

Wrapping the Body: Inuit Dolls as Fields of Real and Metaphorical Play

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Abstract. Miniature bodies performed multiple roles in past Inuit societies, as dolls, ornaments, personal amulets, and an assortment of magico-ritual devices. A particular genre of faceless, stub-armed wooden figurine is identical to those historically dressed in hide clothing and used primarily as girls' playthings and, although reasonably common on Inuit sites, they have attracted relatively little archaeological attention. The figural overlap of dolls with other Inuit miniatures is meaningful and points to their wider social and discursive connectivity: dolls were manufactured by adults, didactically clothed by adult seamstresses and older girls, and animated in younger children's imaginative play. Iconic constituents of a social technology of the body, dolls were tiny but richly vascularized ontobodies that were put to work in core cultural narratives regarding age, gender, selfhood, and the life course.

The body is the prototypical wrapped object, composed of a succession of complexly enveloping and interpenetrating layers: fluids are contained within cells that compose vessels and organs and are in turn scaffolded by bone, wreathed in muscle and connective tissue, and enfolded in skin. Animal bodies are finally sheathed in a protective and seductive outermost layer of scales, scutes, feathers, fur, chitin, or slime, but humans are unusual. Over our delicate skin, we retain only a sparse and patchy covering of hair, barely more than an elephant or a mole rat; we are unwrapped mammals. In place of our missing fur we cloak the body in a fabulous array of pigments, scents, cosmetics, clothing, jewelry, and equipment, setting up a persistent tension between an inner, naked body—a soft, vulnerable, “true” self—and a brittle, disingenuous, social surface.

This cultural intervention at the body's surface is nowhere so essential as in cold places. The body is at risk of hypothermia at even moderately cool temperatures, and exposed flesh freezes at the

very low temperatures that some people experience for parts of the year. Even the subtly cold-adapted bodies of Inuit (Steeermann 2007; but see Holliday and Hilton 2010) were usually enveloped in elaborate sartorial wrappings tailored to a variety of conditions and activities (Issenman 1997; Oakes 1991; Stenton 1991). Unfortunately, clothing does not survive well archaeologically. Recognizable Inuit hide garments are found only occasionally under the permafrost conditions that typically obtain on winter sites (e.g., McCullough 1989:190–199) and even more exceptionally in catastrophically abandoned dwellings (Dekin et al. 1990) or accidentally mummified burials (Møller 1989). In everyday practice, clothing seems to have been heavily recycled and so typically occurs as fragments or negative castoffs from sewing patterns, or is only implied by the recovery of bone needles, leather thimbles, and sinew thread.

In addition to direct evidence of real clothing and clothing manufacture, Inuit archaeologists

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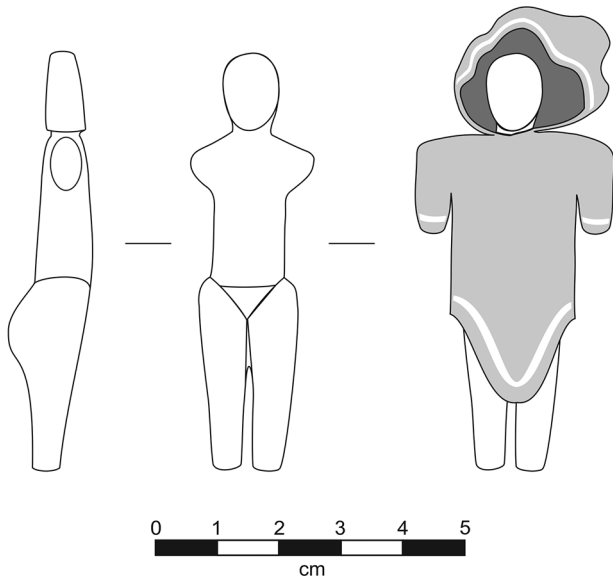


Figure 1. A characteristically faceless precontact Inuit doll and the sort of clothing (a parka or amauti with a much-enlarged hood forming a pouch to carry an infant) in which it might have been dressed in play.

frequently recover simple wooden figurines that are normally interpreted as dolls (Fig. 1) (e.g., Giddings 1964:Plate 32; Gulløv 1997:217–218; Park 1998, 2005; McGhee 1984:73; Schledermann and McCullough 2003). These are equivalent to ethnographic examples referred to as *inuujaq*, among other things, in the eastern Arctic (Schneider 1985) that were designed to wear clothing and figured mostly in girls' play (Laugrand and Oosten 2008; Linn and Lee 2006; Strickler and Alookey 1988). Playthings are one of the categories of evidence taken up by recent archaeologies of children, as markers of the distribution and content of children's activities, and of larger societal discourses on childhood, maturation, the body, learning, work, and play (see, e.g., Ardren and Hutson 2006; Baxter 2005; Cunnar and Högberg 2015; Lillehammer 2010; Moore and Scott 1997; Sofaer Derevenski 2000 for archaeological explorations of children and child's play, and Bailey 2005; Foxhall 2015 on the allied challenges of miniatures). The equally significant *absence* of formal toys has also been effectively finessed in more opaque archaeological contexts (Casella 2011; Hutson 2006), demonstrating the insistent visibility and interpretive accessibility of even the least visible actors. Children, after all, have always been present, and, as Hutson (2006) notes, we have all been children and so arguably trail this childhood residue into our adult lives.

Precontact Inuit dolls, however, are archaeologically widespread and reasonably distinctive,

though sometimes difficult to disentangle from other sorts of representations of the human body. They frequently incorporate some simple, integral elements of clothing or ornament, such as an incised triangular bikini or thong covering the pelvis, knee- or thigh-high boots, or an amulet strap crossed over the chest (Fig. 2), but very rarely retain separate items of clothing like those commonly accompanying ethnographic specimens (McCullough and Schledermann [2003:183] illustrate an exceptional doll wearing a simple hide pelvic covering). Although archaeologists normally lack what would surely be a fascinating body of evidence bearing on the technological intricacy and semantic elaboration of Inuit clothing and girls' work and play dolls nevertheless provide access to an array of core cultural discourses (Lima 2012). In the sense that they open onto numerous other experiential realms, to which they provide navigable interpretive pathways, dolls could be considered highly *vascularized* archaeological objects: significant nodes within the dense socio-semantic networks that composed past realities. They help draw a series of meaningful contrasts that, through the repeated wrapping and unwrapping enacted in the changing of dolls' clothing, were the objects of a playful reiteration: naked/clothed, indoors/outdoors, body/tool, play/work, surface/depth. However, the doll's miniature un/clothed body was not only the site of a performative play—a practical training for adult roles—but also of children's distinct and often uniquely personal engagements with wider cultural discourses on the self and sociality. This is the sort of crafty role to which miniature bodies seem particularly well-suited (Bailey 2005; Meskell 2015).

Wrapped Bodies

The notion of wrapping is an interesting vantage from which to consider the archaeological record since we encounter so much of the world at the remove of a layer (Harris and Douny 2014). Indeed, daily life involves a continuous passage through such membranes—we are perpetually opening doors, taking off bits of clothing, unwrapping purchases or gifts, sliding open drawers, removing laptop sleeves, opening books and software, and the reverse of all of these. The world is a harsh place; we need to protect our things and our bodies from moisture, heat, cold, sunlight, abrasion, and theft. We may also choose, or be culturally inclined, to cultivate privacy, or even secrecy, shrouding our things and our bodies from the prying eyes of competitors, predators, and the uninitiated. Or not. On the contrary, we may advertise our bodies or shield them from view in a playful or provocative way. Some of our earliest experiences of play are of peekaboo and hide-and-go-

