



Scott  
Polar  
Research  
Institute



# Reimagining the Poles: Shifting ideas of Wilderness and Extremes

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International Polar Educators Conference

April 6, 2019

## \* Clues to the Living Polar Regions

- Portraying either of the polar regions as barren shuts down a lot of possibilities for understanding.

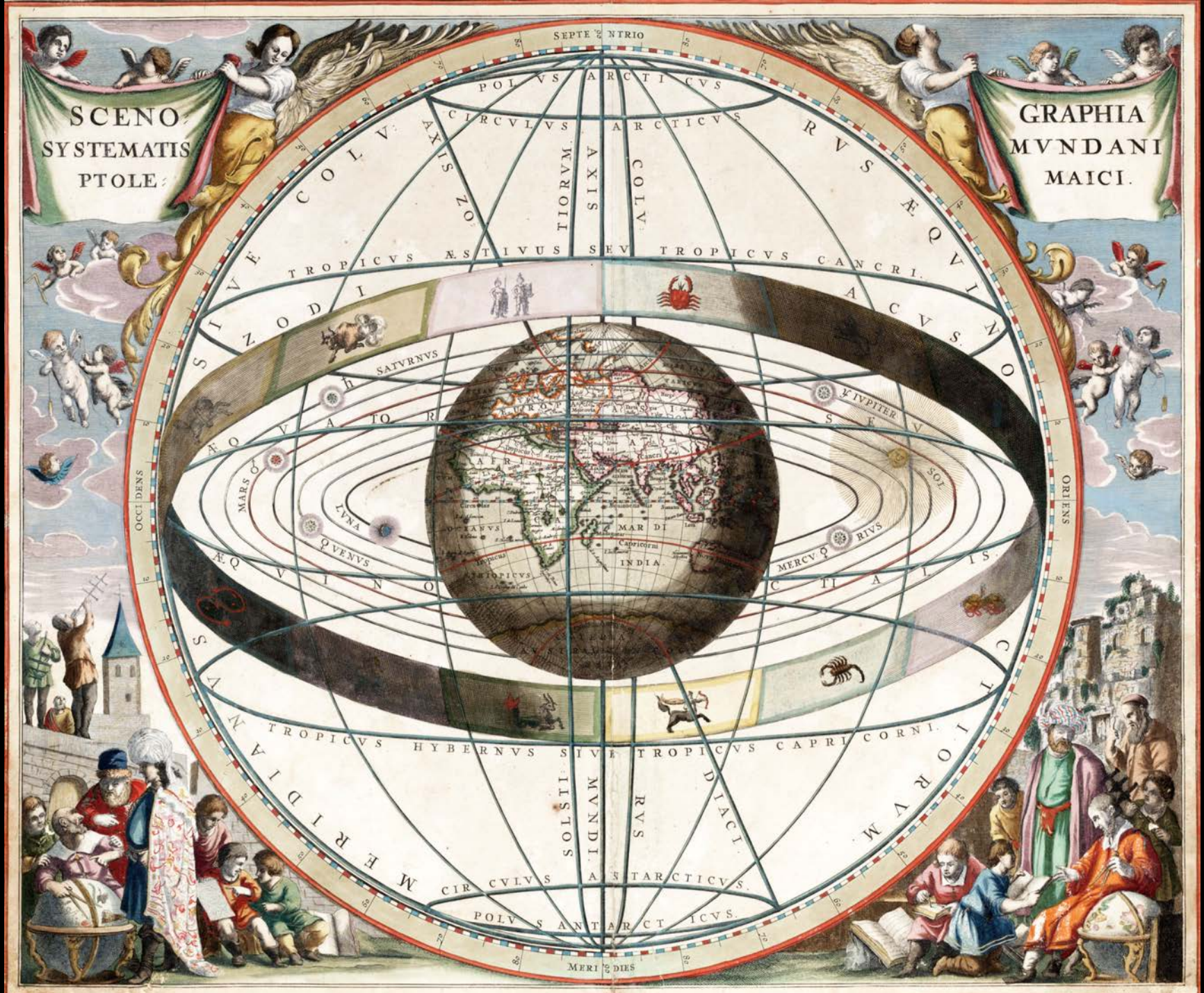




Understanding the Poles unlocks the questions about universal truth and who has the keys to the living polar regions.

