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An Archaeological and Archival Appraisal of "Spanish Indians" on the West Coast of Florida in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

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An Archaeological and Archival Appraisal of “Spanish Indians” on the
West Coast of Florida in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

by

Margaret F. Stack

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
Department of Applied Anthropology
College of Arts and Sciences
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Identity in Archaeology, Florida-Cuba Maritime Trade, Florida History

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Abstract

Spanish Indian is a generic term that has been used repeatedly in written documents over the past three centuries to describe a range of different social, ethnic, and economic groups in the southeastern United States. In this thesis, a comparative analysis of the material culture from Cuban fishing ranchos of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries on the west coast of Florida addresses the ways in which specific Spanish Indian artifact assemblages fit into the archaeological record. Three archaeological assemblages from known Rancho sites are detailed and analyzed. In addition, this thesis details a public archaeology project undertaken in conjunction with the Florida Public Archaeology Network, which led to the development of a traveling exhibit and public presentation on the origins of local place names. The thesis also provides suggestions for how historical archaeologists might contend with difficulties in determining and documenting identity at early historical sites in coastal Florida. The research undertaken for this thesis demonstrates a pressing need for additional data collection and research in the field. As it currently stands, however, the preliminary analysis conducted in this thesis indicates an economic basis for cultural interaction and intermarriage rather than an actual cultural synthesis, creolization, or ethnogenesis, which would imply shared cultural systems of belief and meaning. This thesis is also a proposal for a typology of ranchos. Through a cross-comparison of the similarities and differences in subsistence strategies and labor practices, a research design for rancho archaeology is outlined.
Chapter 1: Introduction

This thesis examines evidence in the archaeological and archival records for ethnogenesis or creolization at three Historic Spanish rancho settlements along the southwest coast of Florida. In addition, the majority of available information on the Spanish Fishing Rancho Period of Florida history is compiled and analyzed. This thesis is also a proposal for a typology of ranchos. Through a cross-comparison of the similarities and differences in subsistence strategies and labor practices at rancho sites, I provide the foundation for the development of a research design for rancho archaeology. This research question developed out of studies I conducted during the spring semester of 2010 with the Florida Public Archaeology Network (FPAN). Beginning in January 2010 and continuing through June 2010, I took part in an internship working for FPAN under the supervision of Jeff Moates. This internship resulted in the creation of a traveling exhibit and public presentation about the Spanish ranchos in historical Florida. The work included areas along the west coast between Charlotte Harbor to the south and the greater Tampa Bay area to the north, with a boundary near Anclote Key (Figure 1). The period studied ranges from approximately AD 1760 to 1840, although both earlier and later dates emerged during research. Beginning in April 2010, a series of public events under the collective title of “Ranchos and Regattas” hosted by FPAN has highlighted this little
Figure 1. Map of Major Ranchos in Southwest Florida from Tampa Bay to Charlotte Harbor (after Consejo de Redacción del Atlas de Cuba 1978:14-15).
known history. As part of this series, the public presentation I developed was primarily focused on certain place names in the Tampa Bay area that may have directly or indirectly received their names from some of these Spanish fishermen. This presentation was delivered at the South Florida Museum, Weedon Island, Lemon Bay in Englewood, and the Southwest Florida Archaeological Society meeting in Bonita Springs.

During my internship, I conducted background research in order to create a synthesis of the information available on Spanish Florida Gulf Coast ranchos and the individuals involved in their creation, maintenance, and ultimate disappearance or integration. This research involved examining historical records, archival documents, and archaeological site reports. While engaged in this process, I communicated with Dr. John Worth from the University of West Florida. His current research is focused on the Spanish Florida fishing ranchos and the ethnic composition of these settlements. To date, he has studied Cuban and Spanish archives to trace the lineages of Spanish Cubans living at the fishing ranchos. He has also investigated the cultural affiliations of Native Americans who intermarried with Spanish fishermen in an attempt to highlight the ethnogenesis that he believes occurred at these fishing camps over time. He has argued that the term “Spanish Indian” should be used to describe the individuals who were born as a result of intermarriage at these settlements, claiming that a new ethnicity emerged (Worth 2010, personal communication). In a paper he presented at the Society of Historical Archaeology conference in 2010, he wrote, “It seems highly likely, given documentary evidence alone, that the material culture of the Spanish Indians may be largely indistinguishable from a typical Cuban assemblage, though detailed study should
be undertaken to determine any distinguishing characteristics, however subtle” (Worth 2010). This thesis contains, in part, an archaeological study of the materials discussed by Worth.