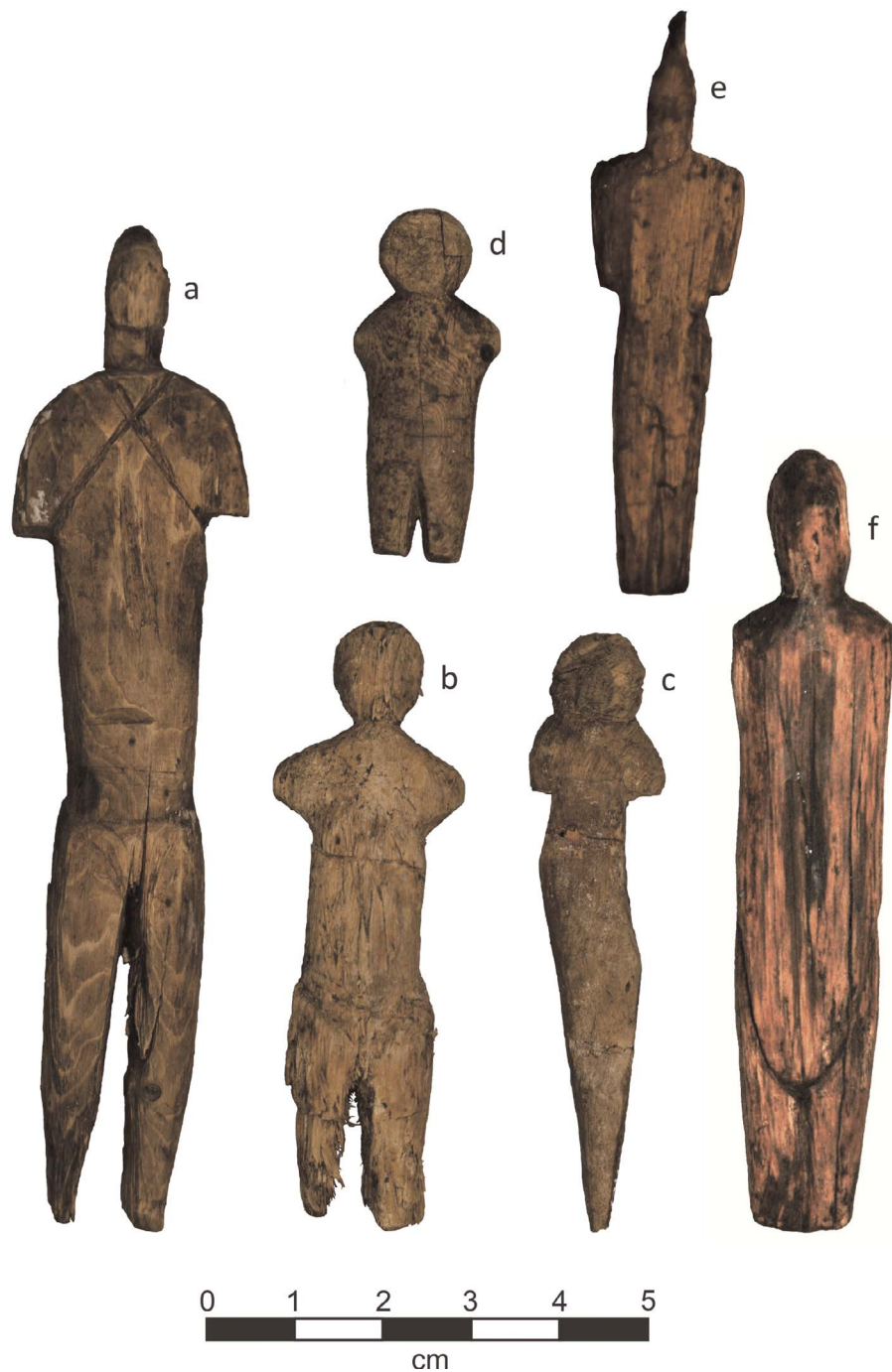


Figure 2. Wooden dolls from the precontact Inuit site of Qariaraqyuk (PaJs-2) on southeast Somerset Island (a–d) dating to ca. AD 1200–1450, and the precontact/early historic site of Nachvak Village (IgCx-3) in northern Labrador (e–f) dating to ca. AD 1450–1700: a. A likely adult male doll, based on the elongated upper body and neck, wearing an amulet strap (PaJs-2:2900); b. A likely juvenile female doll, based on the body shape and proportions, hip boots, and bikini (PaJs-2:3863); c. An unfinished doll emerging from a wood blank (PaJs-2:4010); d. A doll with infant body proportions (PaJs-2:366); e. A doll wearing an integral contact-era style of woman’s parka with a peaked hood (IgCx-3:4581); f. Back view of a doll of uncertain gender, probably adult, showing the sort of long parka tail that appears in both women’s and men’s 16th-century dress (IgCx-3:4934). Both sites are in the Canadian Arctic.

seek, in which we wrap our bodies (or merely our eyes) with whatever concealment is at hand. Wrapping is practical, meaningful, playful. We wrap many of our things—food, gifts, idols, gear—some of the time, but the body is the primordial wrapped object. We are swaddled as infants and bundled as corpses and, in between, clothe ourselves in a fantastical, ever-changing array of dress and adornment.

It is hardly surprising, then, that wrapping the body is the object of such a dedicated process of play and learning in so many times and places. Dressing up in full-fledged miniature costumes or discarded adult clothing is a common form of imaginative play in some settings but depends on the luxury of extra clothes. Dolls, however, can be made out of the simplest materials and their clothing, if any, from scraps (Ball 1967; Lenz 2004; Schwartzman 1976). Such simple dolls have probably been common in the past (e.g., De Maret 2016) but are rarely recognized archaeologically. Even when they do occur (and assuming they are identified as body simulacra), their identification as playthings may be fraught since anthropomorphic figurines can serve a variety of purposes. They may be votive objects, functional models, amulets, jewelry, or some other form of art or ritual device. More problematically still, they may have been more than one of these at once or at different moments in their life history (Crawford 2009; Laugrand and Oosten 2008; López-Bertran and Vives-Ferrándiz 2015; Whitridge 2016).

For example, sacrificed children at the precontact Inca site of Choquepukio (Andrusko et al. 2011) were associated with human and animal figurines of gold, silver, and *Spondylus* shell and tiny ceramic dishes. While these may all have been thought of as votive or other ritual offerings with esoteric mortuary meanings, consistent with their precious materials and depositional setting, their diminutive scale is consistent with that of the children themselves (seven individuals averaging 6.5 years of age), and so they seem to stand equally, semiotically, as toys. Within a similar vein, Ryan and Young (2013) report a doll-like wooden figurine from an Inuit burial cairn on Southampton Island that had been perforated in the face, chest, and pelvis, corresponding to skeletal pathologies in the interred adult woman (see Fig. 4e), and figurines were variously displayed in festival houses, installed next to doorways, used as grave markers, and worn as amulets and jewelry among Yupik, Inupiat, and Inuit groups (Fitzhugh and Driscoll Engelstad 2017; Linn and Lee 2006). Things never occupy such hermetic compartments that they cannot spill over into other uses, with other meanings (Whitridge 2004). The very act of considering them archaeologically already implies a series of such displacements—minimally, of ob-

jects into the archeological record, then into an archeological collection, and now into an archeological paper. And these displacements frequently involve novel sorts of wrappings—in sediment, paper bags, Ziplocs, boxes, cabinets, and academic prose. The archaeological notion of a wrapped body quickly colonizes other analytical domains, as does the miniature wrapped body of the Inuit doll.

Inuit Play

Dolls are just part of an elaborate array of miniatures, toys, and games that occur fairly regularly in Inuit assemblages in the eastern Arctic. Although early ethnographers paid scant attention to children and amusements, there is a slim ethnographic record bearing on the games that adults and children played that provides useful context for interpreting the archaeological material (e.g., Rasmussen 1929:244–250, 1931:356–362; Spencer 1959:188–191, 239–240; Turner [1894]2001:254–260; see archaeological discussions in Gulløv 1983; Kenyon and Arnold 1983; Park, 1998, 2005). By the 1960s, an anthropology of Inuit childhood had begun to emerge that took the practice of play to be an integral component of children's socialization (Briggs 1970, 1991, 1998; Guemple 1979; Lantis 1960; Spencer 1979). Several categories of ethnographic games and playthings can be distinguished: those associated only with girls, boys, women, or men, those shared by children, and those played by various members of the community. These include the competitive, and often violent, sports played by two men in the dance house, such as taking turns striking each other on the side of the head with a closed fist (Rasmussen 1929:244, 1931:358). The iconic woman's game in the eastern Arctic, also an important genre of performance, was throat singing, in which individuals faced each other at close range and produced striking sonorous effects by chanting into each other's open mouths (Nattiez 1983; Whitridge 2015). All adults and older children might participate in wide-ranging outdoor games of kickball (Turner [1894]2001:255). Cat's cradle (*siutaujaqtuqpuq*) was played by people of all ages and both sexes (though predominantly women and girls [Jenness, 1926]), as were the ring and pin game (*ajagaq*) and its multiperson variant (*nuglutang*). Both of the latter involved drilled seal-bone game pieces that commonly occur in precontact assemblages (e.g., McGhee 1984:143).

Children sometimes played with more-or-less genderless toys, such as bullroarers and small, flat-bottomed bird figurines that were tossed on a level surface in a game called *tingmiujaaq* (Boas [1888] 1964; Sproull Thomson 1979). Another popular game involved reaching into a bag of seal flipper

bones that had conventional fictive identities (woman, man, child, sled, dog, and the like) and constructing a narrative based on the pieces that were pulled out (Boas [1888]1964). Children played at a variety of athletic and imaginative games using only their bodies and things in their surroundings, but they also employed a concrete and sometimes strikingly sophisticated play technology. Boys, and to a lesser extent girls, played with miniature or mechanically simple weapons, including bows and arrows, harpoons, knives, bolas, and slings. Both boys and girls are reported to have been furnished with such miniature weapons and taught how to approach games by adults (Jenness 1922:170). Smaller children mimicked hunting, while older boys hunted small animals and competed in games of distance and accuracy (Walls 2012).

Girls, characteristically, played with dolls, as well as with miniature women's knives, lamps, and pots that resembled those with which they would increasingly be identified as they grew older. Playhouses made from snow blocks (Hawkes 1916:122) or cobble outlines (Hardenberg 2010) by both boys and girls (Jenness 1922:219) sometimes delimited domestic play spaces away from the family dwelling in which dolls' lives were animated. Boys are occasionally noted to have played with dolls (Linn and Lee 2006), like girls with hunting equipment, but the ethnographic reports suggest that children's activities were characterized by emergent gendered domains of play practice (Hawkes 1916:113), anticipating the frequently gender-differentiated routines that characterized adult social, ritual, and work life (e.g., summaries in Giffen 1930; Guemple 1986). Based on their ubiquity, dolls were clearly as important a part of Inuit girls' lives in the precontact past as they were historically, although they have received relatively little detailed anthropological attention. Within an extended discussion of toys and games, Rasmussen's entire commentary on Netsilingmiut dolls consists of the following: "*ino·jA·rtut (playing dolls)* The usual game of little girls" (Rasmussen 1931:356). Nelson (1899:342) nevertheless astutely recognized them to be "among the most interesting" of children's toys. Dolls were both more than playthings and of heightened significance precisely *as* playthings, the material residue of a childhood *social technology of the body*. The most intense period of doll play fell between younger childhood and adolescence, the key period of children's socialization into adult roles. Girls were not simply provided with complete dolls to play with but were expected to learn to manufacture the clothing they wore under the guidance of elder women (Linn and Lee 2006; Strickler and Alookey 1988) as "a regular part of girls' education" (Jenness 1946:144).

The engagement with dolls seems to have waned by early adolescence. Amongst Central Yupik, a girl was required to give away her dolls and other playthings after her first menstrual seclusion (Fienup-Riordan 1991:60).

Later historical and recent dolls often have a body made of stuffed, depilated animal skin or duffel that is covered with carefully constructed hide or fabric clothing (Jenness 1946; Linn and Lee 2006; Martens 2009; Strickler and Alookey 1988). These may have existed in precontact times but have not been recognized archaeologically. Another historic doll variant in the eastern Arctic consisted of a faceless, stylized wooden body with shoulders but essentially no arms (e.g., Boas [1888] 1964:163; Turner [1894]2001:259). The rationale for its stubby or absent arms was presumably to allow clothing to be slipped on and off the body more easily than if anatomically realistic appendages hung by its sides (Fig. 1). This form is identical to the wooden human figurines, invariably faceless and with stubs for arms, which frequently occur on precontact Inuit sites (Figs. 2 and 3). In a seminal paper on Inuit playthings Park (1998) tabulated 99 such dolls in 31 assemblages, or just over three per site. While it was relatively straightforward to compare counts of the various miniature tools that dominated the toy assemblages to those of their full-sized, working analogs (in general, the proportions were similar), the dolls, with human bodies as their presumed analogs, had to be dropped from much of the analysis. Nevertheless, dolls were common playthings: miniature women's tools account for only 14% of the toys in Park's sample, but dolls for 27%. They are not, however, the only miniature representations of bodies in Inuit assemblages.