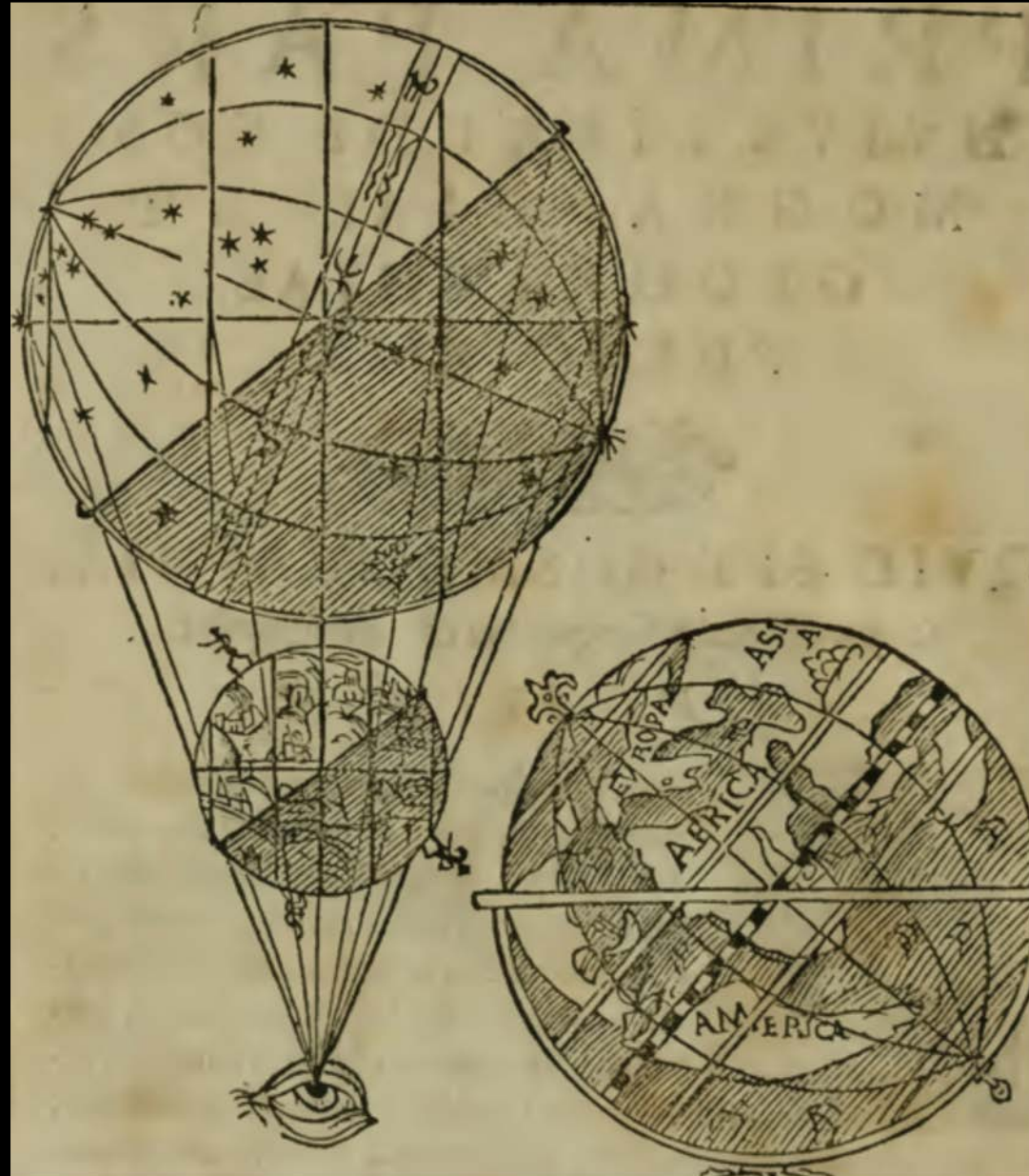
Key concepts:

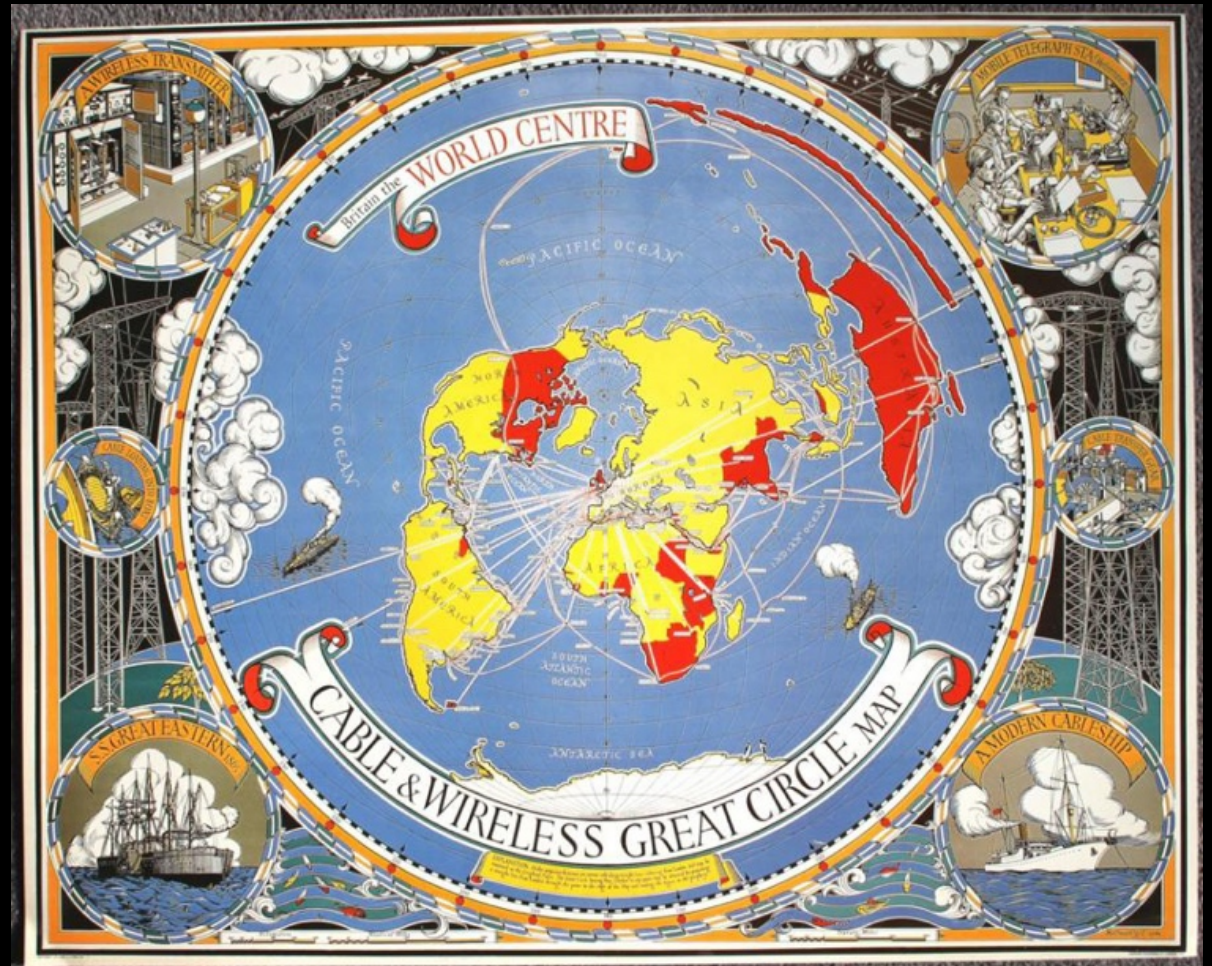
- Cosmography
- Polarity
- Globe
- Extremes
- Universal Truth





Peter Apian, bestselling  
author of cosmography  
influenced by  
Albrecht Dürer,  
1524, first edition





Planispheres and the Planet-Sphere  
MacDonald (Max) Gill, c. 1934,



Mercator's  
Polar Map  
c.1600



# A Question of Polar Orientation

Writing about the Arctic (from  
outside)?

