

Consuming Colonization

ANICA and Indigenous Sovereignty, 1947-1953

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Colonization of North America is told as a story of assimilation and resistance. The Alaska Native Industries Cooperative Association (ANICA) shows us it was not that simple. Indigenous Alaskans often incorporated on their own terms, accepting consumerism and federal intervention while asserting their sovereignty in ways neither traditional, nor modern, nor hybrid.

What is ANICA?

ANICA is a retailers' cooperative founded in 1947 to establish Indigenous self-sufficiency by replacing the US federal government as the supplier of Alaska's Native Stores.

Why ANICA?

This project studies contradictory depictions of consumerism, Indigenous independence, and anti-federalism in ANICA's newspaper and correspondence archives.

Findings

Not traditional.
ANICA's sale and advertisement of consumer goods illustrates how it more closely integrated Indigenous Alaskans with American postwar consumerism, suggesting that Alaskan Indigenous life was rapidly changing in the 1950s.

Not modern.

Indigenous Alaskans incorporated consumerism and American life selectively to complement existing lifeways.

Not hybrid.

Alaskan Indigenous life was not simply a hybrid of colonial and non-colonial ways. Indigenous Alaskans were conscious of their integration. They actively shaped it and resisted outside imposition.

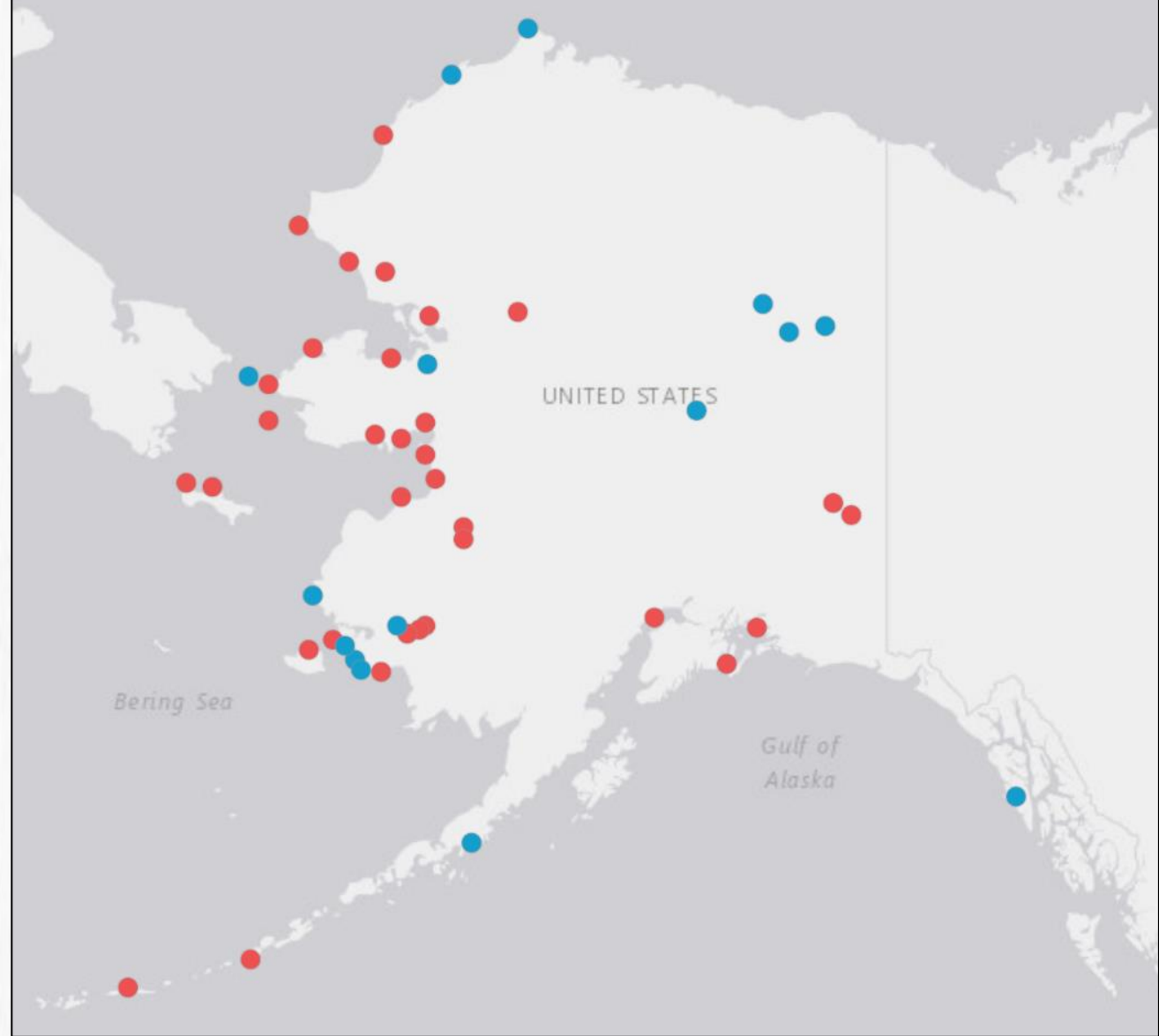
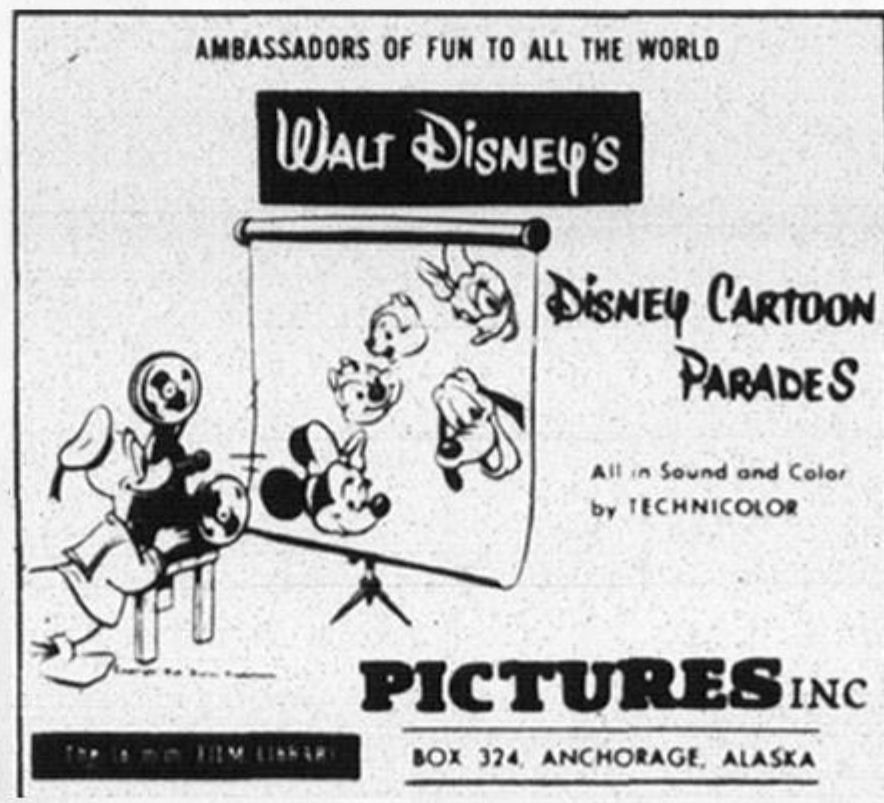
Not modern. Not traditional. Not hybrid.



L. C. Peters



payment in full of its loan



- ANICA Non-Member Stores
- ANICA Member Stores

Significance

- Reframes dominant historical narratives that contrast Indigenous and settler lifeways in Alaska by considering their overlap.
- Pushes against oversimplified politics that portray Alaska as a story of ordinary Insiders and powerful Outsiders by suggesting that these categories were fluid and interconnected.

REFERENCES

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