Dolls and Doll-Like Figurines

In addition to wooden dolls, doll-like ivory or whale bone female figurines occur more occasionally on precontact Inuit sites (Figs. 3 and 4f). It is possible that some of these may actually have been intended as playthings, but they are typically much smaller than the wooden varieties (see below). Additionally, although ivory and bone female figurines closely resemble wooden dolls in overall form, they occasionally incorporate facial and other anatomical details, ornaments, and tattooing that the latter typically lack in the precontact eastern Arctic (e.g., Morrison 1983:165). They recall the still more richly decorated, and sometimes anatomically detailed, Old Bering Sea and Okvik (ca. AD 1–800) ivory female figurines from the western Arctic (Linn and Lee 2006; Mason 2016; Rainey 1941; Rudenko 1961) that are likely culturally ancestral to some of these precontact Inuit objects. It is not obvious whether the Old

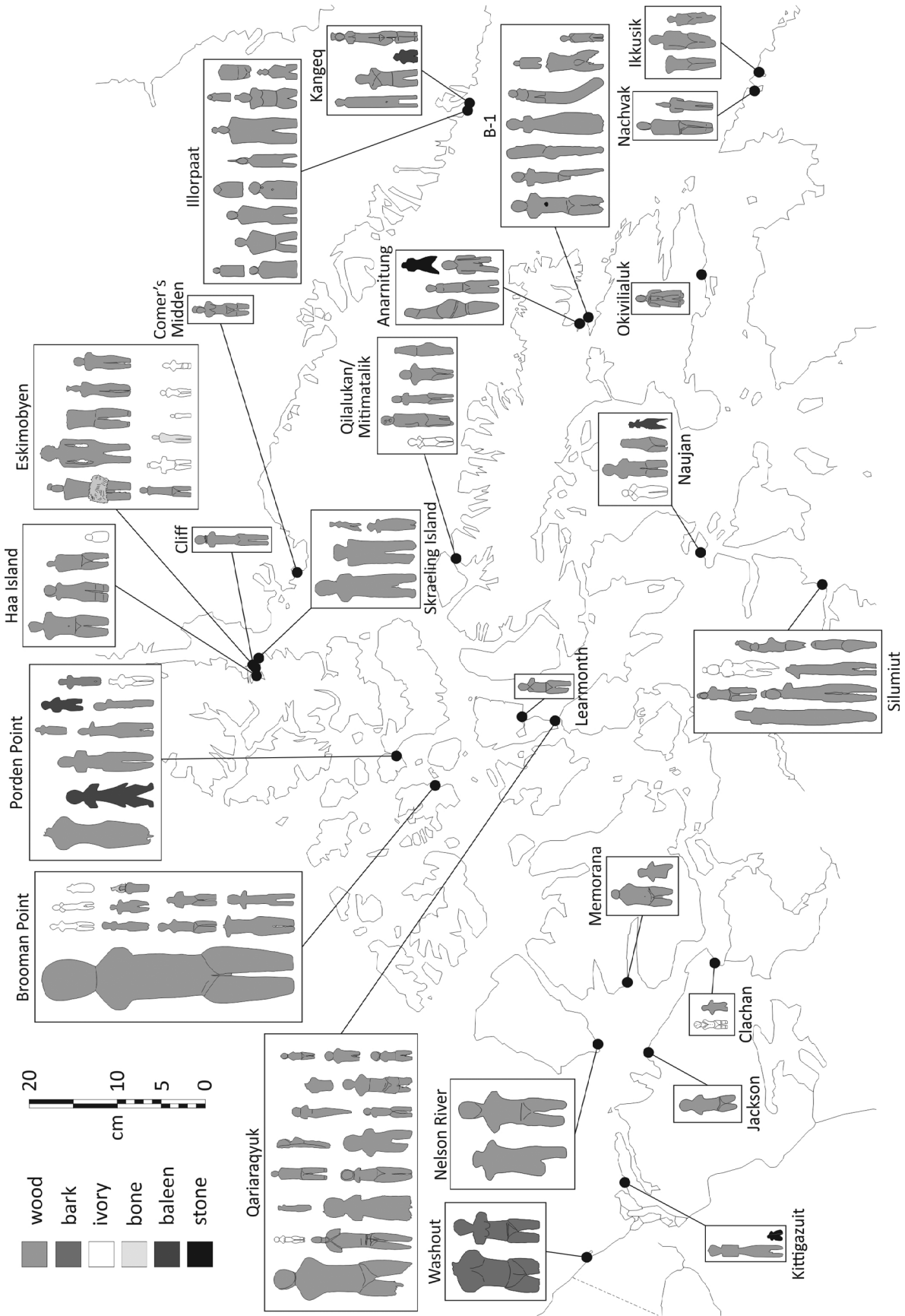


Figure 3. Map of the eastern Arctic showing human figurines of wood, ivory, and other materials (n = 119). Details of the illustrated objects are provided in Table 1.

Bering Sea objects figured in personal fertility magic or some form of specialist or communal religious practice, but a magico-ritual use seems likely given their frequent deliberate decapitation (Linn and Lee 2006). Like the latter, many precontact Inuit ivory figurines lack the piercings that allowed other sorts of figurative objects to be suspended from a cord or attached to another object, and they are typically much more finely executed than dolls (and in a more challenging medium). Ethnographically, analogous doll-like figurines were sometimes used in public rituals in North Alaska (Hawkes 1913; Rainey 1947), and personal amulets could take the form of miniature human bodies (Spencer 1959:282).

Another precontact Inuit variant of the human figurine is an ivory or tooth pendant depicting one or more female figures standing on a barrel-shaped bead (Fig. 4c) (e.g., Collins 1952; Holtved 1944; Maxwell 1985; McGhee 1984; Schlederermann and McCullough 2003). These are intriguing ornaments since they clearly resemble the stand-alone ivory figurines and wooden dolls, which lack an integral bead but sometimes seem to evoke a kind of female solidarity with multiple figures standing shoulder to shoulder, arms enveloping their neighbors. Like the dolls and figurines, they are faceless, reflecting the usual avoidance of human facial detail in precontact Inuit art and decoration. The varying number of figures suggests that a fixed set of individuals—perhaps characters in a myth or folktale—is not being depicted. The reference may be to particular women in the owner's kin group, circle of friends, or family history. The bead-like, and sometimes decorated, suspension arrangement suggests they may have been worn prominently on the body, presumably suspended around the neck. Single female figurines in ivory with a simpler gouged perforation for suspension, and sometimes apparently pregnant (Fig. 4d) (Mathiassen 1927:73), also occur and may overlap with the uses and meanings of these and the freestanding ivory miniatures, though their somewhat crude suspension arrangement suggests they may have been worn concealed.

Although the ubiquitous stub-armed, faceless, wooden figurines in precontact assemblages are convincingly interpreted as children's playthings, the rarer ivory variants are more plausibly identified as amulets, ornaments, or ritual objects that figured in other sorts of practices and discourses bearing on the female (typically) body. It is usually possible to distinguish likely dolls (Fig. 4a) from these objects on the basis of material, size, decoration, and/or allowance for suspension or fastening, but there is doubtless some overlap amongst these categories. Besides the magically pierced mortuary figurine reported by Ryan and Young (2013) (Fig. 4e), Sproull Thomson (1979:490), and per-

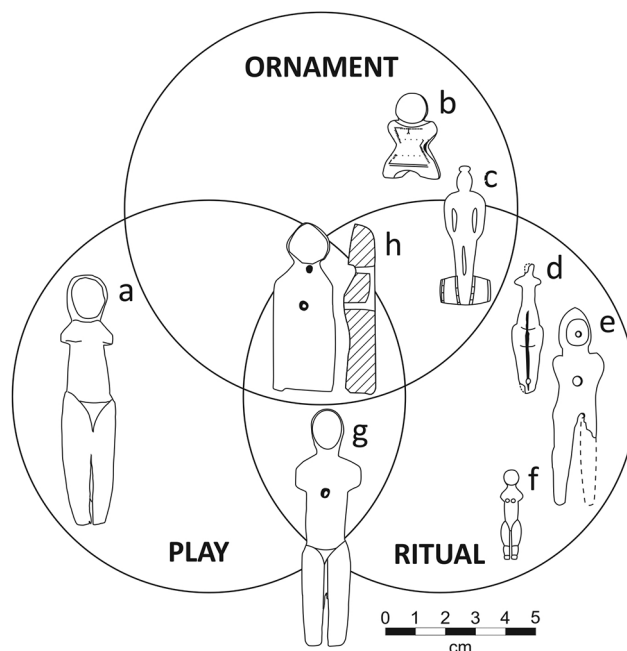


Figure 4. Representations of the human body from precontact (a–d, f) and historic (e, g, h) Inuit sites and their inferred association with play, medico-ritual practice, and/or ornament. Specimens a, e, g, and h are of wood, and b, c, d, and f are of ivory. Descriptions: a. a likely girl doll from Qariaraqyuk (PaJs-2:3316); b. an anthropomorphic ivory harpoon finger rest with clothing-like decoration (PaJs-2:1992); c. figurine with topknot hair-dressing, standing on a decorated, barrel-shaped bead from M-1, House B, Cornwallis Island (Collins 1952:60–61); d. figurine depicting an apparently pregnant woman, with a simple gouged hole for suspension from Naujan, House VIII, Repulse Bay (Mathiassen 1927: Plate 30); e. anatomically unusual doll-like figurine with drilled perforations in the pelvis, chest, and face from an adult Sadlermiut woman's grave (NP-127) on Southampton Island (KkHh-1:937) (Ryan and Young 2013:36); f. miniature doll-like ivory figurine (PaJs-2:4642); g. doll with pierced chest from Strathcona Sound (IX-C:751) (Sproull Thomson 1979:Fig. 1); h. doll with communicating holes drilled through the chest and neck from Illorpaat (igd 3525) (Gulløv 1997:217).

haps Schlederermann (1975:235), illustrate typical wooden dolls (the former of uncertain provenience, the latter from a domestic context) with a similar hole in the chest (Fig. 4g), and Gulløv (1997:217) illustrates a wooden doll-like specimen from southwest Greenland with two communicating holes, perhaps for fastening the figure to clothing (Fig. 4h). Anthropomorphic elements also sometimes figure in the design of more mundane items, such as a decorated harpoon finger rest in the shape of a person (Fig. 4b). While these sorts of representational overlaps potentially complicate

the analysis attempted here, the ambiguity seems interesting and important (Whitridge 2016) and suggests real conceptual resonances amongst doll play and other sorts of figural manipulation. The wooden epitomes of play practices that centered on family and group dynamics must have been recognizably consonant with medico-ritual devices, adult women's pregnancy-related magic, tool decoration, and the perhaps sentimental acknowledgment, through figurative ornament, of women's relationships with each other.

