



Fierce Climate, Sacred Ground: An Ethnography of Climate Change in Shishmaref, Alaska

Elizabeth Marino

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With three roads and a population of just over 500 people, Shishmaref, Alaska seems like an unlikely center of the climate change debate. But the island, home to Iñupiaq Eskimos who still live off subsistence harvesting, is falling into the sea, and climate change is, at least in part, to blame. While countries sputter and stall over taking environmental action, Shishmaref is out of time.

Publications from the *New York Times* to *Esquire* have covered this disappearing village, yet few have taken the time to truly show the community and the two millennia of traditions at risk. In *Fierce Climate, Sacred Ground*, Elizabeth Marino brings Shishmaref into sharp focus as a place where people in a close-knit, determined community are confronting the realities of our changing planet every day. She shows how physical dangers challenge lives, while the stress and uncertainty challenge culture and identity. Marino also draws on Shishmaref's experiences to show how disasters and the outcomes of climate change often fall heaviest on those already burdened with other social risks and often to communities who have contributed least to the problem. Stirring and sobering, *Fierce Climate, Sacred Ground* proves that the consequences of unchecked climate change are anything but theoretical.

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