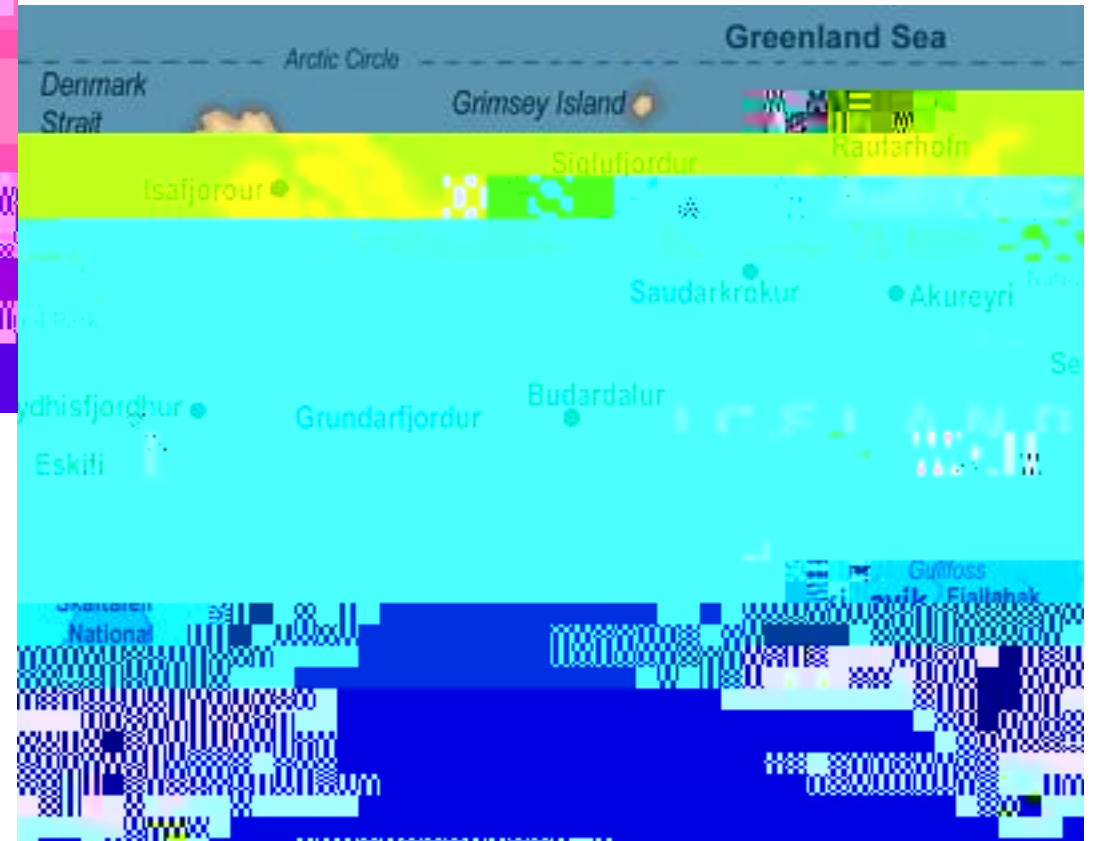


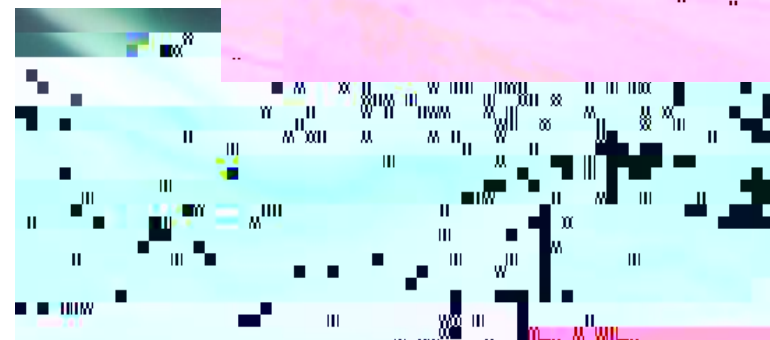
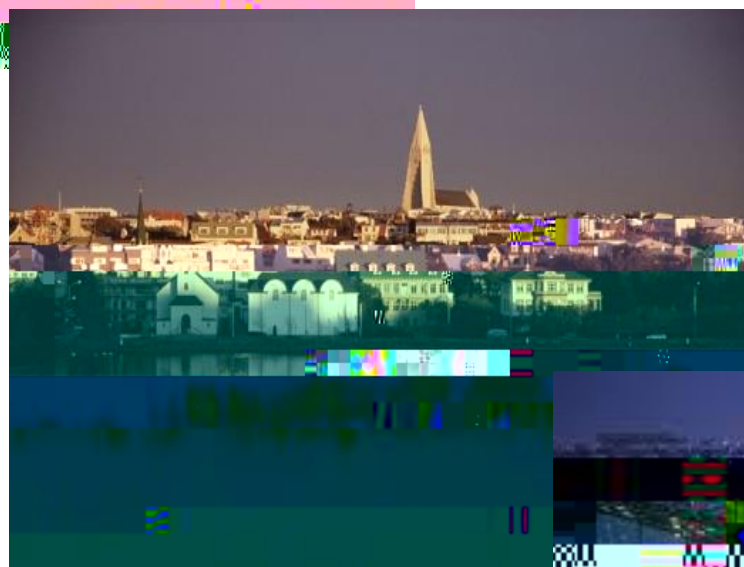
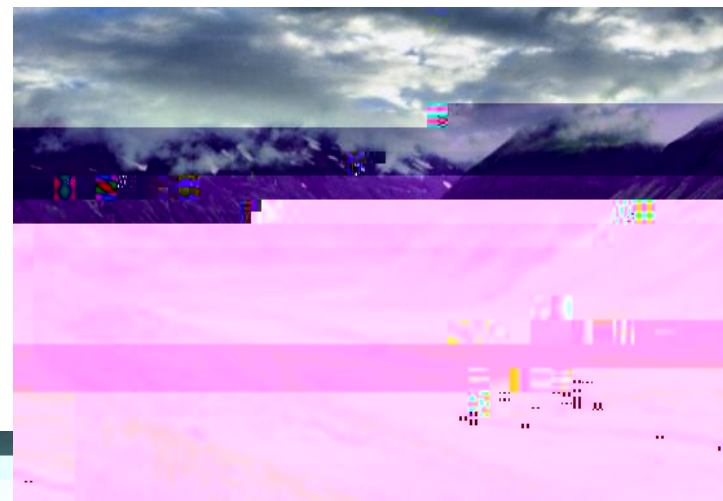
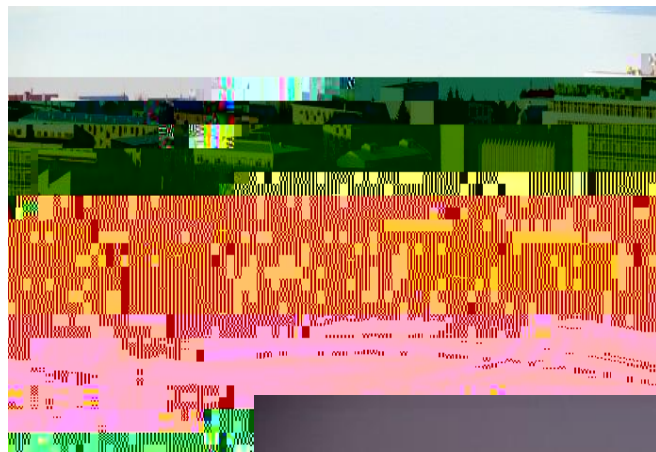
Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir  