To get a clearer picture of archaeological dolls and doll-like figurines, illustrated examples from the eastern Arctic were identified in the published literature and together with unpublished specimens from Qariaraqyuk, Nachvak, and Ikkusik, are illustrated to scale in Figure 3 and tabulated in Table 1. An effort was made to achieve geographical breadth in this sample ($n = 119$), and the specimens range in age from early precontact Inuit (ca. AD 1200 or slightly earlier) to early historic (ca. AD 1800). Pierced ivory figurines clearly designed for upside-down suspension (like Figs. 4c and 4d) are excluded. Although wooden dolls like the ones considered here occasionally occur in later historic assemblages and ethnographic collections, they become increasingly variable in form and, from the late nineteenth century, were progressively supplanted by stuffed hide and duffel examples (Lee 2006; Martens 2009; Yukon Arts Centre 2010) that are beyond the scope of this article.

Despite some formal variability, there is a great deal of consistency in the doll assemblages. The bulk of human figurines in the current sample is made of wood (80%), but a significant subset (12%) are ivory, and smaller numbers of baleen, stone, bark, and bone specimens also occur (Tables 1 and 2). The unusual abundance of ivory figurines in the later precontact assemblage from Eskimobyen might arguably be due to a high Arctic scarcity of driftwood, but it is suggested here that these specimens represent a distinct variety of figurine within the eastern Arctic sample. The 14 ivory and one whale bone figurine average 43.5 mm in height, as compared to 79.0 mm for the 95 wood and two bark specimens. Although they overlap the latter's height distribution (Fig. 5), the ivory and bone specimens are clearly clustered close to the left tail, along with the baleen and stone examples (which average 54.8 and 34.3 mm, respectively). While the present data do not allow for a definitive discrimination of the ivory and wood figurines, a plausible argument can be made for a functional difference, with the wood examples related primarily (although not exclusively, as Ryan and Young [2013] note) to children's play, while the much more labor intensive ivory examples may have more often assumed magical or ritual functions. Besides the significantly greater

challenge of working ivory as compared to wood, most ivory originated in a logistically complex walrus harvest and trade that involved substantial labor, organization, risk, time, and equipment. A piece of wood adequate for carving a doll could have been collected on tundra or beach almost anywhere. The elaborately decorated ivory example from Clachan, with its unusual facial, skeletal and costume details, likewise hints at the symbolic weight of this contrast.

Where there is some basis for inferring the gender of the figure based on clothing, hairstyle, and/or anatomy, females appear to be represented more than three times as often as males. Indeed, many of the most common figural details are taken to denote a woman or girl (in declining order of occurrence: hip boots, bikini or thong [see Mønsted 2022:191–193 for an interesting interpretation of these garments], breasts, top knot, hair bun, and peaked hood). Top knots occur only on specimens from Greenland, Ellesmere Island, and, intriguingly, the site of Silumiut on northwest Hudson Bay. A hair bun projecting from the back of the head occurs on one doll at the western edge of the sample (Washout) and three from the central area (Learmonth and Qariaraqyuk). Dolls appear to depict infants, children, and adults based on body proportions and distinctive features such as breasts or topknot, but the precise age grouping is often impossible to gauge. Only seven dolls are tentatively identified as representations of infants, based on a distinctly shortened torso and legs relative to the size of the head (e.g., Fig. 2d). Crossed lines over the chest, likely representing an amulet strap, occur on seven specimens, including three presumed male, one female, and three of uncertain gender. The specimens from Illorpaat (Fig. 3) are unusual in representing arms by angular projections just below shoulder level, or not at all, rather than by rounded stubs. This was noted on at least one of the wood specimens and one of the ivory specimens from Ellesmere Island (though others hint at this morphology), one of the wood specimens from Qariaraqyuk, and perhaps one of the dolls from Nachvak, raising the possibility that distinctive doll styles were shared over wide areas through movement of individuals or families or that the dolls themselves were sometimes exchanged over large distances. Four figures exhibit plausible Norse costume details, including three from Greenland and Ellesmere Island wearing apparent cowls and one from Okivilialuk wearing a split front tunic with a cross ornamentation and possible cowl (Sabo and Sabo 1978; see also Gulløv [1983] for additional Inuit depictions of Norse from Greenland). Inuit dolls yield an array of evidence bearing on play, dress, cultural interactions, and, as argued below, conceptions of the body and self and merit closer scrutiny.

Table 1. Inuit dolls and doll-like figurines from the eastern Arctic, listing site name, Borden number, the key to doll location in Figure 3, height (in mm), surviving proportion of actual doll height (as %), estimated total doll height (mm), inferred gender based on clothing and body form (female, male or unknown), and bibliographic reference.

Site	Borden No.	Figure 3 Key	Material	Actual Height (mm)	Estimated Completeness (%)	Estimated Height (mm)	Gender	Details of Dress/Anatomy	Reference
Washout	NjVi-2	left	bark	99	70	141	female	bikini, hip boots, breasts	Yorga 1979:125, plate 28A
Washout	NjVi-2	right	bark	94	100	94	female	bikini, hip boots, breasts, hair bun at back	Yorga 1979:125, plate 28B
Kittegazuut	NiTr-2	left	wood	110	100	110	uncertain	unfinished?	McGhee 1974:plate 11o
Kittegazuut	NiTr-2	right	stone	23	100	23	uncertain	—	McGhee 1974:plate 7g
Jackson	OaRn-2		wood	65	100	65	female	bikini, hip boots	Taylor 1972:24, plate III
Nelson River	OhRh-1	left	wood	112	90	124	female	bikini, breasts	Kenyon and Arnold 1985:349, Figure 1a
Nelson River	OhRh-1	right	wood	123	100	123	female	bikini	Kenyon and Arnold 1985:349, Figure 1b
Memorana	OdPq-1	left	wood	70	100	70	female	bikini, hip boots, navel	McGhee 1972:36, plate Vb
Memorana	OdPq-1	right	stone	39	100	39	uncertain	—	McGhee 1972:36, plate Vc
Clachan	NaPi-2	left	ivory	37	100	37	female	bikini, hip boots, knee boots, neck/chest/brow ornament, facial details, skeletal motifs	Morrison 1983:165–166, plate 26d
Clachan	NaPi-2	right	wood	28	95	29	uncertain	—	Morrison 1983:165–166, plate 26e
Brooman Point	QiLd-1	far left	wood	294	100	294	female	hip boots	McGhee 1984:73, plate 24a

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued)

Site	Borden No.	Figure 3 Key	Material	Actual Height (mm)	Estimated Completeness (%)	Estimated Height (mm)	Gender	Details of Dress/Anatomy	Reference
Brooman Point	QiLd-1	row 1 left	ivory	50	100	50	female	hip boots	McGhee 1984:73, plate 24b
Brooman Point	QiLd-1	row 1 middle	ivory	46	100	46	uncertain	amulet strap, hip boots?	McGhee 1984:73, plate 24c
Brooman Point	QiLd-1	row 1 right	ivory	30	100	30	uncertain	—	McGhee 1984:73, plate 24e
Brooman Point	QiLd-1	row 2 left	wood	54	100	54	uncertain	—	McGhee 1984:73, plate 24h
Brooman Point	QiLd-1	row 2 middle	wood	46	100	46	female	hip boots	McGhee 1984:73, plate 24i
Brooman Point	QiLd-1	row 2 right	wood	36	60	60	uncertain	hood (excluded from height estimate)	McGhee 1984:73, plate 24k
Brooman Point	QiLd-1	row 3 left	wood	68	100	68	female	bikini?, hip boots	McGhee 1984:73, plate 24g
Brooman Point	QiLd-1	row 3 right	wood	58	100	58	female	bikini?, hip boots, breasts?	McGhee 1984:73, plate 24f
Brooman Point	QiLd-1	row 4 left	wood	83	85	98	female	hip boots	McGhee 1984:73, plate 24j
Brooman Point	QiLd-1	row 4 right	wood	79	100	79	male	—	McGhee 1984:73, plate 24i
Porden Point	RbJr-1	lower 1	wood	126	90	140	uncertain	—	Park 1989:Figure 16v
Porden Point	RbJr-1	lower 2	baleen	99	100	99	uncertain	—	Park 1989:Figure 16bb
Porden Point	RbJr-1	lower 3	wood	109	100	109	uncertain	—	Park 1989:Figure 18r
Porden Point	RbJr-1	lower 4	wood	94	100	94	female	hip boots	Park 1989:Figure 14o
Porden Point	RbJr-1	lower 5	wood	75	100	75	uncertain	—	Park 1989:Figure 14n
Porden Point	RbJr-1	lower 6	ivory	51	100	51	female	hip boots, top knot	Park 1989:Figure 18p

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued)

Site	Borden No.	Figure 3 Key	Actual Height		Estimated Height (mm)	Gender	Details of Dress/Anatomy		Reference
			Material	Completeness (%)			Material	Anatomy	
Porden Point	RbJr-1	upper 1	wood	36	100	uncertain	—	—	Park 1989:Figure 20k
Porden Point	RbJr-1	upper 2	baleen	47	100	uncertain	—	—	Park 1989:Figure 18q
Porden Point	RbJr-1	upper 3	wood	48	100	uncertain	—	—	Park 1989:Figure 30o
Qariaragyuk	PaJs-2	lower 1	wood	157	90	female	bikini, hip boots, breasts	Whitridge 1999; PaJs-2:3365	
Qariaragyuk	PaJs-2	lower 2	wood	112	100	male	amulet strap, long trousers	Whitridge 1999; PaJs-2:2900	
Qariaragyuk	PaJs-2	lower 3	wood	96	100	uncertain	unfinished	Whitridge 1999; PaJs-2:2003	
Qariaragyuk	PaJs-2	lower 4	wood	81	100	female	bikini, hip boots, hair bun at back	Whitridge 1999; PaJs-2:3316	
Qariaragyuk	PaJs-2	lower 5	wood	77	100	uncertain infant	—	Whitridge 1999; PaJs-2:13	
Qariaragyuk	PaJs-2	lower 6	wood	55	100	uncertain	hip boots?	Whitridge 1999; PaJs-2:2225	
Qariaragyuk	PaJs-2	lower 7	wood	78	100	female	bikini, hip boots, breasts	Whitridge 1999; PaJs-2:3863	
Qariaragyuk	PaJs-2	lower 8	wood	46	100	male	long trousers	Whitridge 1999; PaJs-2:3051	
Qariaragyuk	PaJs-2	upper 1	ivory	35	100	female	knee boots, hip boots, breasts	Whitridge 1999; PaJs-2:968	
Qariaragyuk	PaJs-2	upper 2	wood	38	95	female	hip boots	Whitridge 1999; PaJs-2:2276	
Qariaragyuk	PaJs-2	upper 3	wood	64	100	male	long trousers	Whitridge 1999; PaJs-2:2136	
Qariaragyuk	PaJs-2	upper 4	wood	61	80	female	—	Whitridge 1999; PaJs-2:2869	