*or*

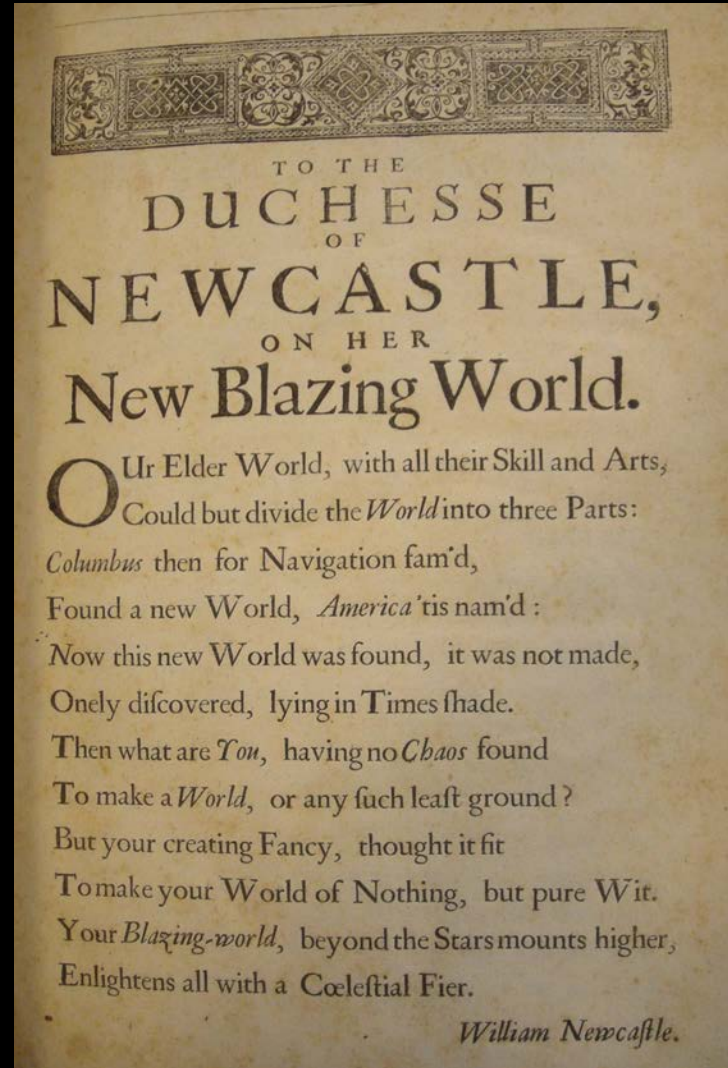
Writing from the Arctic (from  
within)?