Professor of Second Language Studies  
University of Iceland

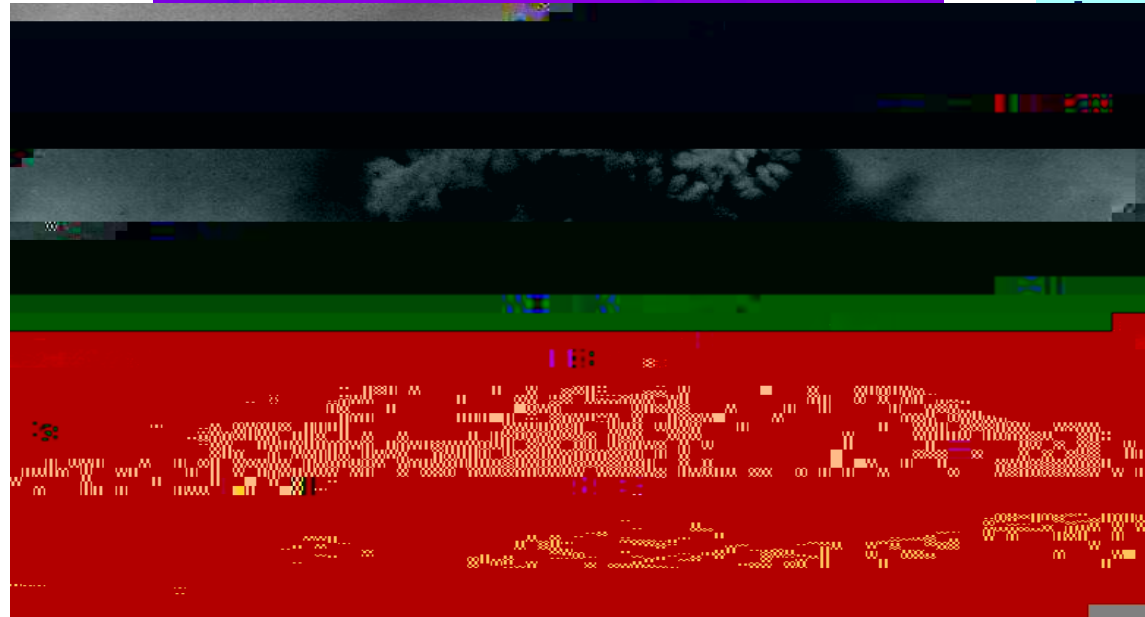
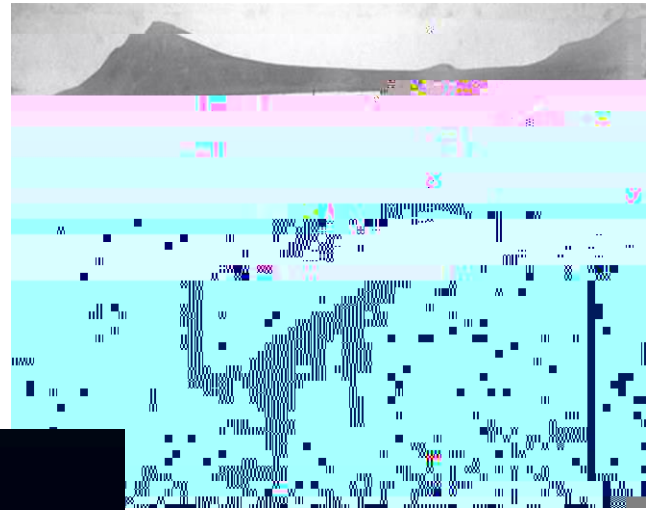
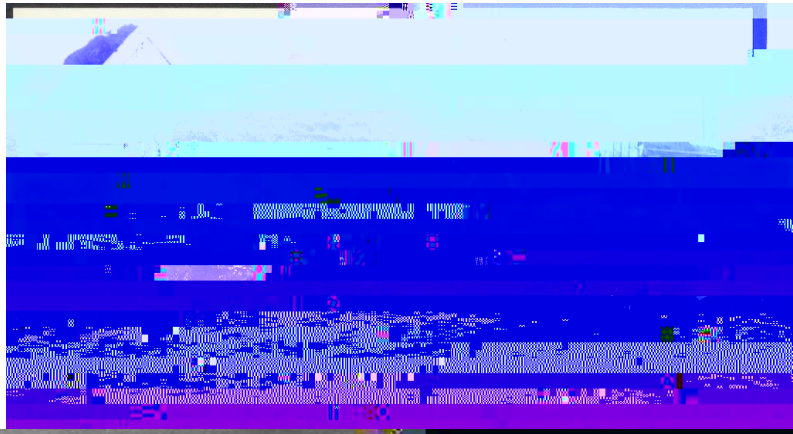
Richard and Margaret Beck Lecture  
University of Victoria  
Sunday, September 24, 2017