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued)

Site	Borden No.	Figure 3 Key	Material	Actual Height (mm)	Estimated Completeness (%)	Estimated Height (mm)	Gender	Details of Dress/Anatomy	Reference
Qariaraqyuk	PaJs-2	upper 5	wood	69	100	69	female	hip boots?, hair bun at back	Whitridge 1999; PaJs-2:4010
Qariaraqyuk	PaJs-2	upper 6	wood	33	60	55	uncertain	—	Whitridge 1999; PaJs-2:2919
Qariaraqyuk	PaJs-2	middle right	wood	40	100	40	uncertain infant	—	Whitridge 1999; PaJs-2:366
Qariaraqyuk	PaJs-2	upper 7	wood	38	100	38	female	bikini, hip boots	Whitridge 1999; PaJs-2:43
Learmonth	PeJr-1		wood	60	100	60	female	amulet strap, bikini, hip boots, hair bun at back	Taylor and McGhee 1979:107, plate 14b
Silumiut	KkJg-1	lower 1	wood	166	175	95	uncertain	—	McCartney 1977:275, Plate 41A
Silumiut	KkJg-1	lower 2	wood	135	100	135	female	hip boots, top knot	McCartney 1977:275, Plate 41B
Silumiut	KkJg-1	lower 3	wood	106	90	118	female	—	McCartney 1977:275, Plate 41C
Silumiut	KkJg-1	lower 4	wood	75	85	88	female	—	McCartney 1977:275, Plate 41E
Silumiut	KkJg-1	upper 1	wood	68	100	68	female	hip boots, bikini, top knot	McCartney 1977:275, Plate 41D
Silumiut	KkJg-1	upper 2	ivory	87	100	87	female	top knot, hip boots, breasts, “severed arm”	Ryan and Young 2013:40, Figure 6
Silumiut	KkJg-1	upper 3	wood	81	100	81	female	top knot	McCartney 1977:275, Plate 41F
Naujan	MdHs-1	1	ivory	53	100	53	uncertain	amulet strap	Mathiassen 1927:75, plate 32.7
Naujan	MdHs-1	2	wood	76	100	76	uncertain	—	Mathiassen 1927:75, plate 32.8
Naujan	MdHs-1	3	wood	56	90	62	female	hip boots	Mathiassen 1927:75, plate 32.9

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued)

Site	Borden No.	Figure 3 Key	Material	Actual Height (mm)	Estimated Completeness (%)	Estimated Height (mm)	Gender	Details of Dress/Anatomy		Reference
								Material	Gender	
Naujan	MdHs-1	4	baleen	46	100	46	uncertain	—	—	Mathiassen 1927:75, plate 32.10
Haa Island	SgFq-1	1	wood	90	100	90	female	bikini, hip boots	—	McCullough and Schlederermann 2003:103–104, plate 47d
Haa Island	SgFq-1	2	wood	73	100	73	uncertain infant	—	—	McCullough and Schlederermann 2003:103–104, plate 47e
Haa Island	SgFq-1	3	wood	70	100	70	male?	bikini, hip boots	—	McCullough and Schlederermann 2003:103–104, plate 47i
Haa Island	SgFq-1	4	ivory	26	100	26	uncertain	no legs, cowl?	—	McCullough and Schlederermann 2003:103–104, plate 47p
Cliff	SgFo-1		wood	84	100	84	female	hip boots, sinew cord at neck	—	McCullough and Schlederermann 2003:103–104, plate 47f
Eskimobyen	SgFm-4	upper 1	wood	94	100	94	female	top knot, fur brief	—	McCullough and Schlederermann 2003:103–104, plate 47a
Eskimobyen	SgFm-4	upper 2	wood	102	100	102	male	—	—	McCullough and Schlederermann 2003:103–104, plate 47c
Eskimobyen	SgFm-4	upper 3	wood	73	80	91	female	bikini, hip boots	—	McCullough and Schlederermann 2003:103–104, plate 47j

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued)

Site	Borden No.	Figure 3 Key	Material	Actual Height (mm)	Estimated Completeness (%)	Estimated Height (mm)	Gender	Details of Dress/Anatomy	Reference
Eskimobyen	SgFm-4	upper 4	wood	73	100	73	female	top knot	McCullough and Schlederermann 2003:103–104, plate 47b
Eskimobyen	SgFm-4	upper 5	wood	65	100	65	female	—	McCullough and Schlederermann 2003:103–104, plate 47g
Eskimobyen	SgFm-4	lower 1	wood	59	100	59	female	bikini	McCullough and Schlederermann 2003:103–104, plate 47h
Eskimobyen	SgFm-4	lower 2	ivory	51	100	51	female	top knot	McCullough and Schlederermann 2003:103–104, plate 47k
Eskimobyen	SgFm-4	lower 3	bone	46	100	46	male?	—	McCullough and Schlederermann 2003:103–104, plate 47l
Eskimobyen	SgFm-4	lower 4	ivory	25	100	25	uncertain	no legs	McCullough and Schlederermann 2003:103–104, plate 47m
Eskimobyen	SgFm-4	lower 5	ivory	34	100	34	female	hip boots	McCullough and Schlederermann 2003:103–104, plate 47 n
Eskimobyen	SgFm-4	lower 6	ivory	32	100	32	uncertain	no legs	McCullough and Schlederermann 2003:103–104, plate 47o

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued)

Site	Borden No.	Figure 3 Key	Actual Height		Estimated Completeness (%)	Estimated Height (mm)	Gender	Details of Dress/Anatomy		Reference
			Material	(mm)						
Skraeling Island	SfFk-4	lower 1	wood	115	100	115	female	bikini, breasts	McCullough 1989:215, plate 65h	
Skraeling Island	SfFk-4	lower 2	wood	94	100	94	female	bikini, knee boots	McCullough 1989:215, plate 65i	
Skraeling Island	SfFk-4	lower 3	wood	56	100	56	uncertain infant	—	McCullough 1989:215, plate 65j	
Skraeling Island	SfFk-4	upper	wood	36	100	36	uncertain	—	McCullough 1989:215, plate 65k	
Qilalukan/Mitimatalik	PeFs-1/PeFr-1	1	ivory	52	100	52	uncertain	amulet strap, bikini	Mathiassen 1927:187-188, plate 57.15	
Qilalukan/Mitimatalik	PeFs-1/PeFr-1	2	wood	82	100	82	male	long-tailed parka, short trousers, knee boots, facial details	Mathiassen 1927:187-188, plate 57.16	
Qilalukan/Mitimatalik	PeFs-1/PeFr-1	3	wood	71	100	71	female	hip boots	Mathiassen 1927:187-188, plate 57.17	
Qilalukan/Mitimatalik	PeFs-1/PeFr-1	4	wood	63	100	63	uncertain	bikini, hip boots	Mathiassen 1927:187-188, plate 57.18	
Qilalukan/Mitimatalik	PeFs-1/PeFr-1	5	wood	69	85	81	female	knee boots	Mathiassen 1927:187-188, plate 57.19	
Comer's Midden			wood	65	100	65	female	knee boots, hip boots, bikini, top knot, breasts	Mathiassen 1927:299, plate 78.16	
Okivilialuk	KeDq-7		wood	54	100	54	male	cowl, split-front cassock with decorative hem, chest panel with cross	Sabo 1991:320, Plate 3	

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued)

Site	Borden No.	Figure 3 Key	Material	Actual Height (mm)	Estimated Completeness (%)	Estimated Height (mm)	Gender	Details of Dress/Anatomy	Reference
Anarnitung	MbDj-1	lower 1	wood	111	90	123	female	knee boots, hip boots	Schledermann 1975:137, plate 48a
Anarnitung	MbDj-1	lower 2	wood	84	100	84	female	hip boots, bikini, breasts	Schledermann 1975:137, plate 48g
Anarnitung	MbDj-1	lower 3	wood	65	100	65	male	—	Schledermann 1975:137, plate 48f
Anarnitung	MbDj-1	upper	stone	41	100	41	uncertain	—	Schledermann 1975:137, plate 48k
B-1	LIDj-1	lower 1	wood	109	95	115	female	hip boots	Schledermann 1975:137, plate 48b
B-1	LIDj-1	lower 2	wood	109	100	109	female	hip boots, bikini	Schledermann 1975:137, plate 48c
B-1	LIDj-1	lower 3	wood	116	90	129	uncertain	knee boots	Schledermann 1975:137, plate 48d
B-1	LIDj-1	lower 4	wood	116	150	77	uncertain	—	Schledermann 1975:137, plate 48e
B-1	LIDj-1	lower 5	wood	103	240	43	male	long trousers	Schledermann 1975:137, plate 48j
B-1	LIDj-1	lower 6	wood	65	80	81	uncertain	—	Schledermann 1975:137, plate 48i
B-1	LIDj-1	lower 7	wood	49	100	49	male	amulet strap, long parka	Schledermann 1975:137, plate 48h
B-1	LIDj-1	upper	wood	29	100	29	uncertain infant	—	Schledermann 1975:137, plate 48l

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued)

Site	Borden No.	Figure 3 Key	Material	Actual Height (mm)	Estimated Completeness (%)	Estimated Height (mm)	Gender	Details of Dress/Anatomy	Reference
Nachvak	IgCx-3	left	wood	88	100	88	female	bikini, long-tailed parka	Whitridge 2006; IgCx-3:4934
Nachvak	IgCx-3	right	wood	66	100	66	female	peaked hood	Whitridge 2006; IgCx-3:4581
Ikkusik	IdCr-2	1	wood	54	85	64	female	hip boots	Schledermann 1971:56, plate 8c
Ikkusik	IdCr-2	2	wood	74	100	74	female	hip boots	Schledermann 1971:56, plate 8d
Ikkusik	IdCr-2	3	wood	54	100	54	female	hip boots	Schledermann 1971:89, plate 18g
Illorpaat	lower 1		wood	54	100	54	male	no legs	Gulløv 1997:216–217; igd 3536
Illorpaat	lower 2		wood	70	100	70	male	long trousers?	Gulløv 1997:216–217; igd 4074
Illorpaat	lower 3		wood	80	100	80	male	hip boots?	Gulløv 1997:216–217; igd 3708
Illorpaat	lower 4		wood	55	100	55	male	no legs; communicating holes drilled through neck & chest	Gulløv 1997:216–217; igd 3525
Illorpaat	lower 5		wood	87	100	87	female	peaked hood	Gulløv 1997:216–217; igd 3437
Illorpaat	lower 6		wood	106	100	106	female	top knot	Gulløv 1997:216–217; igd 3670
Illorpaat	lower 7		wood	75	100	75	female	top knot, long trousers, breasts	Gulløv 1997:216–217; igd 2264
Illorpaat	lower 8		wood	50	100	50	female	top knot, hip boots	Gulløv 1997:216–217; igd 3870