During the course of my internship, an historical collection from Fisherman’s Key near Sanibel Island was borrowed from the State in order to develop an exhibit showcasing objects deposited during the Florida Spanish Fishing Rancho Period. The existence of similar collections obtained during the survey or excavation of known fishing rancho sites provided me with the material I needed to pursue a comparative study stemming from the work of Worth. My research seeks to determine the extent to which the archaeological assemblages from these Gulf Coast fishing rancho sites can pinpoint the degree of ethnogenesis that occurred. Through an analysis of the available archaeological assemblages collected from the known rancho sites on the southwest coast of Florida, I have attempted to determine the extent to which ethnogenesis or creolization of Spanish Indians is evident in the material culture of these settlements.

There are a number of initial investigations that can help to supplement this goal. First, I wanted to determine where most of the ranchos were located and when each was established. If possible from the literature, I am also looking to determine who the founder was of each of the individual ranchos. In this way, I would be able to trace the names of those who were the proprietors of these areas and learn what happened to them and their legacy after the fall of the ranchos around 1840. I also hope to determine how many people lived at each of the ranchos, who they were, and how they lived. It is also important to investigate whether marine resources really made up the majority of their
diet. Some historical records claim the existence of cultivated fields and tropical fruit
trees at the ranchos, and it is also possible that the fishermen traded fish for other types of
food. This is a subject that needs to be researched further to establish the level of
complexity of the societies that developed at each of the fishing communities. Finally, it
is essential to look at the types of tools utilized at each of the fishing ranchos and where
these tools originated from. The tools may point to the types of foods eaten on site as
opposed to traded. Also, if complex networks of trade were established, as some records
claim and as the Useppa collection supports, then it is possible that much of the material
culture of the Florida Gulf Coast rancho sites indicates what these networks were and
whether they were uniform along the southwest coast. All of this information is tied
together with an analysis of the assemblages in order to present a more thorough picture
of the cultural composition of the ranchos and the ethnic changes that may have occurred.

At the very least, at the closing of this undertaking, there will exist a better
understanding of the material culture of the Spanish Florida fishing ranchos and the
extent to which these archaeological assemblages document ethnic change. In essence,
this thesis combines historical and archaeological research and analysis to build a more
solid foundation of the Spanish Fishing Rancho Period of Florida history, a time that may
be little known and little studied, but one that is rich with culture, community, and
character.

Following this introduction, the second section of this manuscript reviews the
literature that is available on this subject. In this way, the scope of information that is
currently known in the historical record about the Spanish fishing ranchos is brought together in one comprehensive chapter.

The third section develops a more complete picture of the people who lived at these specific ranchos, the so-called “Spanish Indians.” This chapter highlights instances in which Spanish Indians have been mentioned in the historical record, and in what context. It also investigates the meaning behind the term “Spanish Indian” itself. This term has been used repeatedly in written documents over the course of history to describe a wide variety of different social, ethnic, and economic groups in the southeastern United States. However, there are currently no parameters for understanding this category of social entity in the historical record and no established material culture markers for identifying the presence of such groups in the archaeological record.

The fourth section of this manuscript examines the concept of identity in the archaeological record. The chapter focuses on the difficulties inherent in defining identity, both within relatively uniform ethnic groups as well as within multi-cultural groups such as those living and working at the Spanish Florida fishing ranchos. In addition, I also include a discussion on the issues specifically involved with the study of material culture and identity. This section investigates problems that stem from analyzing archaeological remains as merely passive objects rather than active representations of identity formation. The inferences that result from the comparative analysis of the known Florida rancho archaeological assemblages are evaluated within the greater context of the terms and concepts of identity and material culture. This work allows for a better understanding of how Spanish Indian collections fit into the archaeological record, and
provides a clearer indication of the difficulties in determining and documenting identity within the field of archaeology.

The fifth chapter focuses specifically on the known fishing rancho sites on the southwest coast of Florida and the archaeological assemblages from each. Detailed information on the sites themselves is presented, as well as pertinent information from previous archaeological investigations conducted in these areas. A discussion of other rancho sites from approximately the same time period is offered for comparative purposes. The material culture of each of the fishing rancho sites, both prehistoric and historic, is then analyzed. Table 1 details the periods and date ranges discussed in this section. A quantitative comparative analysis of the material culture of these sites and how these assemblages relate to one another follows.

