages were founded (Anderson et al, 1976: 433). In addition to the settlement of these permanent villages, technological advances such as snow machines, outboard motors, high-powered rifles and nylon nets made long treks for game unnecessary or at least less frequent. For further clarification, let us look at the present seasonal round of activities.

As the days lengthen during March and April, temperatures are moderate and snow conditions are ideal for dog teams or snow machine travel. There is generally a good deal of travel during this period, on short hunting trips, and visits with friends and relatives in other villages in the region. Many annual region-wide events are scheduled for this time. One of the most important is the quarterly meeting of the Friends Church. As many as two hundred visitors from these villages, as well as from Buckland, Kivalina, Point Hope, Barrow, and Kotzebue travel by snow machine or airplane to the host village, for a week of attending services and visiting (Anderson et al, 1976: 166). There is a real sense of celebration during this week, with both host and visiting family members sharing their local foods. Each group must have planned for and obtained surplus supplies to exchange. There must be sufficient fish to eat, plus enough dried fish to give or trade with visiting friends or relatives who have brought with them foods from their areas.

If an individual does not have an established partnership with a coastal person, this may be one of the few opportunities to exchange goods. It is also an excellent time to establish partnerships with people of different regions and to fulfill obligations to their relatives and partners through exchanges.

Early spring is also a period when frequent trips are made to hunt caribou. These trips are usually of short

duration, though frequent. In Kiana during 1975, residents traveled primarily to the Hunt River area for their spring caribou because the animals in that area were fat. Some hunters who are unable to go that far because they have jobs in the village or have too little gas for their snow machines go to the mountains between the Squirrel and Salmon Rivers, where the caribou are leaner or less prized (Anderson et al, 1976: 167).

Travel continues during this early spring period until the snow becomes too soft and the river ice begins to break up. Travel during this break-up period is dangerous and is usually postponed until a trip by boat is feasible.

During April and May, the major subsistence activity is shee fishing. Sheefish are caught by locating a school under the ice and hooking through a hole in lake and river ice. Some pike are also caught with this method but are less valued as they are smaller and less tasty. Entire families, or groups of families, will go during calm weather on overnight camping expeditions to fish for sheefish.

When not fishing, men and some women of the Kobuk River area are also goose, duck, and muskrat hunting. This period of time before the ice fully breaks up also affords an opportunity to overhaul boats. The boats are recaulked, repainted, and rotten wood replaced. It is also the time when the women inspect and repair fish nets. Usually some nets will have to be replaced, and new

floats and sinkers attached to the nets.

Once the river ice clears and travel by boats is possible, trips are made up-river to intercept whatever few caribou stragglers are still fording the river at those spots. The meat obtained on these trips is usually dried and cached for later consumption.

In the Kiana area, most families set out fixed gill nets for whitefish across small streams or along the shore of the Kobuk River within a two-mile radius of the village. In 1975, none of these families moved out to their fish camps for the season (Anderson et al, 1976: 173). In 1976, however, several families did establish their fish camps down the river.

The separation and dispersal of families to fish camps is no longer as necessary, and families tend to remain in the villages making frequent trips out to set and retrieve nets. Those whose fish camps are within an hour or an hour-and-a-half boat ride from the village (5-10 miles) go to their camps in the morning, remove fish from the net, re-set it and begin cutting and hanging the fish. In the afternoon, they again empty the net and re-set it and cut and hang their fish, after which they return home. For those who set nets further away, it may be necessary to spend two to three days at a time away from the village. If this is the case, they will have partially dried the fish by the time they return.

During the 1970's, whitefish were of more importance

than salmon as a food resource for all the residents of the lower Kobuk River area (Anderson et al, 1976: 174). The quantity of whitefish taken and the duration of the whitefish season depends almost exclusively upon weather conditions. As Anderson notes, during June of 1975, there was a great deal of rain and the river rose and essentially eliminated the whitefish harvest. During 1976, however, the weather conditions were more favorable and permitted a good whitefish harvest. Every effort is made to capitalize on good weather, and nets are set early and utilized to their fullest for as long as good weather continues. During this period, there is almost a feverish activity revolving around the harvest and distribution of whitefish. Other fish, such as pike, grayling and trout, are also caught in the nets, but whitefish remain the staple.

By the middle of June, sheefish are moving up river and the women have prepared their gill nets. The nets are set in eddies along the river banks where the sheefish stop before continuing up the river, and the nets usually produce from three to five fish a day. With a normal weight of 20-30 pounds per fish, 150 pounds are not unusual for a day's catch (Anderson et al, 1976: 175). Fish not immediately consumed are cut and hung to dry.

During the second week of June, smelt begin their annual run up the river, and women get their small seining nets repaired. Smelt are caught either with a dip net or

with a small mesh seining net. The seining nets are more productive than dip nets and are used if available. The smelt are dumped directly from the nets into tubs. If tubs are not available, they are emptied directly into a ditch that has been dug in front of the net. Families who do not own nets can share in the catch if they help with the seining. Both men and women participate in this seining. The smelt are eaten fried, stored in freezers, or dried. The frozen smelt are consumed during the winter or are used as bait for sheefish the following spring.

Through July, August and part of September, the major emphasis will be on salmon, sheefish, and some whitefish. Lower Kobuk River women are primarily responsible for ensuring an adequate harvest. Preparing and maintaining gill and seine nets involves a large investment in time, energy, and money. A fully outfitted seine net cost approximately \$500, if purchased in Kiana in 1976. The exact price would depend on the length of the net, the weight of the twine used to make it, and whether or not commercial weights were attached. To prepare the nets, the woman must check every inch of netting and repair any torn area. She must also check to see that the floats and weights have not torn loose during use. If there are some weakened or damaged areas of her net, new sections must be put in.

The selection of the seining spot depends on several factors. There are some traditional spots favored by

specific women and families, and there are some areas where the fish will congregate. Seining trips usually last all day, depending on how successful they are. Usually two women fish together, along with some of their children or other helpers. In addition to contributing sections to the same net, women who seine together frequently also share boats, motors and expenses, such as money for drums of gas. Usually the women alternate in using their own boat or motor. Men often assist in these activities today, since they seldom hunt caribou during summer, preferring instead to hunt them in other seasons when they are closer to the village. Upon return to the village after a seining trip, the women cut and hang the fish to dry on prepared racks near the river's edge.

In recent years, most of the seining has been for whitefish. Salmon are less frequently seined in the lower-river villages than formerly, due in part to the extremely labor-intensive and expensive nature of this pursuit. Instead, they are obtained by gill nets. Also, because sled dog usage in the villages has decreased, these salmon obtained through gill netting are sufficient to supply the salmon needs of a family and their few rather sedentary dogs, as long as conditions remain favorable all summer.

During the summer months, there is increased gathering activity by women and their children. Many varieties of berries are collected, and other types of vegetables

gathered. Some of these vegetables and berries are enjoyed fresh, but a large quantity are frozen for use later in the year.