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued)

Site	Borden No.	Figure 3 Key	Material	Actual Height (mm)	Estimated Completeness (%)	Estimated Height (mm)	Gender	Details of Dress/Anatomy	Reference
Illorpaat	upper 1		wood	35	100	35	male	infant	Gulløv 1997:216–217; igd 3667
Illorpaat	upper 2		wood	34	100	34	male	cowl?	Gulløv 1997:216–217; igd 360
Illorpaat	upper 3		wood	27	100	27	female	cowl?	Gulløv 1997:216–217; igd 3924
Illorpaat	upper 4		wood	40	65	62	female	bikini?	Gulløv 1997:216–217; igd 1840
Kangeq	1		wood	91	100	91	uncertain	navel	Gulløv 1997:313; L13.3241
Kangeq	2		wood	70	100	70	male	amulet straps, long trousers	Gulløv 1997:313; L13.3460
Kangeq	3		baleen	27	100	27	uncertain infant	—	Gulløv 1997:313; L13.3450
Kangeq	4		wood	97	100	97	female	bikini, top knot, knee boots, hip boots, breasts	Gulløv 1997:313; L13.3490

Table 2. Summary characteristics of dolls and doll-like figurines from Table 1.

Attribute	n	%
wood	95	80
ivory	14	12
baleen	4	3
stone	3	3
bark	2	2
bone	1	1
total	119	101
female	61	51
male	19	16
undetermined	39	33
	119	100
hip boots	43	36
bikini	33	28
breasts	13	11
top knot	13	11
knee boots	9	8
crossed amulet strap	7	6
infant body proportions	7	6
long trousers	7	6
hair bun at back	4	3
cowl	4	3
long-tailed parka	3	3
navel	2	2
facial details	2	2
peaked hood	2	2
neck/chest ornament	1	1
brow band	1	1
skeletal motif	1	1
short trousers	1	1
cassock	1	1
cross on chest	1	1
attached fur hood	1	1
attached fur brief	1	1
attached neck cord	1	1

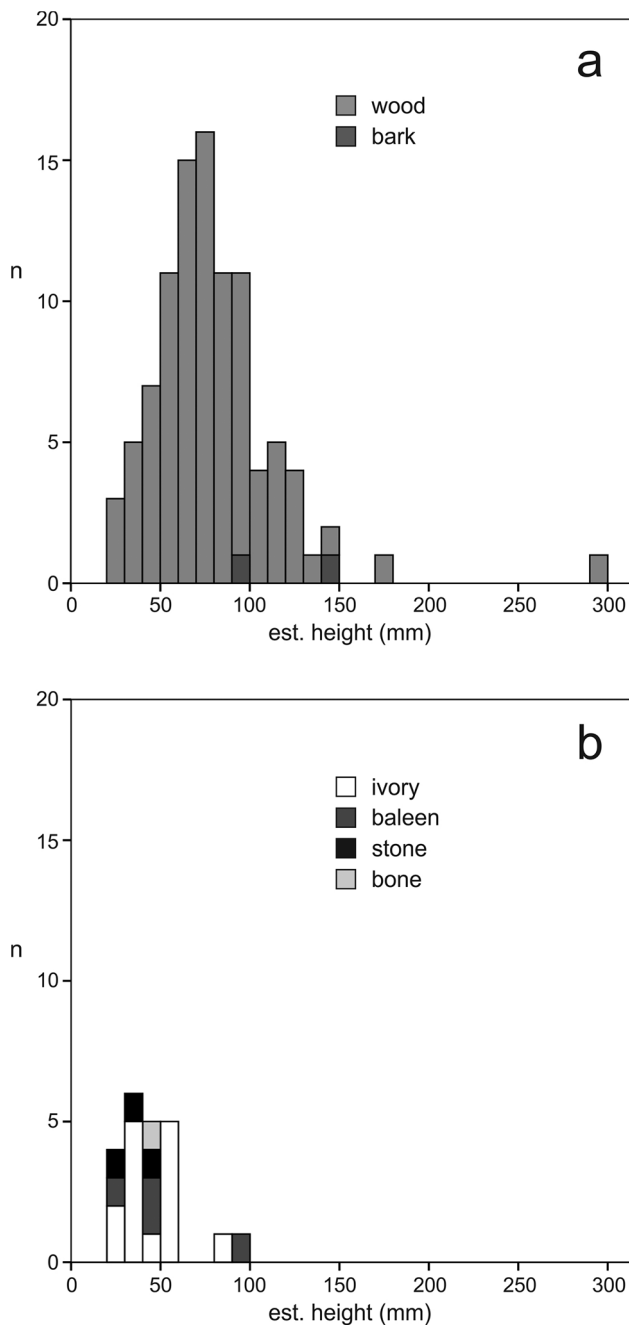


Figure 5. Histograms displaying estimated heights (in mm) of 97 wood and bark figurines (a) and 22 ivory, whale bone, baleen, and stone examples (b) based on data in Table 1.

Playing with Miniature Bodies

It is frequently (indeed, inevitably) suggested in the literature that Inuit doll play was not *merely* play; like boys' play with hunting implements, it represented training for the productive tasks of later adolescence and adulthood (e.g., Jenness

1922:170; Maxwell 1985:294). Girls not only acted out imaginative scenarios with dolls, alone and in concert with other children, but were instructed in the manufacture of doll clothing and, over time, took on this challenging work themselves (Helen Ell-Natakok, in Martens 2009). Carefully crafting elaborate doll garments from scratch—“skinning an animal, stretching and softening the fur, and cutting and sewing the skins” (Strickler and Aloo-kee 1988:12)—was clearly preparation for adult work, even if performed on suitably diminutive subjects, such as lemming skins (Desjardins 2016:23; Strickler and Aloo-kee 1988:12). This characteristically messy overlap amongst play, socialization, and work (like that amongst dolls, ritual figurines, and ornaments) is part of what makes childhood such an interesting and important social archaeological research domain. But while doll play undoubtedly helped prepare children’s bodies and minds for adult work and gender roles, fostering their enskillment and socialization, these were not the only effects it produced (Laugrand and Oosten 2008). For one thing, engaging in imaginative play is not a purely childish activity—Inuit adults played, desported, gambled, and performed throughout their lives, as indeed adults do in many settings cross-culturally (see, e.g., Moseley-Christian 2010 on the magnificent dollhouses—*pronk poppenhuisen*—curated by elite Dutch women in the 17th century). In one guise or another (music, dance, sport, theatre, gaming, sex), play persists more or less universally across the life course, and so child’s play can be considered in part a preparation not just for adult work but for adult *play*.

But childhood is more than a preface to adulthood; it is a distinct, and in many ways, self-contained segment of the life course (Hirschfield 2002; Lillehammer 2000, 2010). Children produce exquisite art, form deep emotional bonds with each other, master complex athletic and performance skills, and generally reflect on their place in the universe in ways that later life frequently neglects and obscures but does not better. Although we are often propelled through life by the anticipation of deeper insights and more fulfilling experiences, in retrospect, childhood can be recognized as experientially and emotionally unequalled (think “Rosebud” or *À la recherche du temps perdu*). Child’s play is not merely training for work and other things but a deeply satisfying end in itself, one of the pleasures of being-in-the-world. If anything, it is adult work that might be considered the numbing simulacrum of play!

Neither is play a simple, homogeneous practice but rather subsumes a complexly differentiated field of activity. It includes an individual manipulating miniatures or other representations according to an invented monologue, as in stereo-

typical “doll play,” as well as multiple individuals engaging cooperatively in this sort of activity. It also includes formal games with rules and a clear beginning and ending, played either singly or with others; informal, open-ended games or sports such as skipping stones or kicking a ball, again either alone or with others; and an ill-defined exploratory and experimental engagement with the world—what an adolescent might call “doing nothing.” This, too, works alone or in groups. Children think about and interact with the world through play, and play mediates children’s relations with each other. It can thus be regarded as a significant discursive practice, a form of materialized (i.e., often nonverbal) thought that engages with various meaningful features of the child’s lifeworld. Indeed, play could be considered children’s preeminent, or at least most characteristic, discursive modality. This is especially the case for younger children with relatively limited verbal proficiency; their social interactions and solitary activity can be insistently, all-consumingly playful. The profound significance of play for the young is reflected in the potential adults have seen in it for tactical interventions in children’s affairs, whether therapeutic (e.g., psychologists’ play therapies) or, through the thorough capitalization of children’s recreation and consumption, exploitative (Langer 2004). So what did Inuit doll play accomplish? It was almost certainly fun, sociable, educational, and likely therapeutic. It also appears to have been thoughtful and inventive, exploring long-running cultural themes and taking up new ones. Some of these creative discursive themes are explored below, inspired by the dyadic contrast that inheres in the doll’s own alternately clothed and unclothed body.

Doll Dualities

A polarity between surface and depth is built into the very design of the Inuit doll, as a wooden core that is meant to be wrapped in hide clothing. The act of concealing the wooden body is not accomplished once and for all, perhaps by the maker, but rather repeatedly, by the player; this is the point of the stubby or absent arms. The player dresses and undresses the doll as necessary for different roles and functions and, indeed, as an act of play itself. The act of dressing another’s body recalls a mother’s (and other adults’) care of the infant’s body, and doll play often seems to cast the player in the role of mother to a child-doll (which, consequently, may be carried in the child’s *amauti* in the same way as a mother carries a small child). This represents a reference both backward in time to early childhood, when the player herself would have been the one being dressed and carried, and forward in time to motherhood, when an actual child

will be the one repeatedly clothed and unclothed. Doll play is also a play on the temporalities of the life course.