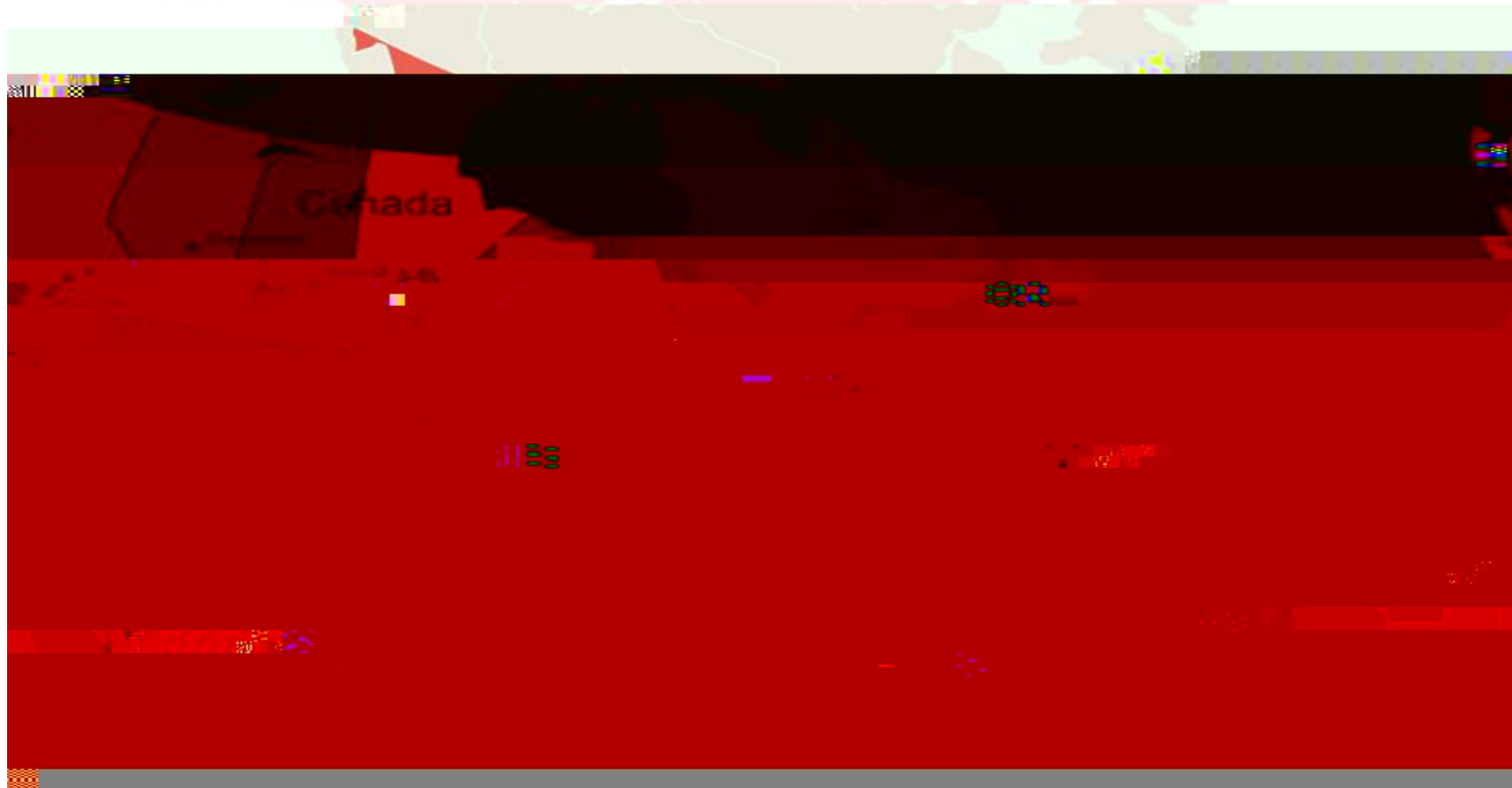


Nordic Welfare State  
330.000 inhabitants  
Icelandic  
Literature and Culture  
Saga and Eddas