Many of the men go to Fairbanks or other parts of Alaska on construction jobs during the summer. In 1974 and 1975 they worked on the Trans-Alaska Pipeline project and other related jobs. Several of the men and some with their families were in Kotzebue working for the commercial fishery for those two years (Anderson et al, 1976: 177). Wage earning is crucial, for without money they could not buy the necessary equipment for subsistence hunting and fishing. The most constant summer employment for the people of Kiana has been fire fighting. Crews are organized before the start of the season and remain ready at a moment's notice throughout the summer. Fire fighting jobs are open to both men and women.

In the fall, the families of the lower Kobuk River continue to seine for salmon and whitefish. The intensity of their activities, however, depends on how successful the summer fishing has been. If the summer has been rainy and the catch small, they take every opportunity to make up their winter supply by seining. For those families who went to the coast to fish commercially, this is an exceptionally crucial time of the year. By the end of August, they must be back on the river, with their fish camps set up, and working long hours to catch enough salmon to hang and dry before the run is over.

Despite the earnings of summer fishing on the coast, fire fighting, and construction, the acquisition of traditional foods is crucial. Earned money, which is necessary for buying hunting and fishing equipment, acquiring store goods, and paying off bills related to new housing and village improvements, does not help much in obtaining traditional foods. Families manage to store up just about enough of the traditional foods that they require for their own use, and a family cannot count on buying these things from others. Although most people, especially relatives, are willing to share their food supply during the winter, a family without enough of its own would feel uncomfortable in having to be a burden on others by constantly requesting traditional foods from them.

As soon as moose season opens, sometime in September, most men and some women go out by boat to hunt. Although some gender distinctions in role and task organization are maintained since traditional times, expediency and pragmatism, as always, shape the economic adjustments of Eskimo families. Women who hunt generally represent families with few or no adult males, or families with impoverished kinship affiliations who cannot depend on the largesse of others for their protein needs.

The moose are frequently spotted weeks earlier, but hunting is postponed until the animals have become fatter. With electric home freezers fairly common, moose

meat can be stored fresh and thus has taken on an important role in subsistence. Most people regard the moose as a form of insurance against the possibility that caribou, which migrate southward from the Brooks Range in fall, will not show up or will show up late, so moose are eagerly hunted (Anderson et al, 1976: 179).

After freeze-up, people begin to prepare for the transition to winter living. As soon as the river ice is strong enough to support a person's weight, women put gill nets under the ice along the main channel in front of the two lower Kobuk villages, Noorvik and Kiana. This is the last opportunity many families will have to obtain fish, and it can be a crucial fishing period (Anderson et al, 1976: 179).

A major caribou hunting period begins as soon as the streams are iced over and travel by snow machine is possible. The herds should be in the vicinity by this time, and until they are spotted, there is some anxiety for the coming winter. The number brought in early in the season determines to a great extent how much effort must go into later caribou hunting during the coldest months.

From November through February, ling cod (burbot) are caught in moderate quantities by trapping under the ice. They are used as dog food, although frequently eaten fresh with salt and seal oil. Trapping, which was carried on from December or January to spring, has been a minor activity during the last few years. If trapping is done,

a trapline several miles or more distant from that of the next person, and often within the caribou hunting area, is set and checked regularly.

During the coldest months of the year, few of the people make long journeys in pursuit of game. One important reason for this is the inability of snow machines to perform in temperatures at 30° F below zero or colder. Another reason revolves around the various holiday activities from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day. Late winter is a period of relative relaxation, and a time during which people will seek out jobs in the village, or repair homes and tools. Caribou hunting in late winter, as well as providing fresh meat for the family, is considered enjoyable.

When late March finally comes, everyone in the village is eager to travel, and all look forward to the various spring events in the different villages that give people an excuse to visit.

Social Characteristics of the Population of Kiana

In 1880, there were approximately thirty Eskimos living in what is now called the "old village" of Kiana (U.S. Census 1884). Kiana derives from the Inupiat Eskimo word "quuyana" which is a place name roughly translated as "hello" or "greetings." The current village site, on a bluff overlooking the Kobuk River, was settled by miners, who in 1912 established a school and post office there.

Kiana became a supply depot for the gold mining operations at Klery Creek, twelve miles up the Squirrel River. The need for supplies for the mine and miners created the trading posts. Because of its location and the availability of store products, Kiana quickly became a locus of trade along the Kobuk. There were wage opportunities for the men at the mine; although they were initially paid in goods rather than cash, this nevertheless was an early introduction to the wage economy.

For Kiana residents, institutional ties are strongest to Kotzebue, a town of 2499 persons on the coast. Several trips a year are made to Kotzebue for a variety of reasons: to see a doctor, to pick up supplies, to trade, and so forth. Domestic ties are strongest to Noorvik (35 miles), Selawik (43 miles) and up-river villages (See map). My kinship data are insufficient to support the distribution of kin in the region. Anderson (1976: 414-420), however, has traced marital patterns, and finds that 32.1% of marriages occur between Kiana and Noorvik residents. Most interesting is that it is Kiana women who marry men from Noorvik. Anderson speculates that it is the geographic proximity that has led to greater social interaction and has resulted in a higher frequency of marriages between the two villages. Looking at Table 1, it can be noted that the majority of Kiana marriages are exogamous, that is, a marriage between a resident and non-resident. Of all couples residing in Kiana, nearly

half (44.6%) are non-Kiana women married to Kiana men. This contrasts with the 17.9% of Kiana wives who are married to non-Kiana husbands.

Table 1. Marital Residence Pattern in Kiana, 1975

<u>Marital Residence</u>	<u>Number of Couples</u>	<u>Percentage of Couples</u>
Patrilocal: wife from elsewhere, lives with Kiana husband in Kiana	25	44.6
Matrilocal: husband from elsewhere, lives with Kiana wife in Kiana	10	17.9
Common: both spouses from Kiana	10	17.9
Neolocal: neither spouse from Kiana	<u>11</u>	<u>19.6</u>
Total	56	100.0

Source: Anderson et al., 1976.

Previous chapters have discussed some important aspects of Inupiat social structure and some general cultural dimensions. A brief introduction to the people of Kiana would be helpful to orient the reader to the discussion that follows.

The majority of the residents of Kiana are not full Eskimos. This intermarriage occurred over time through intermarriage with white whalers, miners, trappers and with other Native groups from the coast and inland. Ethnically and culturally, however, most consider themselves to be Inupiat Eskimos. All of the residents of Kiana speak some English, although most over age forty have only a limited speaking and writing ability. Those

residents under age twenty are most comfortable with English and have only a limited fluency in Inupiat.

The area's economy is a vital link that contributes to change in growth and development patterns. Whenever an area's economy grows or declines, this change creates a chain reaction affecting all aspects of the area's economic, physical environmental, and social existence. As previously mentioned and discussed, subsistence is the basic economic foundation in the region. Family income flows from two distinct sources, earned and unearned. Nearly half of the Kiana households receive some form of unearned income during the year in the form of Social Security benefits, public assistance payments or other transfer income. More than half of the households in Kiana have at least one member who is employed during some part of the year. Of special concern are the figures from the NANA Regional Survey (1979) which indicate that only five percent of adults in Kiana have permanent jobs.