Dress, in the Inuit context especially, evokes a polarity between indoors and outdoors, house and landscape. Individuals dressed themselves, or as small children were dressed, in multiple layers before heading out into the cold world. In winter, this involved undergarments, boot linings, boots, an inner parka with the hair turned towards the body, and an outer parka with the hair turned outwards (Issenman 1997; Oakes 1991). The act of alternately accreting and unpeeling multiple layers represents a further intensification, an amplification, or involution of the wrapped body, and recalls the complex layering of the biological body: hair, skin, flesh, bone, organ, fluid. Dressing was not a momentary event but a time-consuming project. There was even a technology that accompanied the act of undressing, involving light rods called snow beaters (*anautaq*; Rasmussen 1931) for removing the snow from outer clothing so that it could dry properly, a drying rack (*ivnicat*; Rasmussen 1931) for suspending wet clothing over the oil lamp, and anterooms (*suuvik*; Spencer 1959:54–55) just inside the house entrance for undressing and storing outdoor clothing. Archaeological examples of baleen and antler snow beaters and drying racks made of baleen netting strung inside a whale bone, antler, or baleen frame, occur on precontact Inuit sites (Mathiassen 1927), as do house entrance tunnels with attached compartments of varying width and complexity.

The naked/clothed opposition also contrasts the relative immodesty and habitual concealment of the naked body (at least, parts of it), connected to bodily excretions and sexuality, to the public, social body. Dolls sometimes appear to be at least partly clothed, with a triangular bikini covering the pelvic area and boots (knee- or, more often, hip-high) being the most commonly depicted items of dress. Very occasionally, full dress is depicted, as in two dolls from Nachvak Fiord (Fig. 2e–f) which have carved wooden parkas: one with a peaked hood and one with an extended flap at the back. The more usual integral doll clothing evokes only the shorts and boots or long pants that were historically worn indoors in well-insulated sod winter houses when the temperature demanded that most clothing be stripped off (Fig. 2a–b). This indoor dress style appears to have been the de facto “undressed” state of most dolls. It also seems possible that leg coverings and boots were explicitly represented because the dolls sometimes wore separate items of dress only on the upper body.

Dressing and undressing the doll’s body rehearsed the dressing and undressing of human bodies as they moved between inside and outside, night and day, and also between different func-

tions. Summer and winter activities required different clothing, as did everyday tasks and formal performances. The transitions from infancy to childhood, childhood to adolescence, adolescence to adulthood, and, to a certain extent, adulthood to old age all involved changes in conventional dress, corresponding to the changing form of the body and the perceived need for its accommodation and protection in various activities (having its moss diaper changed, play, chores, work, ceremony). Inuit clothing and adornment styles also unfolded over longer periods of time, as suggested by the appearance of sharply peaked parka hoods in late precontact/early historic dolls from Labrador (Fig. 2e) and Greenland (Fig. 3) (Gulløv 1997:218). These varied between Inuit groups (topknots and buns seem to reflect regionally and/or temporally distinctive hairstyles), between Inuit and non-Inuit neighbors (such as the Innu and Chipewyan), and especially between the Inuit and their Dorset precursors in the eastern Arctic, who figure as the Tuniit antiheroes of Inuit folktales. Some elements of Late Dorset clothing styles, such as a very high parka collar, are apparent from their own somewhat doll-like human figurines (e.g., Appelt et al. 2016:786; Fitzhugh 2017:378, 383). Like other elements of Late Dorset and earlier material culture (stone tools, harpoon heads, figurines, enigmatic decorated objects), these sometimes show up in Inuit contexts (e.g., in a precontact Inuit winter house at Porden Point, Devon Island [McGhee 1996:Plate 2]), likely having been collected from abandoned features or encountered in the course of excavating semi-subterranean house floors. Precontact Inuit must have been keenly aware of contrasting styles of clothing and adornment, making the clothed doll perform a culturally distinctive, marked, body variant—an *ontobody*.

An important dimension of this cultural marking relates to sex/gender: where the gender of dolls is reasonably identifiable, women and girls are inordinately depicted. Inuit doll play typically revolved around the work of caring for a family—making clothing, preparing food, tending to infants—most frequently performed by women (Guemple 1986), as also reflected in the ubiquitous toy ulus (semilunar “women’s knives”), lamps and pots that were the elements of material culture most closely associated with women. Reflecting “all parts of an Inuit woman’s life, little girls learned from this play how to act as women” (Strickler and Alookke 1988:13), and so these playthings can be read in part as elements of a “didactic doll culture” (Moseley-Christian 2010:346) for socializing girls. Historical dolls sometimes wear *amautis* and carry infants in the hood (e.g., Turner [1894]2001:258), and some of the small, physiologically amorphous archaeological doll specimens have the distinct body proportions of infants

(Fig. 2d). Less abundant dolls with relatively long and narrow torsos, necks and heads, and sometimes amulet straps crisscrossing the chest likely represent men (Turner [1894]2001:258; Fig. 2a). Linn and Lee (2006:10–11) report that the more facially explicit Central Yupik dolls distinguished adult women with chin tattoos and adult men with labrets. Adult female doll forms (Fig. 2e) are common archaeologically in the eastern Arctic and were typically the ones rephrased in ivory figurines and pendants, but the most commonly represented body form on precontact Inuit sites seems to be that of a girl (Fig. 2b), based on the female clothing (hip boots, bikini) and lack of breasts. The notion that dolls deliberately depicted a range of aged and sexed bodies (if a demographically biased one) is borne out by Anaoyok Aloo-kee's account of the intricate ways in which a girl's collection of dolls composed "a separate and very real family" (Strickler and Aloo-kee 1988:12), with each being called upon to act out stereotypical age and gender roles in play:

The most important doll was the teenage daughter who had work at home all the time. She was constantly busy carrying things, picking heather, making tea, chewing skins for *kamiks*, and walking back and forth doing anything that needed to get done around the home. There also had to be a grandmother, with grey hair and worn-out clothes, in the doll family. Sitting or kneeling, the old lady did the cooking, fixed things, waited for the hunters to come home, and tried to help wherever possible. The mother of the teenage daughter, who spent much of her time sewing her husband's and her children's clothing, was in charge of the household. She seemed to be fond of giving orders and pushing around her daughter who did the housework. Sometimes the teenage daughter had younger brothers and sisters. If there was a little doll who was old enough to walk, it could get into a fight with a little doll from another family. The parents of the two little dolls then had to argue with each other, trying to decide which child had started the fight. There might also be a pregnant lady with a tiny doll under her skirt. When she was ready to give birth, the grandmother would help her while the younger kids were asked to go out and tell the people that a baby was coming. If the little girl had a rabbit's ear, she put the newborn doll in there, using it as a sleeping bag. Although men were worth having, they were not very important. Usually they went out hunting and were not around much (Strickler and Aloo-kee 1988:12).

The gender and age diversity of doll bodies, perhaps more readily than any other single category of archaeological evidence, implies the possibility of an *archaeobiography* that interrogates the inflections and divisions of the Inuit life course.

Whereas dolls themselves were objects of play, the subject of that play was often work. A

tension between play and work also informed the increasing labor that clothing dolls would have demanded. The production of clothing for older girls' dolls involved their participation in the manufacturing process, progressively training them for the arduous work of processing animal skins, cutting patterns, and sewing full-sized clothing. The processing of hides for clothing (Oakes 1991) and boat covers (Braund 1988; Petersen 1986) was conventionally women's work ethnographically, while men typically harvested the animals (especially caribou and seals) from which these skins were obtained. Through doll play and hunting play girls and boys became caught up in the complementary roles that knit together women's and men's work across the life course. While the doll's clothing perhaps most obviously evokes this gender complementarity, the production of the doll itself also implies cooperative labor. Women and children may have manufactured dolls from local wood or driftwood they collected themselves, but wood processing was typically part of men's task allotment. In the western Arctic and southern portions of the eastern Arctic driftwood was often abundant, and together with willow and alder shrubs, it would have provided a ready supply of local carving material. In parts of the Canadian Arctic Islands and Greenland, however, wood was scarcer (Dyke et al. 1997). There, men scavenged driftwood during far-flung coastal travels, made dedicated harvesting trips to the treeline, or obtained wood from neighboring groups at summer trade fairs (Rasmussen 1931:26; Savelle 1985). Driftwood was also collected at sea in all parts of the Arctic (Alix 2012) in contexts that suggest predominantly male procurement. Adzes for reducing logs and side-slotted "crooked knives" for whittling, both common in precontact assemblages, historically belonged to men's toolkits (Whitridge 2004). Dolls are occasionally crudely made, hence perhaps by children, but are typically as carefully finished as other elements of precontact material culture, and so, presumably, they were mostly manufactured by male specialists in wood reduction (see, e.g., Annie Cookie in Yukon Arts Centre [2010:50]). The "birth" of a doll is sometimes visible in the partially finished objects, which were carved progressively from head to toe and so emerged from the wood in an act of apparent parturition (Fig. 2c). The overall scenario is of an object sequentially changing hands as it took on the form of a finished plaything: men, women, or children may have collected the wood, but men likely manufactured the doll's body, women and older girls tailored its clothing, and younger girls infused it with life through play.

The undressed doll appears drably generic, beyond the hints of gender and age. Even more strikingly, eastern Arctic dolls lack not only

identifying facial features but seem to be missing their faces altogether. In profile, dolls' heads appear truncated, as though the face has been summarily cut away, whereas the torsos and legs are three-dimensional and fairly naturalistic (Fig. 1). Dolls were presumably dressed with personalities and perhaps singular identities, only in the course of play, when they were clothed and equipped. Indeed, play would have consisted precisely in this creative evocation of the doll's sociality and individuality, as it was put into imaginary dialogue with other dolls and into interaction with miniature lamps, pots, and other toys. The negation of everyday faciality in the static doll body, however, remains troubling, as does its echo in the missing faces of ivory figurines and pendants and faceless (but otherwise animated) stick figures incised on drill bows and knife handles (Whitridge 2013, 2016). The deliberate, prior effacement of precontact and early historical dolls and figurines in the eastern Arctic implies that things could not be allowed to possess whatever qualities of personhood might pass through a representation of a human face. Although nonhuman animal faces (polar bears, seals, caribou) are frequently depicted in decorative art and so presumably did not produce this uncanny effect, equivalent representations of the human face seem to have been powerful and potentially dangerous in some settings (Carpenter 1973:131). Dolls' usual lack of arms also represents a psychoanalytically troubling characteristic, at least with respect to the unclothed doll body. Hawkes (1916:151) recounts a northern Labrador Inuit tale in which an adopted Innu (i.e., non-Inuit) girl who later betrayed her community had her arms cut off as punishment. Manipulating such disfigured bodies—lacking faces, arms, and hands—may have been a frightening subtext of girls' play (see below). Beginning with the forehead and backs of the hands (Jenness 1946:54), the face, lower arms, hands, and, to a lesser extent, the upper arms and thighs seem to have been the main sites of women's tattooing in the eastern Arctic (Jenness 1946:52–54; Rasmussen 1931:312–313), as though this painful rite of passage that marked the transition to womanhood restored that which the doll's body rescinded.