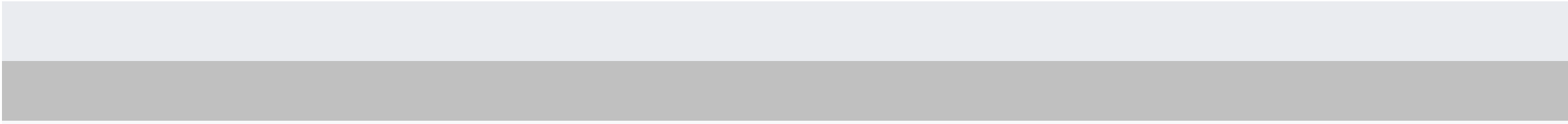


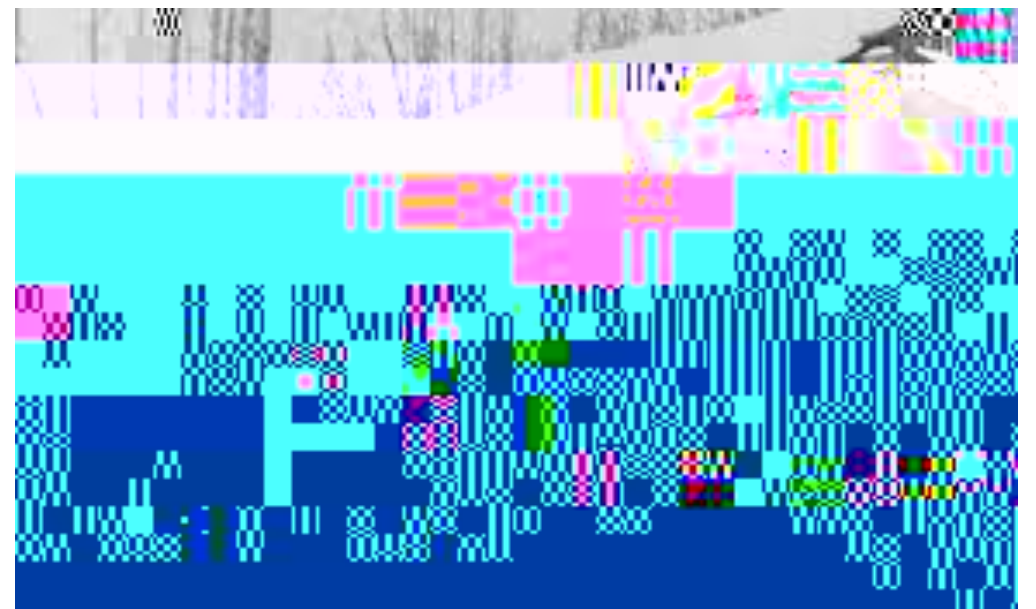
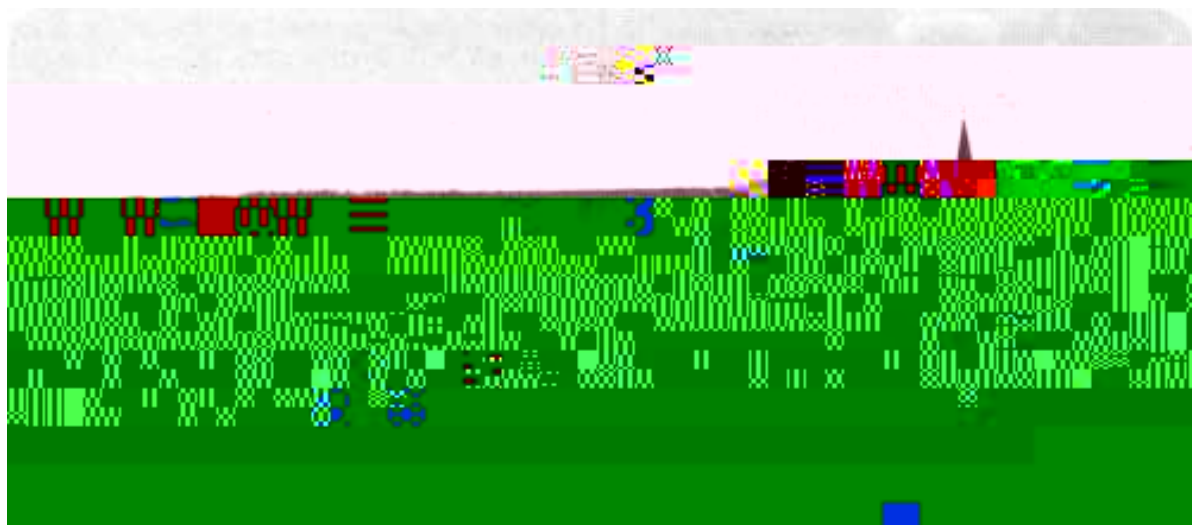