In Kiana, the population of 280 has remained fairly stable during the past ten years. Table 2 shows the 1975 distribution of the Kiana population by sex and age. This table includes Native residents, seventeen white residents, Kiana Natives temporarily working on pipeline projects, and high school students attending school outside the village. As can be seen, there are slightly more men (52%) than women (48%), and more people in the 10-19 age group than in any other. According to Anderson,

there is a recent tendency for young women to meet and marry their spouses outside the village and to remain outside with any children they might have. Also, effective birth control methods are known and used, which may account for the low number in the 0-9 age group. Anderson (1976: 518-519) notes that the recent movement of people in their early child-bearing years away from Kiana may also have contributed to the low number in the youngest age groups. Nonetheless the population is a young one, with the majority of residents in their teens or younger.

Table 2. Number and Percentages of Kiana Residents, by Age Group and Sex, 1975.

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Number of Persons</u>			<u>Percentage</u>		
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
0-9	33	28	61	22.6	20.9	21.8
10-19	40	46	86	27.4	34.3	30.7
20-29	26	18	44	17.8	13.4	15.7
30-39	15	13	28	10.3	9.7	10.0
40-49	12	7	19	8.2	5.2	6.8
50-59	15	10	25	10.3	7.5	8.9
60 and over	5	12	17	3.4	9.0	6.1
Total	146	134	280	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Anderson et al., 1976

This Chapter, based on both ethnographic literature and descriptive data collected as part of my research, achieves two goals: (1) it provides a contextual, empirical framework within which my analysis is situated, and (2) it provides a brief picture of current life in Kiana that reveals both persistence and discontinuity of

trends highlighted in Chapter III. Both purposes are important to an understanding of the analysis contained here.

CHAPTER V.

RESULTS

The preliminary hypothesis stated in Chapter I is that changes in Eskimo norm and role relationships are related to social factors (for our purposes, chiefly those of Westernization and acculturation) that restrict or undermine Eskimo adaptive processes. This chapter will evaluate the hypothesis through an analysis of the primary data collected in the field, and by reference to secondary sources already identified and summarized in the text. I will begin by characterizing the Kiana sample in a naturalistic and descriptive fashion, and then move on to a more detailed examination of the several data sets corresponding to these families, their composition and the economic roles they are engaged in. Finally, the hypothesis will be re-evaluated and reformulated in a way that will be consonant with the data and analysis.

The findings, based on analysis of secondary, primary socioeconomic, and primary observational data, are summarized below. The generalizations that are not accompanied by citations are based on both primary data and secondary literature, although in such cases the literature serves mainly a corroborative, supplementary purpose. The themes that unite these findings are (1) persistence of traditional adaptations, (2) in the face of

new and sometimes intrusive urban, Western elements, that (3) nonetheless seem capable of being accommodated to by Eskimo women, using traditional norm and role models. I will begin by characterizing the families in the Kiana sample. Family data are summarized in Table 3.

Family One

Family One is comprised of a husband and wife, their seven children, two grandchildren and son-in-law. Their income derives principally from welfare payments (see Appendix 2) and some occasional jobs held by older children. The wife is involved year round in a variety of subsistence hunting, fishing and gathering activities. She has never held a job outside the home, completed only five years of formal education, yet has been a valued and active member of the school board for many years.

The seven children in the family are all girls. A grandson, born out of marriage, was legally adopted by the grandparents. The husband had tuberculosis years ago and is partially blind in one eye and is much less active in subsistence activities than his wife. She prides herself on her hunting abilities and is now teaching her oldest daughter to hunt and snare. Several of the teenage daughters have gone out of the village to school and are less inclined to learn the basic skills. Nevertheless, all are expected to participate with the family when an especially heavy run of fish appear, or nets need repair.

Table 3. Families in the Kiana Sample: Data Summary

FAMILIES	AGE OF FEMALE HEAD	# OF CHILDREN	H H SIZE	INCOME	EDUCATION OF FEMALE		# OF NETS	# OF BOATS	# WHITEFISH SEASON	# SALMON SEASON	FREQ. OF GATHERING TRIPS			
					HEAD	HEAD					0-1	2-3	4+	
Family 1	40	7	12	27,000	5	5	3	1	1200	50			X	
Family 2	45	6	8	18,000	8	8	1	2	500	24	X			
Family 3	30	6	10	18,000	4	4	0	1	0	0	X			
Family 4	35	6	8	10,000	4	4	0	0	120	9	X			
Family 5	55	1	2	12,000	8	8	1	1	0	0		X		
Family 6	32	1	2	30,000	7	7	1	2	0	0			X	
Family 7	49	5	2	20,000	8	8	1	1	601	34			X	
Family 8	50	6	9	16,000	0	0	2	1	307	27		X		
Family 9	53	6	8	45,000	8	8	2	1	601	58			X	
Family 10	31	0	2	20,000	12	12	0	1	0	0	X			
Family 11	56	3	10	60,000	9	9	2	2	800	80			X	
Family 12	35	7	9	16,000	6	6	0	0	0	0	X			
Family 13	55	10	4	30,000	8	8	3	2	1150	45			X	
Family 14	50	6	4	25,000	8	8	3	2	2518	50			X	

One of the daughters, in Anchorage at the University of Alaska, spent a semester in Spain learning Spanish. She left the University after two years and returned to her village and now takes whatever odd jobs are available. This family is rather unique, in that the wife and daughters perform virtually all the subsistence tasks. Ordinarily, the husband would be primarily responsible for the boat and its upkeep. Because of his ill health, he is unable to function in this way.

Family Two

Family two is comprised of a husband and wife, and their six children. This family also relies heavily on subsistence activities and resources, principally hunting and fishing. Their income derives primarily from wages the husband earned from being a barge captain. The husband was home rarely, and this income virtually supported two households, making this family one of the poorest in the village. Aside from this, no other person in the family earned any income. The full range of subsistence planning and implementing was done by the wife.

Family Three

Family three is composed of a husband and wife, their six children and the husband's parents. This young couple, although they receive gifts of fish and meat, do not hunt, fish or gather. They own no nets and utilize

their one boat for pleasure trips to Kotzebue or up-river. In their home they have a small store, selling primarily canned goods. The wife has been employed in light clerical positions in Kotzebue and spends about 80% of her time working in their small store. Her husband has a job working for the native corporation. Their children are fairly young and have not yet participated in any traditional subsistence activities.

Family Four

Family four is composed of a husband and wife and their six children. The wife devotes her time to child care and some summer fishing. The husband is sporadically employed in construction and fire fighting. He hunts for the family's meat during the winter.

Family Five

Family five is composed of a husband and wife. They have a grown daughter living in Anchorage with her two children. Both individuals in this family are in poor health. The wife is partially blind and receives Disability payments and the husband receives social security. They own one net and a boat, but they are not used frequently for fishing. The husband does some hunting. A later visit to the village found both individuals incapacitated and receiving all fish and meat from relatives and friends.

Family Six

Family six is composed of a woman and her child. The husband/father works full time in Kotzebue and only infrequently is in the home. The husband is a caucasian who moved to the Kobuk River area many years ago. The wife owns a gill net but does not do much fishing. She was once a part-time magistrate. A subsequent visit to the village found her in a position with the school district as a bilingual aide, which is interesting, given she speaks no Eskimo.