Western Arctic Yupik and Inupiat groups have a much richer tradition of depicting faces in figurative art and design (including elaborate masks) than their Inuit neighbors, but even they seemed to recognize the danger of figuration that was too lifelike. A Yupik woman, Rosalie Bunyan-Serovy, reports being told by Rosie Paniyak

that when she made a whole bunch of dolls a long time ago, she was by herself, and she said that she was afraid of her dolls because she thought they would come to life. I said, "Oh, yeah?" Because I never told anybody either [but,] I thought the same

thing, too (Hensel 2006:53–54; see also Linn 2006:44).

Interestingly, pre-Inuit Dorset culture groups in the eastern Arctic not only created human figurines with recognizably individual faces (e.g., Jordan 1979/80), but masks, maskettes, and tubular objects with stylized human/animal faces (LeMoine et al. 1995), and elaborate antler "batons" that were covered with dozens of distinctive faces (Blodgett 1974). These seem to articulate a representational grammar wholly distinct from, and in some ways diametrically opposed to, the Inuit one. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987:115) suggest, "when the face is effaced, when the faciality traits disappear, we can be sure that we have entered another regime."

Power flowed through doll play in other significant ways. On the one hand, it cast girls in the role of demiurge, controlling a society of miniature individuals of all ages and genders in the enactment of fraught psychosocial dramas. These were typically played out within relatively hermetic child-doll communities. Linn and Lee (2006:12), however, cite an episode reported by the 19th-century American ethnographer Edward Nelson (1899:345) that suggests the potency of doll play within a cosmopolitan adult-child-doll setting, in which two girls "placed their dolls standing in a semicircle before us upon the floor, while they sat quietly behind as though permitting their dolls to take a look at the strangers." Doll play effectively inverted the normal familial setup, in which children were the ones subjected to adult supervision and control. In doing so, however, it presented girls with a clear rehearsal for their eventual assumption of precisely this latter social role. It was perhaps this tacit anticipation of advancing in the adult power structure that eased girls' complicity in the domestic subjugation of children.

Discussion

Dolls and doll play seem to provide a unique vantage on the precontact Inuit lifeworld. Although superficially children's amusements, their interpretive tractability reveals them to be both more than this and already significant in this guise. Struggling to elicit their local meanings draws out a number of archaeological tropes with potentially wider utility beyond the Inuit case. In the first place, they draw attention to what might be labeled a *social technology of the body* in the sense of a set of objects and practices concerned with the production, modulation, and reproduction of embodied social roles, relations, and understandings. This could be taken as a variation on Foucault's (1977:26) "political technology of the body," but one that emphasizes the roles of things in the

production and normalization of heterarchical social practices and identities, rather than the overtly or subtly coercive power structures, the “micro-physics of power,” implied by the former. Towards the end of his life, Foucault also began working through the notion of a “technology of the self,” charting the shifting discourses on the care and cultivation of the self in Gnosticism and early Christianity (Martin et al. 1988). However, this, too, has a slightly different stress—on selfhood as an interior project rather than an ongoing negotiation of social relationality out in the world, with all its messy, material entanglements, as implied by “social technology.” Although a Foucauldian framing of play in one of these ways would certainly be possible and interesting, as would a biotechnological emphasis on the material practices bearing on the growth, nourishment, exercise, and repair of the body, the perspective adopted here emphasizes the negotiation of roles within intimate Inuit social networks, the village, and, especially, kin group (what Burch [1981] labels “local family”) pole of sociopolitical affairs. Dolls (and other playthings) were clearly key sites of children’s enculturation but not only of enculturation into eventual adult roles and identities (which likewise involved the active manipulation of systems of dress and social interaction) but also into the roles and identities and meanings that accompanied childhood itself, a highly significant decade of the early life course in its own right. Other embodied practices, some with durable material accompaniments—clothing, adornment, tattooing, labretifery, performance—can also be considered elements of this technology. For example, hide-backed mica hand mirrors (and their probable mica residues) occur on a number of precontact Inuit sites (Whitridge 2016). These represent devices specifically for allowing an individual to view their face and the sides and top of their head (and perhaps other locations on the body), presumably for the application of such things as cosmetics, jewelry, masks, and hairdressings in the context of both everyday and ceremonial dress. Social life everywhere employs elaborate technological facilitators and embellishments; doll play is merely one of the material setups belonging to this broader social technology of the body.

As a miniature human simulacrum, the doll occupied an uncanny margin that is sharply evoked by its lexical resonances. In eastern Arctic dialects, the word for doll—*inuujaaq*—is built from the stem *inuu-*, meaning of or like a person, and is part of a cluster of terms relating to uncanny and borderline states (Schneider 1985:87). Dolls were thus semantically aligned with core biological and sociological ambiguities and transformations over the life course. Furthermore, dolls were clearly intended to depict differently aged and sexed bodies,

and doll-like figurines seem to have been linked to women’s and *angakkuit*’s (shamans’) ritual, these latter perhaps especially associated with pregnancy/childbirth and illness/death, respectively. Figurative representations thus enable a kind of *archaeobiography*, an attention to the entire unfolding of the life course, punctuated in the precontact Inuit case by a series of distinct life states (infant, child, adult) repetitively materialized in doll bodies. Although only dolls and incised figurative art depicted a recognizable variety of bodies in this fashion, other material accompaniments of these states can be identified. Fragments of clothing tailored for particular tasks and bodies, architectural spaces (internally demarcated houses, ceremonial structures, extramural activity areas), a highly differentiated toolkit, ritual paraphernalia, and bodies of various ages that were disposed of in mortuary settings can be used to reconstruct and interrogate distinct periods, moments, and transitions in the lives of social actors. With respect to the latter, social archaeology has begun to rehabilitate/colonize human biology and biological anthropology in recent years (Agarwal and Glencross 2011; Geller 2008), providing access to an array of information relating to growth, health, diet, activity, injury, and disease that can be used to flesh out the distinctive “local biologies” (Gilchrist 2012)—regionally variant archaeobiographies—that framed the lives of individuals of varying cohorts and communities.

Part of the particular archaeological attraction of dolls is the sense that they are connected to a wide array of meaningful discourses—for example, on the body, childhood, the life course, work, family, performance, sexuality, and ritual. Everything from the context of their manufacture to the ways they were played with seems to enact a significant relationship: of children to women and men, play to work and ritual, things to bodies, the real to the imaginary. Like some other significant objects in the precontact Inuit world, dolls were highly *vascularized*, joined by innumerable semantic threads to other things, people, and contexts, and thus they bring an exceptionally meaningful network node into focus. Metaphors spun out from the notion of dense, fibrous connectivity (actor-network [Law and Hassard 1999], meshwork [Ingold 2008], entanglement [Hodder 2012]) have become popular in archaeology in recent years. Perhaps only somewhat distinctly, vascularization conjures the image of an object-node that is engorged with sociosemantic connectivity: not merely a flat, featureless web of vectors and attachments of things to other things but a conceptual juncture of singular, heightened significance. In the precontact Inuit case, analogously vascularized objects can be readily identified, such as the flat-bottomed bird figurine (*tingmiujaaq*) that assembled an array of meanings and practices connected to child’s play,

mythology, and human-animal relations, or the ivory needle case that evoked a tattooed body, harpoon head, and seal's breathing hole. Harpoons, lamps, boats, garments, houses, and other significant things constituted similarly vascularized nodes. Although essentially everything in the Inuit universe can be thought of as networked, enmeshed, and entangled, only certain hermeneutically vivid objects seem "vascularized."

The notion of distinct modes or registers of embodiment being modeled by dolls and worked through in doll play draws our attention to the culturally and subculturally variable human body. The body was a significant focus of precontact Inuit material cultural discourse (Whitridge 2016), as it is now and must have been at most times and places for most people (Alberti 2016; Harris and Robb 2012; Joyce 2005). Individuals understand and act with their bodies in diverse ways, reflecting their personal biology and experiences, societal strictures, and sense of identification with other similarly or contrastingly embodied individuals (vis a vis age, gender, ethnicity, ability, sexuality, subcultural proclivity, etc.). There is no typical human body. One way of thinking about this diversity is in terms of the ontologically disparate bodily understandings and practices that characterize different times and places and coexist at any given juncture. These *ontobodies* are inevitably the object of discursive and real struggles and often of systems of discipline that aim to purge diversity and reproduce normative bodies and understandings. Precontact Inuit dolls and doll play, and the homogenization of body imaginaries in conventional figurine types, ergonomic tools and feature forms, genres of personal adornment, clothing, and mortuary practices tended to reproduce endemic ontobodies.

Conclusion

Numerous meaningful contrasts inhered in the Inuit doll—between the plant material that formed the body and the animal that clothed it, between the natural, lived body it evoked and the stiff, artificial reality it actually possessed, between the singular, recognizable person and the generic, faceless simulacrum, between the full-sized and the miniature. Far from the mute testament to children's amusement that their ethnographic and archaeological disregard implies, dolls inhabited a semantically rich core of Inuit cultural life. And how could they not? As by far the most common representation of the human form in precontact Inuit archaeological assemblages, they must have constituted an ever-present commentary on the affairs of the living and the full-sized. Fascinatingly, girls—perhaps the *least* visible category of Inuit actor in ethnographic and archaeological

accounts—controlled this discourse. While adults likely manufactured most dolls and helped craft their clothing, their ultimate disposition was as tokens in a richly inventive semantic field centering on girls' play, sociality, work, and worldview.

Dolls, like toys more generally, have been neglected in Inuit archaeology. They have typically been dealt with near the end of monographs, just before the unidentifiable objects and intrusive artifacts from earlier time periods. But besides the light they clearly shed on girls' play—an important category of activity for a substantial cohort—they represent a vital material discourse on the body that spills across ages and genders. Dolls were significant nodes in densely vascularized semantic and practical networks—fields of connectivity amongst child's play, adult work, and the magical and ritual activities that appear to be bound up with the finer ivory figurines. Doll play was not, however, merely a rehearsal or fantasy of adult activities but rather the living expression of children's complex engagements with bodies, and all their fantastically diverse wrappings.

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