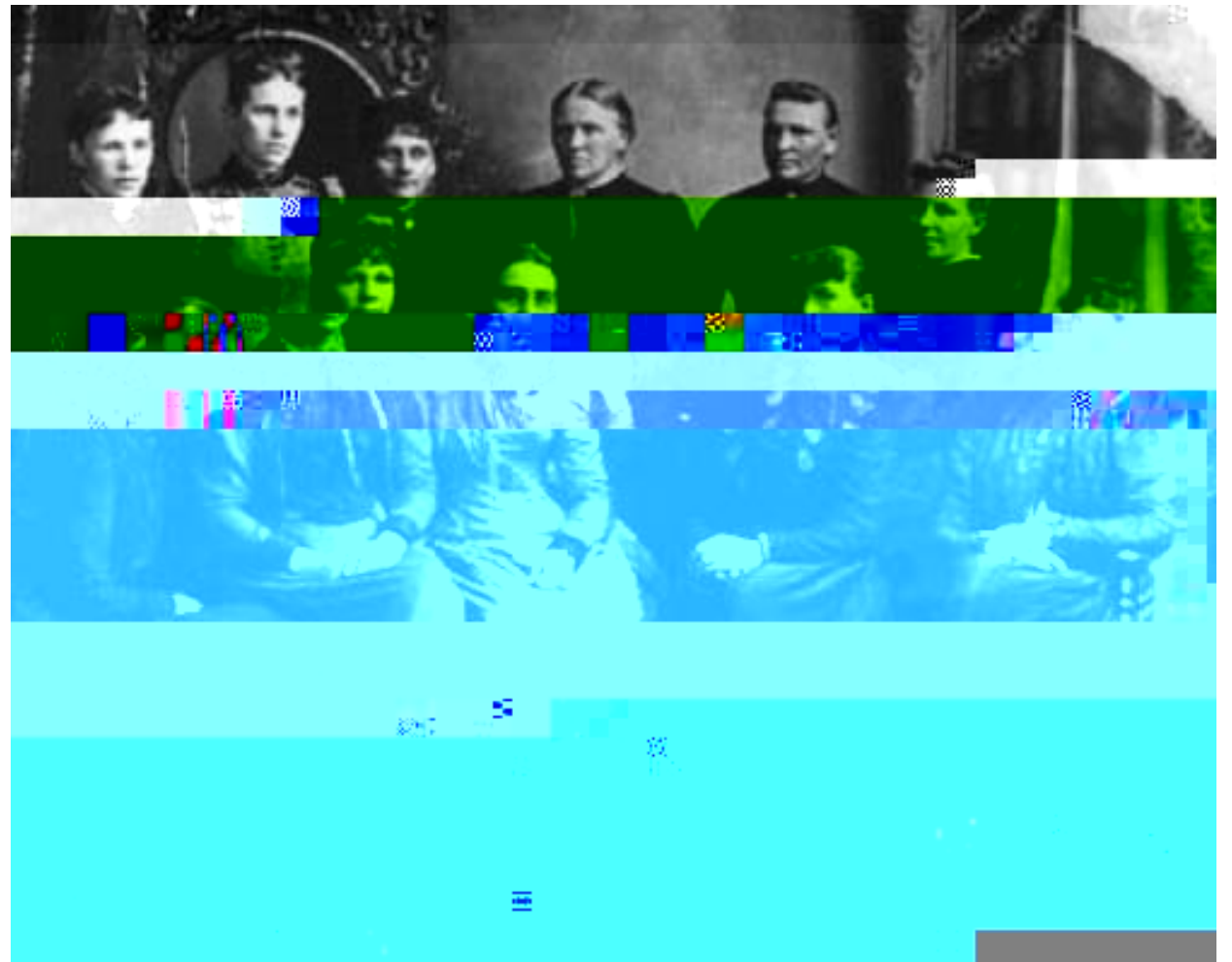


<https://www.icelandicroots.com/emigration-where-to>



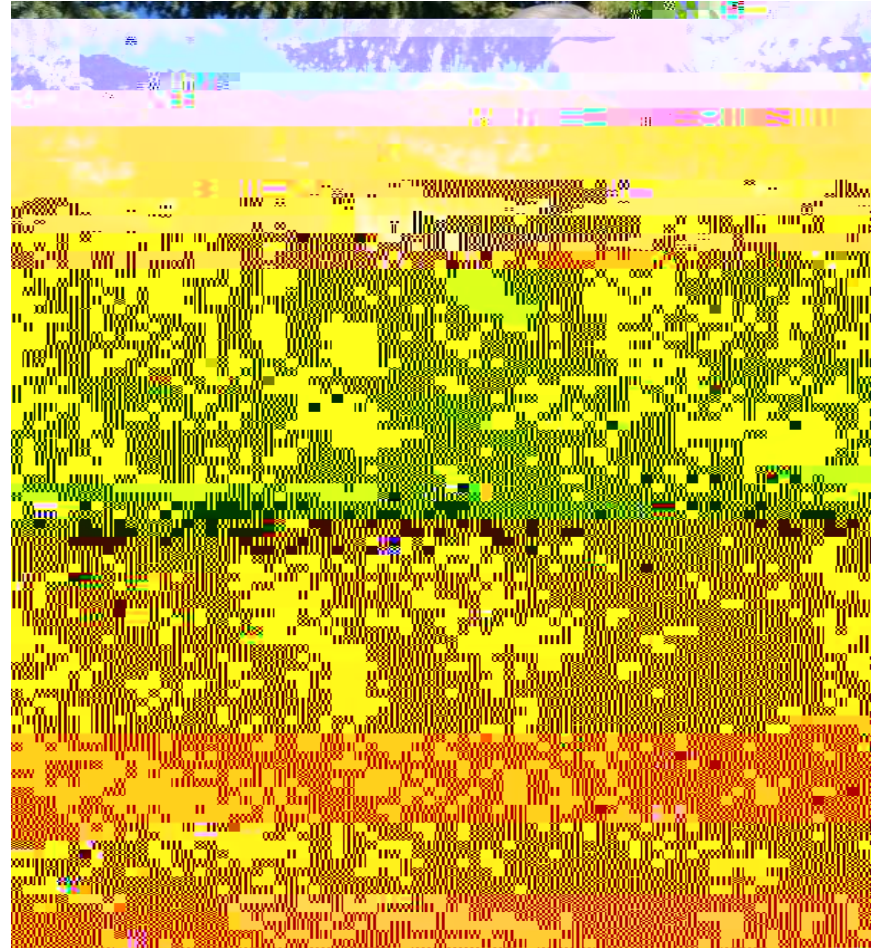












Statue near Wynyard, Saskatchewan

The first Icelandic newspaper in North America was *Framfari* (*The Progress*), published in New Iceland between 1877 and 1880.

Between 1879 and 1910, eight other publications originated in Gimli. In 1886 the Icelandic newspaper *Heimskringla* (*The World*) was founded.

*Lögberg* was founded in 1887, partly in opposition to *Heimskringla*. Both were published in Icelandic.

They were combined in 1959 into *Lögberg-Heimskringla*, published in English. The oldest continuous ethnic newspaper published in Canada.





1898 Sigtryggur Jonasson was elected to the Manitoba legislature to represent St Andrews.

Margaret J. Benedictson, editor of the women's magazine *Freyja* from 1898 to 1910, formed the first women's suffrage society in Winnipeg in 1908.