Family Seven

Family seven is composed of a widowed woman living with one of her adult children. There is a strong reliance on traditional subsistence resources. In addition, she receives a small pension from her husband. She also works as a village health aid, which means she is responsible for referral of serious medical emergencies to doctors in Kotzebue, and for treating more minor situations. Although not substantially older than other women in this sample, she nevertheless appears to have many more skills, such as trapping skills, skin tanning and skin sewing.

Family Eight

Family eight is composed of a mother, her five children, one adopted grandchild and her boyfriend and one

of her daughter's friends. This family owns two nets and one boat and does a significant amount of fishing during the summer. The mother is employed occasionally by the school district as a school cook, and receives Aid to Families with Dependent Children.)⁶ Although the mother does not take an instigating role in hunting caribou, she accompanies others and thus shares in the distribution. In addition, she is frequently given gifts of meat from others.

Family Nine

Family nine is composed of a husband and wife and their six children. The husband is employed as a night guard at one of the local seasonal hunting camps and the wife is a part time village health aid. Both individuals and their older children put a real premium on subsistence activities and resources. Fishing and gathering activities were participated in by many members of the family. Three of the older children had been to the lower states for high school education and the elder daughter and son had spent some time in Anchorage at the University.)

Family Ten

Family ten is composed of a husband and wife. This couple is unable to have children of their own and are attempting to adopt a child from a young mother in the village. The husband is the mayor of the village and

comes from one of the prominent families. The wife went to high school out of Alaska and has worked in many capacities in Kotzebue. She currently works in the trading post owned by her in-laws. This family owns a boat, but no nets. They do some hunting in the fall and winter, but their reliance upon traditional subsistence resources is almost nil. The wife was observed on several occasions out with others checking fish nets, but appeared to have no fish cutting, stringing or drying skills.

Family Eleven

Family eleven is composed of a husband, wife and one adult child, his wife and their six children. This family owns one of the two larger stores in the village. This family is engaged to a large extent in all types of subsistence activities. They own two boats and two different types of nets and fish throughout the season. The wife is a competent hunter and frequently hunts during the fall and winter. As an owner of one of the larger trading posts, this family is in a position to extend credit, make loans or barter for goods. They frequently do all these transactions. It appears as though loans, credit and bartering are greatly facilitated by the relationship existing between the families involved. Those who are related, or who are involved in some partnership would seem to have more generosity extended to them. The wife in this family is also a vocal member of

the school board and the Friend's Church, and works daily in the family store.

Family Twelve

Family twelve is comprised of a husband and wife and seven children. The wife works part time as a health aide and is kept very busy with young children. This family is unusual, in that there is almost no subsistence activity. The family subsists on gifts of fish and meat and receives some welfare payments. The wife was observed on many occasions helping other women with basic cleaning and processing of fish. She appeared inept at cutting, drying and smoking fish, however.

Family Thirteen

Family thirteen is composed of a husband and wife and two of their teenage children. The husband is employed only in the winter and works on the pipeline in the North Slope. The wife is a permanent part-time school janitor. Although not strictly dependent upon subsistence hunting and fishing, since they have both incomes, they nevertheless do a great deal of hunting and fishing for their winter use and to use for trading with Point Hope (a coastal community) partners for seal oil, whale meat and other essentials. This family has an extended kin network and distributes fish to both family and those in need in the village. This family was conspicuous for their hard

work and dedication, frequently sleeping a few hours a night while especially heavy runs of fish were in the river. The children in this family, except for the youngest still at home, have all pursued higher education. One of the older sons earned a teaching credential and is back in the village teaching at the grade school. The other children are either in Kotzebue or in other Alaskan cities.

Family Fourteen

Family fourteen is composed of a husband and wife and their two youngest children. The other four children are living in other areas of the region, and may live with their parents occasionally. This family has invested heavily in subsistence equipment. They own two boats and have three nets. As can be seen from the data sheet, this family harvests a large number of whitefish and salmon. In addition, they are also very active trappers and hunters. They make many trips out of the village to gather berries, greens and other vegetable products. The two children remaining in the home are only marginally active in these activities. Basically, it is a husband and wife team.

As demonstrated in Chapter IV, the yearly subsistence strategy essentially parallels the traditional patterns, with some important changes and variations. The Eskimos residing along the lower Kobuk River still rely for

subsistence products on the river, with its interconnecting streams, sloughs, and lakes. As Anderson (1977: 182) notes and these research data confirm, their identity is inextricably linked to the land and the resources there. The pervasive influence of fishing extends beyond the economic and technological spheres into the social areas of Native culture. The make-up and organization of seining crews, the division of labor associated with fishing, the systems for sharing fish catches, the transfer of knowledge and skills related to fishing, property rights and ownership -- all have ramifications throughout the social structure of the Native community.

Cash was extremely scarce in the villages until the early 1950's. Before then, transactions took place in trading posts in Kobuk, Shungnak, Kiana and Noorvik, and these were primarily on a barter-credit basis (Anderson, 1977: 575). Despite their traditional identification with traditional subsistence values and activities, the people are unavoidably involved in a cash economy. Virtually every hunting, fishing, gathering or trapping activity involves the use of manufactured items that have to be purchased with money. The list of these items is long: it includes twine for nets, guns, ammunition, snow machines, boats or the materials for boat construction, motors, tents, campstoves and fuel. In addition to the purchases of these items needed for subsistence pursuits,

there are increasing demands for money to pay for the various services and for the new items introduced into village life.

Within the last five years, for example, the three lower Kobuk villages have obtained new housing, with a resulting ten-year-or-more mortgage. In the lower two villages, electricity has resulted in minimum monthly payments of approximately twenty-five dollars. Running water and sewage facilities have also created new needs for cash. Heating costs (for propane and fuel oil) may exceed three hundred dollars per month per family during the winter. Television, radios and telephones and other items are present in some villages and planned in others, and they generate other demands for ready cash.

It should not be assumed that these technological developments are necessarily obliterating a subsistence way of life. In the case of electricity, for example, it is actually making year-round dependence upon the traditional resources more feasible. Meat can be frozen for year-round use. The crucial issues are that personal choice in how time is allocated has been reduced. Making the choice between wage-earning activities and subsistence activities has become more difficult.

Before moving on to some discussion of the tables, it might be useful to briefly reiterate some of the objectives of the analysis. This outline should help to clarify the bivariate analysis that follows.

As noted in Chapter I, this analysis is important to corroborate my findings, ot to test the hypothesis.

- 1) The hypothesis asserts that Western influences may erode a traditional adaptation.
- 2) Effects and properties of Western institutions, such as school and wage labor, are part of these influences. Subsistence hunting and fishing are part of the traditional adaptation. Because Western influences are relatively new, we might incorrectly assume that younger individuals embrace Western institutions more readily.
- 3) If Western influences and a traditional adaptation coexist, if there is not a determinate relation between them, the hypothesis is in question.
- 4) Therefore, comparisons of variables corresponding to Western institutions on the one hand and traditional practices on the other were done, using linear bivariate methods.

