

Eskimo — Pamana'rmiuq, eskimuq, Pamanirmiu'aq, Yup'ik

ESKIMUT PAAGANI ET'AARTUT. – THE ESKIMOS LIVE UP NORTH.

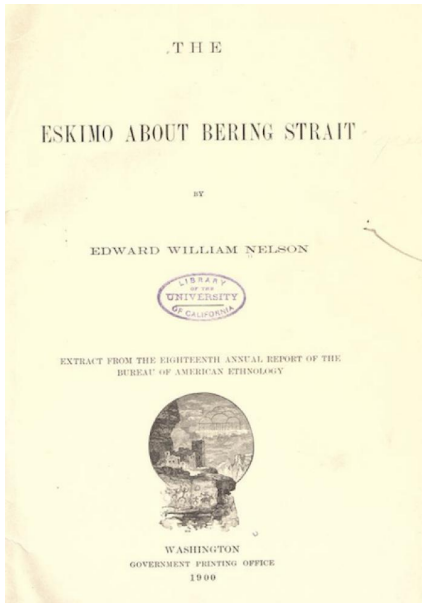


Photo: Edward's Nelson's study of the Yup'ik people,
"The Eskimos About Bering Strait."

Although the term Eskimo appears to have passed into English from the French word Eskimeaux, linguists believe that the word's ultimate origin is in Innut, an Algonquian language spoken in the eastern Canadian provinces of Quebec and Labrador. These people used a similar-sounding word, meaning "snowshoe-netter," to describe their northern Inuit neighbors. French traders recorded this word and other westerners eventually adopted this term.

Whatever its origin, Eskimo is a controversial term. Anthropologists have used it to describe the indigenous peoples of the North American Arctic, including the first residents of Greenland, the Canadian Archipelago, and coastal Alaska from Prudhoe Bay to Prince William Sound. The term was intended to denote a shared heritage—to highlight similarities in biology, culture, and language among the people inhabiting this northern environment.

However, because Eskimo is not a traditional self-designator, it is not widely used by northern peoples themselves. Most prefer to be called by their own cultural names—Inuit, Iñupiat, or Yup'ik—which mean "real people." Alutiiq people are no exception. Although the Alutiiq people recognize cultural ties to their Yup'ik neighbors, most do not think of themselves as Eskimo. This distinction is evident in one of the Alutiiq words for Eskimo, *Pamanirmiuwat*, which literally means "people from up there."