Thomas H. Johnson was appointed attorney general and minister of public works for Manitoba in 1915, becoming the first Icelandic Cabinet minister in Canada.

Dr. George Johnson was Minister of Health for Manitoba before becoming lieutenant governor of the province in his later years.



Isolation of communities

First settler came to create 'New Iceland'

Timing of immigration

Positive view of bilingualism

## Early interest

Debates in the magazines as far back as 1888

Vilhjálmur Stefánsson (1903) published a paper on new words adopted into Icelandic and the general condition of the language in N. Dakota

Haraldur Bessason (1967, 1984a,b.)

Stephen Clausing (1984)

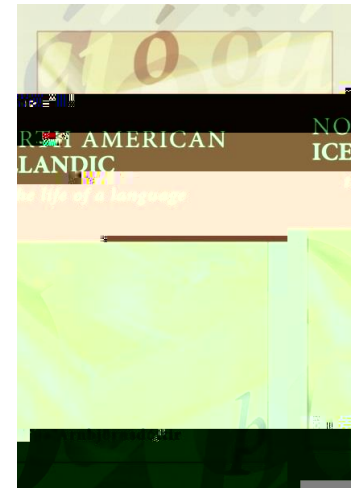
Hallfreður Örn Eiríksson and Olga Franzdóttir (2012)

Gísli Sigurðsson (2002 )

John Matthiasson (1974)

Birna Arnbjörnsdóttir (1990, 2006)

Spoke to over 60 speakers 2-4th generation, men and women, the youngest in their 40's.



NA Icelandic not a single variety

Community lect?

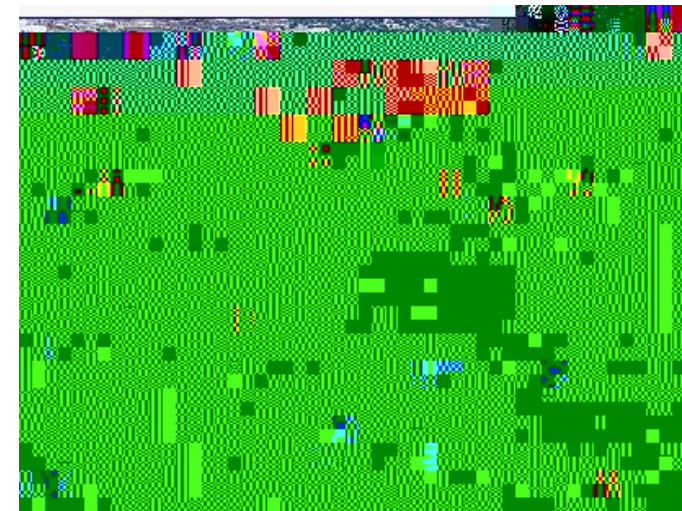
Family lect?