Many choices, skills, and resources compete with one another for the subsistence hunter's and fisher's attention. Some resources, such as capital goods, take time and money to accrue. For instance, Figure 1 presents a bivariâte plot comparing age of the eldest household female and fishing net ownership; families with an older age structure may more often possess more subsistence capital. Similarly, possession of capital may imply more subsistence activity directly or indirectly related to the

Figure 1. Number of Nets
Compared to Age of Female
Head of Household

KOBUK WOMEN

Mean of X = 44	Correlation Coefficient = .67	Valid Cases = 14
S.D. of X = 9.46	Degrees of Freedom = 12	Missing Cases = 0
Mean of Y = 1.36	Slope of Regression Line = .08	Response % = 100
S.D. of Y = 1.11	Y Intercept = -2.09	

Regression Equation : $Y' = .08 X - 2.09$
 Standard Error of Estimate for Regression = .83
 Standard Error of Correlation Coefficient = .28
 Significance of Correlation Coefficient = 0.009

specific capital. Figure 2 compares net ownership and frequency of gathering trips; wherewithal in general may connote opportunity. Figure 3 compares net ownership and whitefish harvests, with similar positive results, in this case pertinent to actual use of the capital in question. In fact nearly all subsistence practices seem to reveal this pattern of tight integration. Figures 4 and 5 compare salmon harvests and gathering trips, and whitefish and salmon harvests, for example. The sample size is very small, but these plots nonetheless support the trends observed in other data.

In addition, the economic organization of the villages has changed with the introduction of money. With increased necessity for and availability of cash, evidence of stratification is apparent. There is a basic contradiction between those traditional values discussed earlier and those values introduced in the last fifty years. Money may have an unequalizing effect that tends to negate those values of an egalitarian ethic; however, this ethic seems to persist even after the advent of cash. This fundamental contradiction between values is apparent as well in the perception of change and the implications of change. Assuming change can be perceived as either centrifugal or centripetal, that is, change resulting in increased density, bringing people together, or change promoting dispersion and decentralization, it is apparent that the changes these small communities are

Figure 2. Gathering Trips
Compared to
Number of Nets

KOBUK WOMEN

Mean of X = 1.36	Correlation Coefficient = .79	Valid Cases = 14
S.D. of X = 1.11	Degrees of Freedom = 12	Missing Cases = 0
Mean of Y = 2.14	Slope of Regression Line = .66	Response % = 100
S.D. of Y = .91	Y Intercept = 1.25	

Regression Equation : $Y' = .66 X + 1.25$
 Standard Error of Estimate for Regression = .56
 Standard Error of Correlation Coefficient = .28
 Significance of Correlation Coefficient = 0.001

Figure 3. Whitefish Harvest
Compared to
Number of Nets

KOBUK WOMEN

Mean of X = 1.36	Correlation Coefficient = .91	Valid Cases = 14
S.D. of X = 1.11	Degrees of Freedom = 12	Missing Cases = 0
Mean of Y = 556.93	Slope of Regression Line = 496.06	Response % = 100
S.D. of Y = 680.42	Y Intercept = -116.3	

Regression Equation : $Y' = 496.06 X - 116.3$
 Standard Error of Estimate for Regression = 400.49
 Standard Error of Correlation Coefficient = .28
 Significance of Correlation Coefficient = 0.001

Figure 4. Gathering Trips
Compared to
Salmon Harvest

KOBUK WOMEN

Mean of X = 26.93	Correlation Coefficient = .7	Valid Cases = 14
S.D. of X = 25.61	Degrees of Freedom = 12	Missing Cases = 0
Mean of Y = 2.14	Slope of Regression Line = .03	Response % = 100
S.D. of Y = .91	Y Intercept = 1.47	

Regression Equation : $Y' = .03 X + 1.47$
 Standard Error of Estimate for Regression = .65
 Standard Error of Correlation Coefficient = .28
 Significance of Correlation Coefficient = 0.005

Figure 5. Salmon Harvest
Compared to
Whitefish Harvest

KOBUK WOMEN

Mean of X = 556.93	Correlation Coefficient = .69	Valid Cases = 14
S.D. of X = 680.42	Degrees of Freedom = 12	Missing Cases = 0
Mean of Y = 26.93	Slope of Regression Line = .03	Response % = 100
S.D. of Y = 25.61	Y Intercept = 12.46	

Regression Equation : $Y' = .03 X + 12.46$
 Standard Error of Estimate for Regression = 18.53
 Standard Error of Correlation Coefficient = .28
 Significance of Correlation Coefficient = 0.006

experiencing are centripetal. Some technological changes, however, allow people to exploit the same basic resources in half the time and with half the work. Efficiency appears to be increased. This is a fragile economy, and both strategies are present as a consequence.

Cash and subsistence practices are tightly linked, according to the small primary data sample. Figure 6 compares family income and salmon harvests; Figure 7 compares income and frequency of gathering trips. In both cases a strong correlation coefficient was observed suggesting that (1) diverse economic assets, including cash, probably are needed to finance and sustain today's "traditional" practices, and (2) Eskimos may not embrace the Western ideals and economic goals that often are associated with money. On the contrary, the findings suggest that Eskimos seem to invest these newer resources in continued or enhanced traditional practices. Typically, money is not saved for their families and the future, and purchases are usually not delayed. Based on personal observation and this small sample size it appears that significant amounts of money are necessary to pursue a traditional or subsistence lifestyle.

Another indicator of change in the economic realm is the increasing dependency on government services in the form of cash-producing programs. These programs can be job-related or welfare grants. People in need of subsistence items are also in need of money; now it takes

Figure 6. Salmon Harvest
Compared to Income

KOBUK WOMEN

Mean of X = 24.79	Correlation Coefficient = .78	Valid Cases = 14
S.D. of X = 13.04	Degrees of Freedom = 12	Missing Cases = 0
Mean of Y = 26.93	Slope of Regression Line = 1.53	Response % = 100
S.D. of Y = 25.61	Y Intercept = -11.04	

Regression Equation : $Y' = 1.53 X - 11.04$
 Standard Error of Estimate for Regression = 16.01
 Standard Error of Correlation Coefficient = .28
 Significance of Correlation Coefficient = 0.001

Figure 7. Gathering Trips
Compared to
Income

KOEUK WOMEN

Mean of X = 24.79	Correlation Coefficient = .63	Valid Cases = 14
S.D. of X = 13.04	Degrees of Freedom = 12	Missing Cases = 0
Mean of Y = 2.14	Slope of Regression Line = .04	Response % = 100
S.D. of Y = .91	Y Intercept = 1.05	

Regression Equation : $Y' = .04 X + 1.05$
 Standard Error of Estimate for Regression = .71
 Standard Error of Correlation Coefficient = .28
 Significance of Correlation Coefficient = 0.015

considerable cash to even maintain what is considered a minimum subsistence level of survival.

In conjunction with the increasing density, isolation and stratification in the population of Kiana, an additional problem emerges. The more traditional methods of social control are eroding and may cease to be effective. The need for formal state intervention in the form of state troopers and village public safety officers has become a necessity since informal traditional controls (such as avoidance and ridicule, or physical relocation in extreme cases) are ineffective or infeasible today. The umialik in traditional times held a position of relative authority that was achieved by accumulated wisdom and the consensus of the community. How is an individual now to achieve that status? Those values appear to be eroding; it is no longer sufficient to be a successful hunter or to be the best boat builder. Now one must also be able to acquire money as well.