The sixth chapter of this thesis examines a case study on Spanish Indian identity in St. Augustine and discusses theoretical concepts on identity as they specifically relate to the Spanish rancho sites on the west coast of Florida. After directly analyzing the archaeological assemblages of the Florida Gulf Coast ranchos within the context of prior studies of creolization and ethnogenesis, I conclude that there is not enough evidence contained in the material culture to support the idea that a new ethnicity emerged at these rancho sites. Instead, this chapter argues that the people who lived at the fishing ranchos adopted those practical aspects of each culture that would allow them the fullest and richest existence. In essence, the final conclusion presented in this section is that while there is still much research that needs to be conducted on this time period and these sites,
Table 1. Chronology of Florida Gulf Coast Rancho Settlement Area; Periods and Dates (Adapted from Milanich 1994:275).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Distinguishing Ceramics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Historic</td>
<td>After 1500</td>
<td>European coarseware, Spanish olive jars, glass shards, metal fragments, pipe stems, beads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caloosahatchee IV</td>
<td>A.D. 1350-1500</td>
<td>Safety Harbor, Glades Tooled, Pinellas Plain, Belle Glade Plain diminishes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caloosahatchee III</td>
<td>A.D. 1200-1350</td>
<td>St. Johns Check Stamped, Englewood ceramics, Belle Glade Plain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caloosahatchee IIb</td>
<td>A.D. 800(?)-1200</td>
<td>Belle Glade Plain, Belle Glade Red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caloosahatchee IIa</td>
<td>A.D. 500 or 650-800(?)</td>
<td>Belle Glade Plain appears, undecorated plain, Glades Red; thinner ceramics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caloosahatchee I</td>
<td>500 B.C.-A.D. 500 or 650</td>
<td>Thick, sand-tempered, plain pottery, with round and chamfered lips</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the preliminary analysis indicates an economic basis for cultural interaction and intermarriage rather than a change in ethnic identity.

The seventh chapter of this manuscript summarizes the research and the information that results from the comparative analyses within the theoretical framework of identity theory. It also provides a number of recommendations for future research, including possible areas for further archaeological investigation.

The appendix of this document contains an analysis and description of the contemporary relevance of the Spanish Rancho Period on the southwest coast of Florida, so that this information can be disseminated to the public in a way that is compatible with the broader goals of applied anthropology. Also included in the appendix are images of historic documents that were part of the archival research conducted for this thesis.
Chapter 2: Background History

The earliest historical account of the Spanish fishing ranchos of the southwest coast of Florida was written in 1770 by Bernard Romans, a British royal botanist and Deputy Surveyor General for the Southern District appointed by John Perceval, the first Earl of Egmont. It was Romans who first surveyed the southern coast of Florida from the Florida Keys to the Manatee River, and he was the one who gave the Manatee River its name (Matthews 1983:67-68). His first impression was that there were extensive fisheries in the southwest portion of the state, and that the English colonies were not taking advantage of the immense amount of commerce that existed on the west coast of Florida. He wrote that the “whole of the west coast of East Florida is covered with fishermen's huts and flakes; these are built by the Spanish fishermen from the Havannah, who come annually to make one or two fishing voyages on this coast, to the number of about thirty sail” (Romans 1775:185-186). He also made mention of the prosperity of these fishing enterprises, writing that “with these people a profitable trade might be established” (Romans 1775:186).

A possible further mention of the fishing ranchos came from William Bartram in his extensive travel journal, written between 1773 and 1776 while he was traveling the southeastern United States. In this work, he noted while in Levy County north of Tampa Bay, that “Spaniards of Cuba likewise trade here or at St. Marks, and other sea ports on
the West coast of the isthmus in small sloops; particularly at the bay of Calos, where are excellent fishing bans and grounds” (Bartram 1998:143-44). He also stated that at this location “they take great quantities of fish, which they salt and cure on shore, and barter with the Indians and traders for skins, furs, etc. and return with their cargoes to Cuba” (Bartram 1998:143-44). It is highly likely that the fishing camps and trading posts he was referring to were Gulf Coast fishing ranchos.

Beyond the account from Romans and brief mention by Bartram, there has been very little written about the ranchos or fisheries that began appearing on the islands and along the coast of southwest Florida during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The literature that does exist is typically either outdated or at odds with other sources. One of the most detailed accounts was written by James Covington and was published in the Florida Historical Quarterly in 1959. This article has been the most cited source on the Spanish fishing ranchos of Florida.