- Tim Ingold, Boreas Project





Duchess of Newcastle

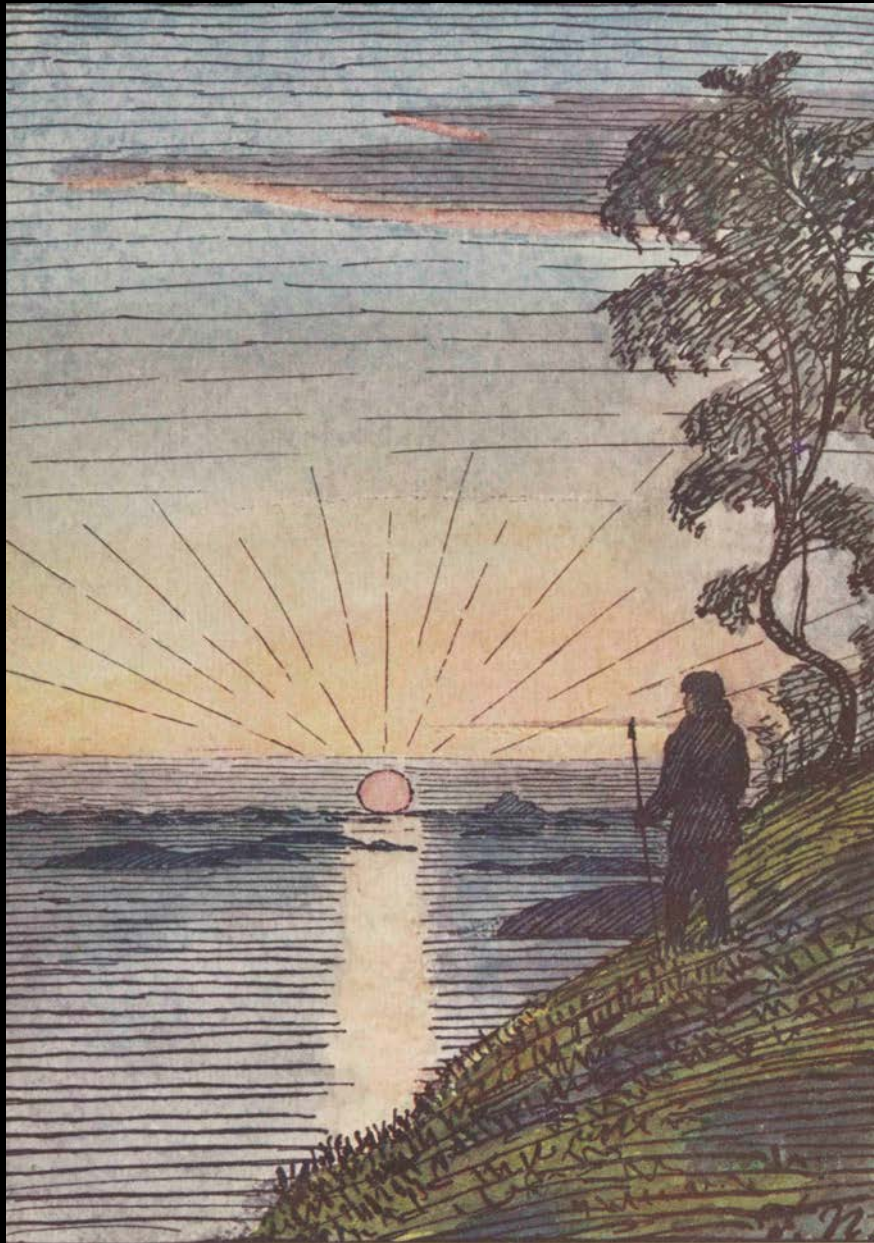


The Blazing World, 1666

Margaret Cavendish:  
 Science and Fantasy,  
 a Precursor to Mary  
 Shelley.  
 Reworks Gender and  
 the Poles from the  
 Interior.

For more, have a look  
 at my new book,  
*North Pole: Nature  
 and Culture 2019*





*The*  
**ARCTIC HOME**  
*in the*  
**VEDAS**

BookGanga.com



B. G. TILAK



Emil Immaruituq,  
Igloolik Elder, 1988.

How students can experience the polar regions  
as inhabited vacariously through embodiment and indigenous traditional knowledge





The Atlas is one of the outcomes of the project "The Northwest Passage and the Construction of Inuit pan-Arctic Identities" (funded by SSHRC—the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council), and co-directed by Claudio Aporta (Geography, University of Cambridge), Michael Bravo (Geography, University of Cambridge), and Fraser Taylor (Geomatics and Cartographic Research Centre, Carleton University). This project looks at Inuit occupancy of the Northwest Passage, through a study and documentation of traditional trails and place names, which have interconnected Inuit groups across the Arctic since time immemorial.

The two main research questions for this project are:

1. how extensive and significant is the historical Inuit presence along the Northwest Passage? and
2. how interconnected Inuit groups were before Europeans arrived?

This Atlas focuses on historical written evidence of Inuit presence in most of the Canadian Arctic. It contains a database of material obtained from hundreds of published and unpublished documents produced by explorers, ethnographers, and other visitors who were in contact with Inuit during the contact period or shortly before Inuit moved to permanent settlements. A very significant proportion of those trails and place names are still used today. The Atlas is a database where the sources can be found through searches, or clicking on features on the map. Each document has been given a geographic reference (which in some cases, it occupies the whole Canadian Arctic). Whenever possible Inuit place names and trails encountered in the documents were digitized separately.

It should be noted that accuracy of the geographic data is according to the cartographic techniques of the original sources and of the scale employed. This atlas does not attempt to provide precise local geographic locations, but a regional cross-regional sense of how intensively the waters and lands of the Northwest Passage were used by Inuit.

Class of 30 senior Cambridge Geography  
undergraduates

Immersive learning





Joanasie Makpah (above) with translator

Pairngut Peterloosie, Pond Inlet (r)





# Stefansson's Pole of Inaccessibility” Turning the Poles Inside Out

- Q: Does this map show an empty uninhabited Arctic (from above) or a space of dwelling (from within)?
- Ans: Both, *about* the Arctic and *from* the Arctic.





1. Review notes

2. Read Bates  
on Risk

3. Go through +1 (intranet);  
review Reading list; read Curtis;  
Prepare for Museum visit.

Organise notes and  
Photographs

Cultures of Risk  
lectures  
Donovan,  
Hulme



MGK  
lecture 1  
Risk and  
environmental  
uncertainty in  
other  
knowledge  
traditions or  
cultures  
Oct 24



MGK  
lecture 2  
Understanding  
object  
mobilities and  
histories in  
museum  
collections  
Nov 2nd



Polar Museum  
Visit  
Working with  
Objects  
Rotating  
through three  
stations  
Nov 5th



MGK  
lecture 3  
Reflecting on  
the Museum  
Visit and the +1  
Coursework  
Nov 21st

# Material Politics

This Inupiat (Alaska Inuit) bag was knitted by an Inuit person.

n.

Q: What is the bag knitted from?