How has subsistence itself changed? Are younger Inupiat as involved as their elders in subsistence activities? Patterning, scheduling and sequencing have changed little. People may eat less subsistence foods but they obtain them in basically the same way. Although the major forms of subsistence have not changed, the volume of the subsistence harvest has changed dramatically. This is verified by Anderson (1976), and the Mauneluk Association Report (1975). Change is also evident in the diversity of

resources tapped. The back-up resources like birds, rabbits, and hares are not being utilized as much as they once were. From what Kiana residents say, it has become in some respects a recreational activity. The resulting lack of variety has been compensated with purchases made with cash. One factor that may explain this neglect of potential resources is that the skills required for trapping and snaring fur bearing animals are no longer found among a large percentage of the people. Also, the very minor return relative to the investment in time and capital makes small game a poor choice of resources, given limited time capital, and cash.

Looking at available data (personal data, as well as Anderson 1977; Mauneluk Association 1975), it is difficult to draw any sharp divisions between generations in relation to subsistence involvement. As far as skills associated with fishing, women seem to acquire them without any extensive "apprentice" program. Becoming skillful at all the associated tasks may be occurring at a later age, but it does occur.

There also does not appear to be any trend towards abandoning subsistence activities by younger Inupiat. In fact, there is a very great interest in the social and political issue of subsistence. The NANA Regional Strategy Community Survey (1974) indicates that of the twenty-six families surveyed in Kiana, 65.4% or 17, indicated that they hunted, fished or gathered more than

half of their own food for the year. Most recent information supports such a level of subsistence reliance.

Eskimos young and old seem to diverge from the classic Westernized goal orientations even when engaged in Western practices. They may seek higher education but seldom abandon tradition when doing so; they may seek high cash incomes but tend to invest such resources in subsistence rather than high yield cash returns. For example, Figure 8 compares family income and education in the primary sample; more education does not seem to imply greater earnings. Similarly, education and age show little or no relationships (Figure 9). Household size, a variable often tied to age as a consequence of domestic cycle trends, is related neither to subsistence capital (nets; Figure 10) nor harvests (whitefish; Figure 11). Finally, education and harvests of whitefish do not show any persuasive fit (Figure 12). The sample size is admittedly small, but the data are nonetheless supportive of the contentions I have stated.

Spencer (1959) observed that the primary goal of the Inupiat social structure was to extend and insure cooperation to reduce individual risks from a harsh and uncompromising environment. Some of the specific social relationships and norms that fit with this goal were hunting and fishing partnerships, food sharing between households, and an association between generosity and social status.

Figure 8. Education
Compared to
Income

KOBUK WOMEN

Mean of X = 24.79	Correlation Coefficient = .35	Valid Cases = 14
S.D. of X = 13.04	Degrees of Freedom = 12	Missing Cases = 0
Mean of Y = 6.79	Slope of Regression Line = .07	Response % = 100
S.D. of Y = 2.76	Y Intercept = 4.93	

Regression Equation : $Y' = .07 X + 4.93$

Standard Error of Estimate for Regression = 2.58

Standard Error of Correlation Coefficient = .28

Significance of Correlation Coefficient = 0.212

Figure 9. Education
Compared to
Age of Female Head

KOBUK WOMEN

Mean of X = 44	Correlation Coefficient = .13	Valid Cases = 14
S.D. of X = 9.46	Degrees of Freedom = 12	Missing Cases = 0
Mean of Y = 6.79	Slope of Regression Line = .04	Response % = 100
S.D. of Y = 2.76	Y Intercept = 5.17	

Regression Equation : $Y' = .04 X + 5.17$
 Standard Error of Estimate for Regression = 2.73
 Standard Error of Correlation Coefficient = .28
 Significance of Correlation Coefficient = 0.330

Figure 10. Number of Nets
Compared to
Household Size

KOBUK WOMEN

Mean of X = 6.57	Correlation Coefficient = .06	Valid Cases = 14
S.D. of X = 3.44	Degrees of Freedom = 12	Missing Cases = 0
Mean of Y = 1.36	Slope of Regression Line = .02	Response % = 100
S.D. of Y = 1.11	Y Intercept = 1.23	

Regression Equation : $Y' = .02 X + 1.23$
 Standard Error of Estimate for Regression = 1.11
 Standard Error of Correlation Coefficient = .28
 Significance of Correlation Coefficient = 0.165

Figure 11. Whitefish Harvest
Compared to
Household Size

KOBUK WOMEN

Mean of X = 6.57	Correlation Coefficient = -.01	Valid Cases = 14
S.D. of X = 3.44	Degrees of Freedom = 12	Missing Cases = 0
Mean of Y = 556.93	Slope of Regression Line = -2.61	Response % = 100
S.D. of Y = 680.42	Y Intercept = 574.11	

Regression Equation : $Y' = -2.61 X + 574.11$
 Standard Error of Estimate for Regression = 680.36
 Standard Error of Correlation Coefficient = .28
 Significance of Correlation Coefficient = 0.037

Figure 12. Whitefish Harvest
Compared to
Education

KOBUK WOMEN

Mean of X = 6.79	Correlation Coefficient = .14	Valid Cases = 14
S.D. of X = 2.76	Degrees of Freedom = 12	Missing Cases = 0
Mean of Y = 556.93	Slope of Regression Line = 35.09	Response % = 100
S.D. of Y = 680.42	Y Intercept = 318.84	

Regression Equation : $Y' = 35.09 X + 318.84$
 Standard Error of Estimate for Regression = 673.51
 Standard Error of Correlation Coefficient = .28
 Significance of Correlation Coefficient = 0.368

In terms of understanding the nature of village dynamics and the various strategies utilized to maintain subsistence patterns while selectively incorporating specific technological changes, the significance of women's partnerships cannot be over-emphasized. These alliances become more significant when perceived as integrative mechanisms crucial during this period of rapid social change.

Earlier studies, such as those done by Spencer (1959), addressing the formal and informal nature of women's partnerships, have regarded them as primarily economic in nature. Yet these alliances form an important locus in village life and provide an essential key to understanding ongoing village dynamics.

Partnerships are not a separate institution, however, and are bound up with the wider social and economic patterns. Variables and variations in each area will have consequences for the partnership. Partnerships per se are fairly localized. It would be rare for a person in Kiana to have a partner in Kotzebue or Point Hope, although in one instance known to me a woman who calls a person in Point Hope "partner," exchanges dried whitefish for seal oil and muktuk (whale blubber). Trade between Kobuk and Koyukon (an Indian tribe to the south) women in past times has also been well documented (Nelson et al, 1978: 137). These individuals may perhaps be friends with whom goods are traded. The obligations that attach are more vague,

and a summer may go by without this trade. Also, in a relationship like this, money may be involved in the transaction. Where cash is not involved, transactions would more often be seen as either gifts or favors. The gifts imply no return, but the favors may, depending on the specific arrangements that have evolved between partners.