Covington described the trade relationships that existed between Cuban merchants and fisherman and the Indians living in Florida beginning in the early seventeenth century, as well as the relationship between these fisherman and the Spanish in Havana, Cuba. These relationships were born of the desire by the Florida Indians to obtain European goods, as well as the need by the Spanish to find more fertile sources of fish. As noted by Covington, after the Spanish settled Cuba, the areas surrounding the island were quickly overfished, and a new source became necessary. The proximity of Florida to Cuba as well as the abundance of estuaries located in the Gulf of Mexico made Florida the golden opportunity (Covington 1959:115). The proof of the earliest of these
exchanges between the Spanish Cubans and the Florida Indians was found in the material culture left behind. Covington observed that there were many items indicating differing levels of trade found in “Indian” mounds along the coast, including glass objects, sherds from olive jars, mirrors, scissors, and pendants (Covington 1959:115). Interestingly, the only European items that were allowed to be traded to the Indians were those that were not considered to be a weapon. At first, guns and large knives were objects that were highly restricted (Covington 1959:115).

The trade network was not one-sided, however. Before the advent of the fishing ranchos, the Florida Indians would often travel to Cuba to exchange ambergris, or an intestinal secretion of sperm whales, for iron implements and other objects. At other times, they would be visited on the peninsula by Spanish Cubans who used this hardened whale by-product to make perfume (Covington 1959:116). Ambergris was such a valued asset in Cuba that, at one point, the Spanish traded 500 tons of iron to the Indians in return for an amount of the animal product that sold for $40,000. In addition, the Spanish Cubans used the fat from animals such as manatees and sea otter to grease the bottom of their ships, and they were able to trade goods to the Florida Indians for this substance as well (Covington 1959:116). In return, the Indians typically sought items such as fishhooks and tobacco (Covington 1959:116).

Many of these same Indians later immigrated to Cuba or disappeared from the historical records, and were replaced as traders by the Seminoles migrating south from Georgia, the Carolinas, and the Florida Panhandle (Covington 1959:117). A group of Seminoles who traveled to the Charlotte Harbor area were known to have been trading
deerskins and furs to Spanish Cubans for dried and salted fish, tobacco, rum, coffee, and sugar by the middle of the eighteenth century. It is possible, however, that the Spanish may have been engaged in these practices from the beginning of the seventeenth century (Covington 1959:118). By 1770, some reports claimed that over 30 Cuban vessels were engaged in the trade relations between Florida and Havana. These fishermen worked the coastal waters of Florida each year between the end of August and the end of March, setting up their ranchos or settlements from the Tampa Bay area south to Charlotte Harbor. They caught a variety of fish including pompano, drum, sea bass, and trout, which they dried for trade. They also collected oil from the liver of sharks and the roe of drum and mullet (Covington 1959:118). These traders often lived on these ranchos throughout the year, rather than seasonally, living off of the fresh fish as well as the small gardens they planted and cultivated on the land. Each new season, the fishermen would arrive at the ranchos, where they would first prepare their fishing nets, then either repair the thatched huts that served as their shelters or build new ones. They would then build racks from wood that served as curing stations for the fish they caught. The fish would hang on wooden hooks from native silk grass lines, drying in the hot sun (Covington 1959:119). The roe, on the other hand, was treated differently. It was first soaked in a salt solution, then dried by the sun, and then pressed between wooden boards. The final stage of the curing process was to cure the roe with the smoke from burning corncobs (Covington 1959:119).

Men on the Gulf Coast ranchos were responsible for their own nets, lines, food for the trip from Cuba to the rancho, and his portion of the salt used for curing. Salt was an
essential part of the rancho operation, and it was an even more important commodity due to its regulation by Spanish law. While it would have been possible for the fishermen to boil large quantities of water from the Gulf of Mexico to obtain salt for curing, they were not allowed to. Instead, they were made to purchase around two bushels of salt for the price of one dollar and fifty cents (Covington 1959:119). This was the same salt that the very same men would have also collected from the small chain of islands to the north of Havana called Cayo Sal. They were also forced to pay a duty on the fish they brought back to sell in Cuba (Covington 1959:119). The fishing ranchos were, however, very profitable enterprises. According to Covington, each of the schooners netted an average of two thousand dollars for each voyage, and typically there were two trips per year (1959:120).

Eventually, some of the fishermen decided not to continue to make the trip back to Cuba for the remainder of the year. Instead, they established permanent settlements in the same locations that the ranchos were previously used (Covington 1959:120). They relied on the fish they caught using cast nets and the small gardens that they cultivated to sustain themselves during the off-season. These gardens often contained a number of different vegetables and citrus. Covington observed that one particular rancho resident named Andrew Gonzales managed to plant a full 10 acres of melons, pumpkins, corn, and peas along with another 15 acres of citrus trees (Covington 1959:121). Since Spanish women were not brought to these ranchos, the Spanish fisherman took Seminole women as their wives and established families with them. The children of these relationships either moved to Cuba eventually to enjoy all the rights of Spanish
citizens, or sometimes married full-blooded Seminoles in Florida (Covington 1959:120). According to Covington, the Gulf Coast fishing ranchos soon became a place where a vibrant mixing of cultures and people occurred. Most of the children of the Spanish fishermen and the Florida Indians “were born at the ranchos, spoke Spanish, and had not gone ten miles into the interior of Florida” (Covington 1959:121). In addition, a number of Seminole males came to live and work at the rancho settlements, becoming crew members on the fishing boats (Covington 1959:121).