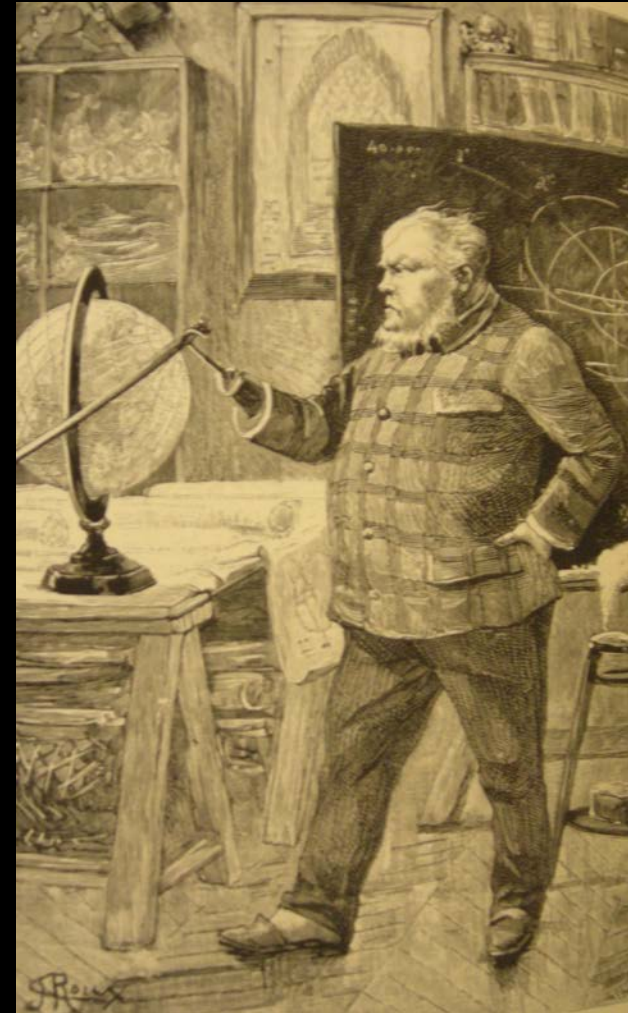
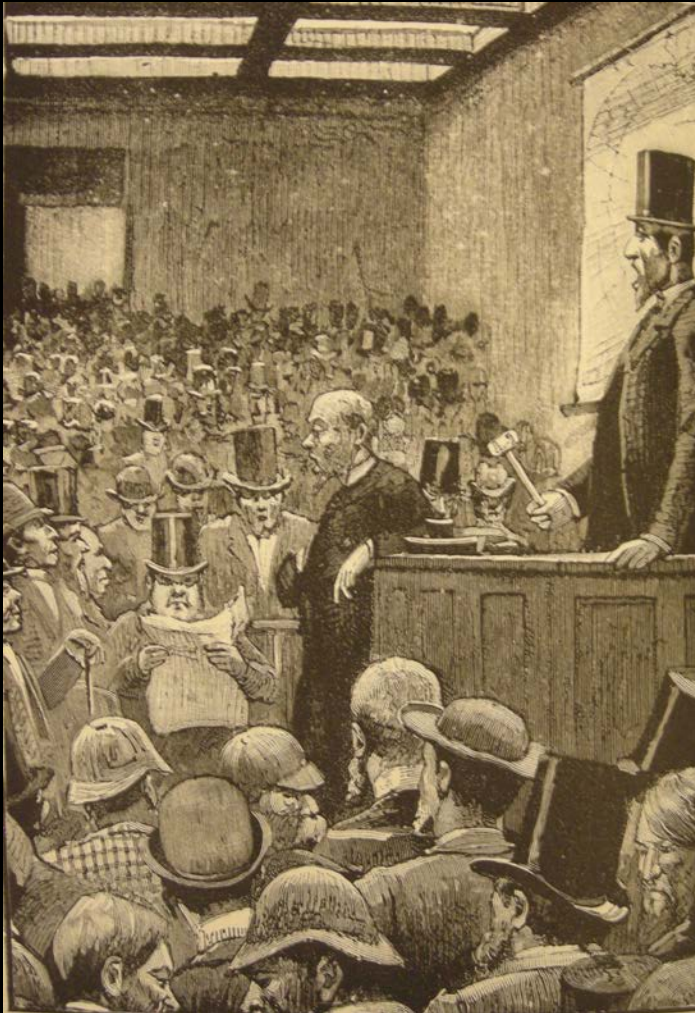
A: Plastic

Points for Reflection

- Is plastic an inauthentic material for Inuit culture?
- Does the dependency on northern towns and cities on hydrocarbons is a factor in your judgement?
- Does reuse (possibly 'upcycling') change the kind of object this is?







J Verne, *The Purchase of the North Pole*, 1891