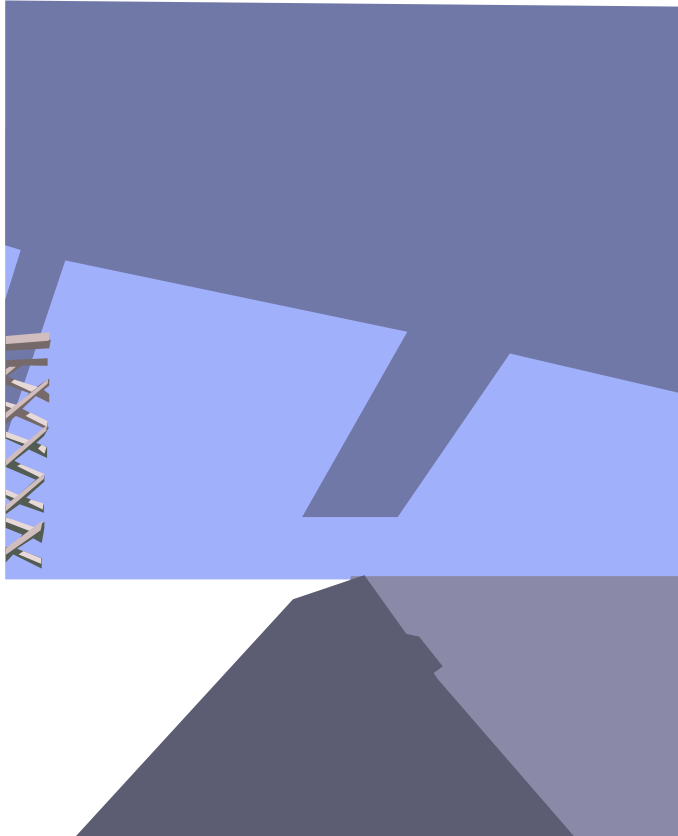
Idiolect?

Degree of embeddedness and influence from English.

NA Icelandic as a separate, geographically defined variety of Icelandic

Certain grammatical and lexical features are consistently found in the speech of a cross-section of NA Icelandic speakers





Ég fór o'n í Main street með fimm dala cheque  
Og forty-eight riffil mér kaupiti  
Og ride út í country með farmara fékk,  
Svo fresh út í brushin ég hlaupti  
En þá sá ég moose, úti' marshi það lá,  
O my - eina sticku ég brjótti!  
Þá fór það á gallop, not good anyhow,  
Var gone, þegar loksins ég skjótti.

Guttormur J. Guttormsson  
(1878-1966)



Kar

Bryggja

Loggahús

Póní

Stasjón

Skonkur

Greid

Blakkborð

Farmari

Músdýr

Baslari

Þorpari

lifa, mæta

fyrir (fyrir, í um,)

*Hvurnig er ég að gera?*

'How am I doing?'

*Hluturinn er að það er búið að eyða...*

'the thing is...'

*Koma upp með*

'come up with'

*að hafa band við Ísland*

'to have ties to Iceland'

...eins og þeir gátu borðað af fisk\_ (acc.)  
[eins og þeir gátu borðað af fiski (dat.)]  
'...all they could eat of fish'

...það var ákaflega mikil hjálp fyrir þeim  
[það var ákaflega mikil hjálp fyrir þau]  
'that was a great help to them'



Mér (dat.)langar til að tefla

[Mig (acc.) langar til að tefla ]

'I want to play chess'

..þeim vantaði að vera þar sem var nógu mikill viður

[þeir þurftu að vera (vildu vera?)þar sem var nógu mikill viður]

'...they needed to be where there was enough wood'

Hún hafði börnin í kringum sig  
'She had the children around 'herself'.

Hann skrifaði þeim að hann mundi ekki vera (yrði ekki) kallaður í herinn.  
'he wrote to them that he would not be called into the army'.

Þeir vildu nú ekki trúa mér að ég kom (kæmi) frá Kanada  
'they would not believe me that I came from Canada'

Sumir sögðu að hann hafði (hefði) átt að keppa  
'some said that he should have competed'

Ég hélt að það var (væri) miklu kaldara  
'I thought it was much colder'



Loss of distinction between [I] og [E]

*viður* 'wood' and *veður* 'weather'

Loss of distinction between [Y] og [ö]

*flugur* 'flies' and *flögur* 'chips'

Research for the purpose of language “beautification” in 1941-1949

6250 speakers or 20% of Icelanders

All in all: every 12th Icelander

Children from the age of 10-13 years

93% of all children in this age group in Iceland

Tried to elicit natural spoken language and warned against written language as a source.

# Map2







Has spread in NA Icelandic from 1- 4th generation

Confined to long vowels

Women are more likely than men to have Flámæli

Speakers in N. Dakota are more likely than speakers in "New Iceland" to have Flámæli.

More specific grammar tests

Comparison with older speakers in Iceland

Plural

Word order

Complex sentences.

Renewed interest in Heritage languages

Research projects in Scandinavian settlements in North America

What can heritage languages tell us about the nature of :

Language acquisition

: Winnipeg, Gimli, Riverton, Arborg, Lundar,  
Portage la Prairie

: Regina, Wynyard, Foam Lake  
: Edmonton

: Vancouver, Nanaimo

: Fargo, Mountain

: Point Roberts, Blaine, Seattle

Consultants: 126 men and women

Average age: 77 years ( 26 - 98)

Icelandic was spoken to some degree in every consultant's childhood home  
Half spoke Icelandic and English from early childhood, half began speaking English  
when they started school.