Partnerships demand much more far-ranging mutual helping patterns. They tend to persist and revolve around more specific activities. Money has crept into the system, but has not eroded it. This is complicated in a number of ways: whereas close partners may have claim to one another's goods, products or tools, there are not open claims made on money. You cannot hoard fish, but you can hoard money. But money is the one main asset that is available year-round, whereas other commodities are largely seasonal. Money is thus bound to appear in these informal exchanges.

The overlap among partnerships, subsistence, and money probably preserves aspects of the frontier economy, in that exchanges are face-to-face and markets localized. People buy from and sell to people whom they know. Money may be used to purchase pelts needed locally through informal channels. Money transactions are more open, in that you are not expected to go to a partner to buy wolf pelts for clothing, but this is nonetheless normally the case. Money is also commonly used to purchase seal oil, a

regional product of the coast alone but one that is widely sought inland.

Economic opportunities, such as jobs and potential advancement, have eroded the partnership system to some degree, although money itself has not. Kin outside the region can seldom take part in partnerships, and thus families with family outside the region have severely reduced kin-based exchange networks, and are thus more apt to develop non-kin partnerships. It is the rich who have access to Point Hope whale blubber, not the poor. The poor now often have difficulty getting even seal oil, since they just cannot maintain those solid contacts. The poor become even more reliant upon cash as a commodity to trade for local goods, since they cannot afford to build up a surplus of anything else. In addition, they normally lack many supportive kin and neighbors on whom they may rely (a factor that contributes greatly to their poverty in the first place).

It is very difficult at times to discern the differences between friendship and partnership. The literature reviewed does not clarify this distinction. It seems that friends can make broad demands on other friends and there is little formal restraint on these expectations. Gifts are from the heart and might not be repaid. Partners, however, seem to construe their relations in terms of reciprocal obligations and fair sharing. Both, for instance, might help someone fish, but

the friend would do it to be helpful and might receive something, while the partner would receive half the fish. On the other hand, the friend might refuse the request for aid and plead extenuating circumstances, prior commitments, and so forth, but the partner would be obligated to help.

True partnerships are relatively rare these days compared to other sorts of friendships that have economic aspects to them, making them appear to be something else. There are three distinct relationships evident: (1) contacts; (2) partners; and (3) friends. ("Contacts" refer to exchange liaisons which are normally cash-based, or in any event opportunistic and lacking the features of history and sentiment common to other relationships.)

Partnerships do not simply come into being but evolve over time. It seems that a number of repeated activities are necessary to ratify the relation. From personal observation it seems that teenagers and young adults have no partnerships, and this is not due to the decay of the institution. Probably these relations take time and nurturance. I have asked women how their partnerships began and find that it is difficult for them to articulate how they have developed over the years. It appears that mutual interests like children or church initiate these friendships and seem most often to tie them together regardless of residence later in life. The partnerships come first, and persist after people move. Local

informants state that women do not set out to develop partnerships in different or strategic places (perhaps near highly prized, local delicacies); this is a consequence, however, of the transience of the population.

Partnerships are articulated in variable ways. People have fairly definite expectations about them, and know who and what is involved. In addition, there are many unconscious, covert aspects, like the division of goods and proportions, that are highly ordered and regularized. The actual practice, however, is very individualized, according to my observations and discussions with Eskimo women.

One partnership recorded in my data between two widows is a good example. They own a boat, gill net and seining net together. They repair their net together and fish exclusively with each other. The few times that only one of the women went fishing, she shared her catch equally with her absent partner. When one of the partners moved to Kotzebue, they maintained their relationship and continued to do some limited summer fishing together and traded various items back and forth. The partner remaining in the village quickly established a new partnership. It could be that this "new" partnership had been there all along, but only surfaced when the main partner moved.

Another partnership involved two women in their mid-fifties. They would frequently go out picking berries.

and greens, and spent many nights camping up-river together. Only one owned the gill and seining nets, but the share of the fish caught was always fifty-fifty. The woman who did not own the net was wealthier and bought supplies to repair the net, and they seemed to rotate the use of their boats. They did not work and fish exclusively together, and there were many times that specific plans for activities were not carried out.

In another case, a conflict arose when one woman partner built a cabin on land that the second partner had historically used as a camp site, and had filed for as a personal land allotment under terms of the Alaska Native Land Claims Settlement Act (1971). The family of the second partner sued the first, and the aunt of the first testified against her niece in court. The aunt, in turn, was a partner of the aunt of the second partner. Thus both nieces and both aunts were partners, and kinship loyalty was ignored in this case in favor of principles that superseded it.

This anecdotal information is presented here because it neatly summarizes and capsulizes in a naturalistic manner the form, content, and function of typical partnership roles. In the latter case, very new, even alien elements of Western social control (litigation) were channeled through traditional mechanisms. These mechanisms might include intervention by the umialik or village elders. In other cases we see how relative wealth

in cash need not erode the egalitarian, communal nature of these relations (e.g., the partners in their fifties), and how both opportunistic, pragmatic, spontaneous elements are combined with long-lasting economic cooperation and sentiments that are both persistent and durable (e.g. the widows).

In the end we are forced to re-evaluate the hypothesis in a fundamental way: for Eskimo women, perhaps those changes in domestic, economic roles that can be documented are due not to the failure of Eskimo adaptive strategies, but due to their flexibility, dynamism, and ultimate success in accommodating old and new.

The analysis shows that the hypothesis is not likely to account for the changes in Eskimo norms and role relations that are central to this study. Specifically, the hypothesis may be credible only for some changes and only under some conditions. More specifically, the evidence for the current state of Eskimo women's roles and adjustment options in an increasingly urbanized, Western context seems to reveal a pattern of great persistence of selected traditional elements, as well as a comprehensive set of accommodations among these elements to new, Western domestic, social, and economic opportunities.

For Eskimo men, in comparison, traditional adaptive strategies and roles (which typically focused on robust hunting and fishing practices and an ethos of independence) may more often clash with the prerequisites

of Western social life. For Eskimo women, however, a social history of traditions that embraced a wider variety of diversified domestic, economic, and nurturance roles may more easily wed itself to a similarly diversified set of modern demands. In particular, we should be drawn to a closer analysis of women's domestic and economic roles.

Thus the hypothesis that changes in these norms and roles are caused by social factors that impede Eskimo social strategies, should be modified to recognize that it may not account for the case of women nor for certain roles and norms (i.e. those associated typically with women's domestic functions and larger economic tasks), or some combination of the two.

CHAPTER VI.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study has chiefly been concerned with documenting Eskimo women's traditional and contemporary roles, using both secondary and primary data collected at a field site and a number of case studies, in order to evaluate and refine a hypothesis pertinent to these roles and changes in them. Briefly, the hypothesis examined here stated that changes in Eskimo norms and role relations are caused by largely Western, urban social factors that constrain or impede Eskimo social strategies for adaptation. These findings encourage some reconsideration of this hypothesis so as to refine it for more productive, informed, later analysis. These findings suggest that many Eskimo social practices, norms or roles are not impeded; in fact, the successful adaptation that is evident may be due to the success of indigenous mechanisms. Furthermore, role and norm changes and adaptability seem differentiated by (1) sex, and (2) role (e.g. domestic and economic roles as opposed to others). These issues are considered below.

