

THESIS AND DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS

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This issue includes three thesis abstracts addressing cultural anthropology and ethnographic research topics from California State University, Long Beach and the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Crecelius's thesis uses linguistics data and theoretical frameworks to examine the process of creating publications from the memoirs of Yup'ik elders. Through political ecology and ethnographic research, Ringer's thesis addresses consequences of the "graying" of the Kodiak commercial fishing fleet. In the last thesis, Stotts uses ethnographic research to explore the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement for North Slope oil and gas development meetings and provides recommendations on ways to improve the process.

Contact Monty Rogers to submit an abstract of a recently completed thesis or dissertation that deals with topics of interest to *AJA* readers.

NATURAL HISTORIES OF YUP'IK MEMOIRS

Caroline Crecelius

Master's thesis, 2017, Department of Anthropology,
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Online at <https://scholarworks.alaska.edu/handle/11122/8117>

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores how cultural knowledge is committed to textual form and circulated within and outside of linguistically marginalized communities. Working within a Central Yup'ik context, I have focused my research on collections of Yup'ik elders' memoirs housed within the Alaska Native Language Archive. Published Yup'ik elders' memoirs offer rich descriptions of Yup'ik cultural histories, epistemologies, and statements about language, the expression and inclusion of which varies based on the interactional contexts, participant frameworks, and funding institutions through which they were produced. This study incorporates both indigenous and nonindigenous theoretical frameworks related to the process of entextualization, or text creation, and the transmission of cultural knowledge. Drawing from archival materials and interviews with participants involved in their production and

circulation, I identify the relevant linguistic ideologies and participant frameworks involved in the creation of these publications or "text artifacts" and frame my analysis with respect to the following research questions: How have published memoirs of Yup'ik elders emerged as a culturally salient genre of text? Who are the primary participants in the production, publication, and circulation of Yup'ik memoirs? How do issues of identity, agency, authenticity, and essentialism shape the form, thematic content, and circulation of Yup'ik memoirs in Alaska? This thesis seeks to identify the primary participants and ideologies contributing to the publication of Yup'ik elders' memoirs, as well as the visibility or erasure of these actors within the published text of the memoirs. I further explore the specific ways in which individual voices, tribal, political, and academic institutions and their ideological goals presuppose and contribute to broader cultural processes and shape the linguistic structure and content of textual artifacts produced.

Although the documentation, description, and analysis of Yup'ik language and culture have received sustained attention both within and outside the academy, this project is the first to investigate the processes and participant frameworks through which traditional Yup'ik cultural knowledge is entextualized and circulated as contemporary

published text. This research offers significant insights into the collaborative efforts of Native and non-Native participants in the production of Yup'ik textual materials, while also contributing to a broader understanding of ideological goals and obstacles relative to processes of entextualization within communities facing marginalization or language endangerment within, and outside of, the circumpolar north. An analysis of the participants and ideologies shaping the production and circulation of Yup'ik memoirs provides an empirical framework for understanding the relationship between text artifacts and ongoing cultural processes, and contributes to an increasingly reflexive approach to anthropological and sociolinguistic research concerning identity, authenticity, and the entextualization of traditional knowledge.

**FOR GENERATIONS TO COME:
EXPLORING LOCAL FISHERIES ACCESS
AND COMMUNITY VIABILITY IN
THE KODIAK ARCHIPELAGO**

Danielle J. Ringer

Master's thesis, 2016, College of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences,
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Online at <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1850206896?accountid=14470>

ABSTRACT

The sustainability of fisheries and fishing-dependent communities depends upon numerous political, cultural, economic, and ecological factors. My research explores a key threat to this sustainability in Alaska—the graying of the commercial fishing fleet. As current fishermen approach retirement age and a decreasing number of young people obtain ownership-level careers in Alaska's fisheries, succession impacts become an increasingly pressing issue. This research utilized a political ecology framework and mixed methods ethnography, including 70 semistructured interviews and 609 student surveys, to study local fisheries access and community viability in the Kodiak Archipelago communities of Kodiak City, Old Harbor, and Ouzinkie. This research documents barriers that fishermen face at different stages in their careers and describes related implications. Findings indicate that opportunities for rural youth and fishermen are increasingly constrained by interrelated economic and cultural barriers that have created equity and sustainability concerns.

Furthermore, research suggests that the privatization of fisheries access rights is a major catalyst of change that has amplified these barriers, generated social conflict, and resulted in a transformed paradigm of opportunity compared to decades past. Second, this research compares fishermen's identities and livelihood motivations to dominant framings in academic literature and policy realms. This comparison reveals that in-depth understandings of fishermen are not well explained by narrow economic assumptions and instead include broader social and cultural dimensions. Last, exploration of the entangled relationships between fisheries access and rural youth pathways demonstrates increasing pressures on coastal communities, such as globalization, outmigration, youth ambivalence, substance abuse, and overall constrained opportunities. Nonetheless, coastal communities are working towards increasing local resilience to external pressures through social network support, and some youth are bucking demographic trends by moving into fishing livelihoods. Due to the suite of threats facing fishing people and communities, it is increasingly important to have a deeper understanding of management impacts and local dynamics within fishing communities in order to plan for sustainable coastal futures.

**“GOING LOCAL FIRST”:
AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY ON A
NORTH SLOPE ALASKA COMMUNITY'S
PERCEPTIONS OF DEVELOPMENT
MEETINGS**

Inuuteq Heilmann Stotts

Master's thesis, 2016, Department of Anthropology,
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ABSTRACT

In this ethnographic study I demonstrate how eight Barrow, Alaska, entities communicate during meetings and how different Barrow groups perceive the stakeholder engagement process as it has taken place in the past 40 years with development organizations. This research was motivated by the limited research on locals' perspectives on development meetings. Nearly all the participants were men and identified themselves as Iñupiat; most had spent significant time in Barrow and in stakeholder en-

agement meetings. Interviews and participant observations reveal the complex communication practices in stakeholder engagement meetings, including local and external norms, the expression of common local concerns, nonverbal communication patterns, and the use of the Iñupiaq language. While many participants were tired of repeating their concerns, experienced meeting burnout, and were frustrated by outside groups “checking the box” (just going through the motions without real engagement), they also considered that the stakeholder engagement process has improved due to the increased benefits and diminished risk associated with development projects. Furthermore, participants’ explanations of the oil “seasons,” a term they use to describe fluctuating market conditions, align with the frequency distribution analysis conducted on stakeholder engagement meetings over the last decade. Recommendations derived from this research include a need for sharing of stakeholder perceptions and concerns, modifying cultural awareness sessions, consolidating all organizations’ stakeholder engagement meetings, and changing the format of public development organization meetings.