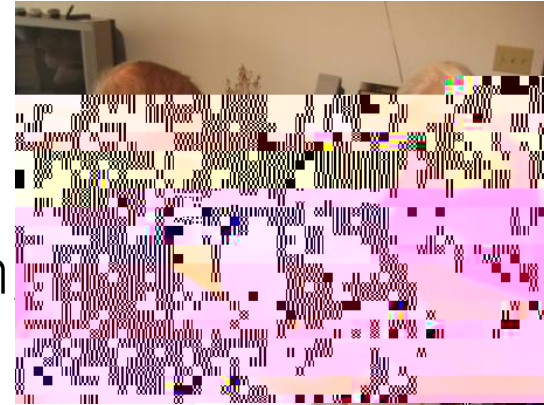
One fifth had learned how to read Icelandic before they started school

Very few read Icelandic now.



short text.

Picture identification



: Categorization of shapes, colors etc...  
( e. *language processing* )



30 elderly Icelanders compared with 60 Canadians and Americans of

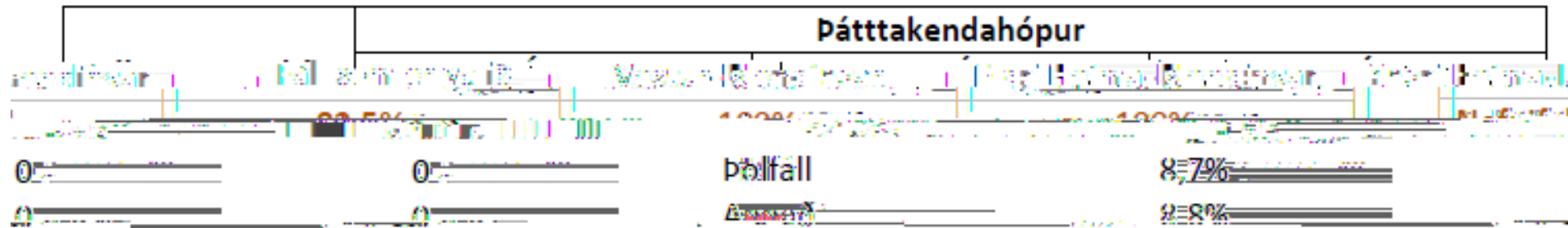


Tested NA Icelandic speakers and East Icelandic speakers. Older and younger speakers (30 pr. group) (ave. age: 77 yrs and 35 yrs.)



(1) *Fiskur er hollur matur*  
(Nom)

borða(r) fisk á hverjum degi.



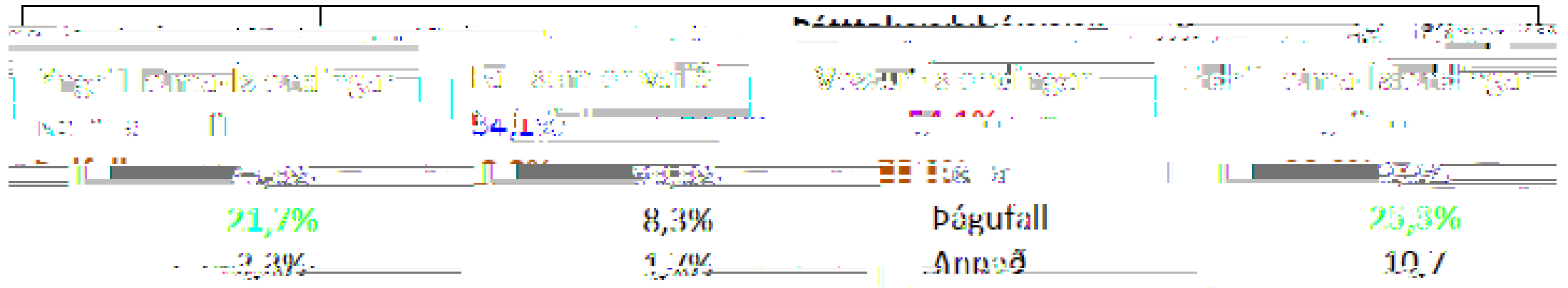
(2) *Þetta var hryllingsmynd.*  
(Dat.)

leiðast svona bíómyndir.



Langar (want)

(1) *Það er langt síðan ég ferðaðist síðast.*  
langa(r) aftur í ferðalag.



## Plural

NA Icelandic speakers use plural much like Eastern Icelandic speakers for common nouns.

## Understanding Complex Sentences

Some NAlce. speakers have difficulty understanding complex sentences that depend on case knowledge. But as do older Eastern Icelandic speakers

## Case Assignment

Some unrest in case assignment among speakers of NAlcelandic.



Certain complex features of language learned late are vulnerable

- Complex/irregular before regular

Needs sustained input to survive

- More complex sentences characteristic of formal language

- Fewer occasions to use formal language

Age in general affects language processing

- Less so for bilinguals

Culturally determined meaning outlives language

Takk fyrir!

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<http://scholar.harvard.edu/mpolinsky/publications/white-paper-prolegomena-heritage-linguistics>.
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