The adjustment of a people to its environment may entail certain specific changes. The environmental and cultural processes have been fairly similar in those far northern cases discussed earlier. Through examination of sources relevant for both situations, it is apparent that

the most significant variables or areas of concern revolve around culture change and roles. Flexibility, as previously defined and discussed, is a key element in the understanding of Eskimo social organization and of role availability and change in particular.

Of related concern is the nature of culture change. What variables contribute to this change? What effects, both short and long term, can be anticipated? In studying the effects of rapid acculturation, it is necessary to remember that although acculturation usually involves increasing complexity and higher levels of technology, less obvious changes in cultural integration also occur. By comparing a range of ethnographic case studies and documenting Eskimo women's traditional and contemporary roles, attention has been focused on specific changes in the integration of a new social order.

It might be useful to briefly summarize and compare the current situations in Canada and Northwest Alaska that were discussed earlier and build on the findings and observations of my research. The present economic position of Native peoples of rural Alaska indicates that they do not enjoy the economic advantages of white Alaskans. Only ten percent of rural Natives work full time. Seasonal employment, concentrated in fishing, construction and fighting forest fires, leaves most Natives unemployed throughout the winter. The annual income for Alaskan Natives is low, while the cost of

living is one of the highest in the world. Reliance upon state and federal subsidies, in the form of public welfare payments, has further weakened traditional reliance upon subsistence activities. This situation affects many aspects of life for rural Natives. The death rate, for example, is more than twice that of whites in Alaska; the infant mortality rate ranges from two to four times that of Alaskan whites. This low standard of living is also reflected in educational levels achieved. The average Native level ranges from six to eight years of school; the average level of education for whites in Alaska exceeds twelve years.

McElroy describes a fairly similar situation in the two Baffin Island communities she studied. Both communities are in a period of transition, becoming more dependent upon wage labor, with more opportunities available for higher education, training and positions of responsibility. These changes also involve increased political participation, manifested in membership on village councils and various boards. In response to these significant shifts, demographic patterns have changed. Following initial contact and shifts from a semi-nomadic hunting, fishing, gathering and trapping lifestyle to year-round village dwelling, some conflicts among roles and values occurred. With changing social and economic expectations have come changed aspirations as well.

As noted, McElroy attempted a partial explanation in

her study on Baffin Island. Her study suggests that Eskimo boys and girls have experienced very different socialization patterns in response to changing political status and economic conditions. As is the case in Northwest Alaska, women's domestic roles have shifted dramatically in the last twenty years, with a resulting increased participation in the wage economy. McElroy predicted, quite reasonably, that Eskimo women would be involved to a greater extent than their men in the traditional activities, and that men would hold higher status jobs, continue their education, and in general be more Westernized than women. Given the historical situation and the high value placed on traditional activities, it is reasonable to assume that these predictions would be as valid in Northwest Alaska. As we have seen, these predictions were accurate for neither area.

My research, and my interpretation of secondary information, leads me to suggest that changes in Native socioeconomic status are not a function of acculturation. This is to say, higher socioeconomic status does not correlate with higher levels of acculturation. High income, higher educational levels, or higher levels of consumption of capital goods among Kobuk Eskimos do not seem to imply less reliance upon traditional resource exploitation, more or higher levels of Western market-cash economic involvement, or more reliance on the nuclear

rather than extended family group.

Although there are those individuals who invest heavily in capital goods, such as boats, outboard motors, snow machines and the like, they are not necessarily significantly oriented to the market-cash economy, although they opportunistically exploit it when it is feasible. Those who can not afford these items are more apt to be dependent on government assistance programs and thus more reliant on purchased food and the generosity of friends and relations. Research findings suggest that the ability to divert time, money and effort into subsistence activities correlates with higher incomes. Further, the ability to make large investments for subsistence is proportionally related to (a) greater subsistence yield and (b) higher income.

For Eskimo women of the Kobuk Valley, progressive and traditional economic endeavors do exist, side by side, each reinforcing and supporting the other, leading to a successful accommodation of old and new. Successful accommodation is thus based on a blend of tradition and innovation. A Western economic ideal does not underly this accommodation, nor is it necessary that it do so.

My work suggests that those domestic groups with the greatest economic wherewithal do not invest these resources for future economic gain. Their assets are invested instead in providing for a continuation of traditional subsistence pursuits that nurtures their

families in a thoroughly contemporary manner, yet with roots in history.

In conclusion, it is apparent that there is an erosion of male contribution to specific areas with a steadily widening scope of women's roles, embracing both traditional and modern arenas. A generalization apparent in other studies indicates that Eskimo society, especially women's roles, cannot easily be summed up. Women's roles are flexible and diverse and cannot be generalized from one area to another. Thus, they are highly responsive to individual, personal variation, as well as different environments and varying socioeconomic factors.

New Native Alaskan village cultures are emerging, each a unique mix of old and new. The rates of change within villages vary greatly in response to numerous influences. Factors include: original cultural values, degree of isolation, persistence or loss of traditional values, size of dominant families, and the presence or absence of effective and legitimized leadership. The presence or absence of natural resources and access to them is one key variable and may be a critical one for predicting survival of villages, corporations or the cultures they represent. In closing, it seems pertinent to repeat yet again that two additional dimensions of variation and change should be embraced within the original hypothesis, dimensions that are important for the definition of data categories, and control and discrimination within the testing

process: these are (1) gender differentiation, and (2)
role content.

Appendix 1

Household Census

Household I.D. _____

Household size _____ Household income/yr _____
(current) (current)

Female head: age _____ # children _____ education yrs _____

Notes: (household composition/residence; female head children vs.
other children in household; family members not currently present etc.)

Family economics and subsistence capital:

Income sources (transfer, earned/unearned) _____

Family labor participation (who, when) _____

Number of fishing nets owned _____

Number of boats owned _____

Number of whitefish harvested (current year) _____

Number of salmon harvested (current year) _____

Frequency of vegetable/berry gathering trips, per week, averaged over
current season _____

Journal page references, this household _____

Appendix 2

Summer 1976 AFDC and Adult Public Assistance
Payment Schedules

AFDC: AFDC payments are determined by one of two formulas; formula selection is at the discretion of the Division of Public Assistance Field Staff.

For mother and one child: \$300.00 per month plus \$50.00 per month for each additional child,

or,

No computation for mother, \$150.00 per month for each dependent child.

Adult Public Assistance:

For single adult with monthly expenses under \$35.00 per month, payment is \$270.00 per month;

For single adult with monthly expenses exceeding \$35.00 per month, payment is \$334.00 per month;

For couple with monthly expenses under \$35.00 per month, payment is \$405.00 per month;

For couple with monthly expenses exceeding \$35.00 per month, payment is \$490.00 per month.

(Schuler 1984)

These payments are independent of other transfer income and welfare payments for Native Americans administered

through the Department of the Interior, which include Bureau of Indian Affairs Public Assistance, Bureau of Indian Affairs cash subsidies for energy needs (fuel oil, propane), and cash subsidies for energy needs provided under terms of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 and the Indian Self-Determination Act of 1974. Food Stamps are another separate category of transfer payments.

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