Since Florida changed hands from the Spanish to the British, the British back to the Spanish, and then finally to the United States, the people of the ranchos were often investigated by each of the different governments. Of some concern were the numbers of runaway slaves who established colonies along the southwest coast, working with the Spanish fishermen and trading alongside them. One of these colonies was near present-day Fort Myers, possibly at Pine Island. While there is not any evidence that they were living or working at the ranchos, there are indications that they were directly involved with the Spanish fishermen. Covington noted that at Pine Island, these escaped slaves received muskets from the Spanish, and were provided with some protection by armed Spanish ships. In addition, they evidently also sold fish and wood to Havana (Covington 1959:122) Also at issue were the relationships between the Seminoles and the Spanish fishermen. The Spanish continued working at the fishing ranchos despite the number of different government investigations, however, having been found innocent of any wrongdoing, and tended to merely have to pay increased tariffs as time went on (Covington 1959:120-122).
One of the best known Florida Gulf Coast ranchos was on what was then called Toampa Island, located around five miles south of Boca Grande. Information about this settlement was documented by John Williams, who described it as a poorly cultivated area of rich shell hammock (Covington 1959:123). He also mentioned the owner of the rancho, an older man named Caldez, who had been working out of that settlement as a Spanish fisherman and trader for decades by the time Williams noted the existence of the rancho (Covington 1959). He described the owner of the rancho as “a stout, healthy, old white-haired Spaniard, very industrious; carries on fishing to a great extent; keeps two small schooners running to Havana with fish and turtle. His village is built on the west side of the island and consists of from eighteen to twenty palmetto houses, mostly occupied by various branches of his extensive family” (Covington 1959:121).

In 1832, a customs agent based out of Key West by the name of William Whitehead wrote a letter to the House of Representatives Committee on Territories in reference to the activities of the Spanish fishermen. In this letter, he described a visit to Charlotte Harbor in 1831, where he documented four different rancho settlements in that area alone. He claimed that around 130 men lived on these ranchos, half of whom were of Indian descent. About 30 of the rancho residents were women and there were between 50 and 100 children (Covington 1959:123). Others claim that the total number of people at the ranchos of Charlotte Harbor was closer to 400 (Hammond 1973:365). Their shelters were thatched palm huts, and they lived off of the fish that they caught (Covington 1959:123). Their huts were simple structures that measured approximately 15-20 feet square, and had both walls and ceilings constructed of the palmetto fronds. Inside, these
homes were very simple; they each contained a few utensils for cooking or eating, a few stools, and a basic table. Whitehead noted the presence of an angel figurine in one of these dwellings, which he noted was one of the only indications of religion at the settlements (Hammond 1973:365). Each of the rancho settlements also had at least one schooner that was used to transport the dried and salted fish back to Cuba (Covington 1959:123). Despite the presence of American fishing vessels in the same waters, there were apparently no conflicts between the Spanish and the Americans since the Americans only sold fresh fish while the Spanish always salted their catch (Covington 1959:124). According to E. A. Hammond, the American fishermen and Spanish fishermen did not even sell their goods to the same parts of Havana (1973:364). Whitehead also noted the existence of an elderly fisherman in Charlotte Harbor, who claimed to have been living there for 47 years. Whitehead went so far as to report that this man was a gentleman who always paid his taxes, was not causing any trouble, and should not have any additional taxes levied against him. This was most likely the same Joseph Caldez that had been mentioned by Williams (Covington 1959:124).

Another large-scale operation was known to have been run by Captain William Bunce at a place called Shaw’s Point at the mouth of the Manatee River. Bunce, perhaps the first American to engage in the rancho enterprise, purchased the rancho from a previous Spanish trader and managed to turn it into the most complex business on the coast (Dodd 1947). While the exact date he began his enterprise is unknown, there is documentation that shows his establishment was well underway by 1834, when one of his ships is listed as leaving for Havana with a supply of dried fish (Covington 1959:125).
Bunce’s rancho had the typical assortment of wooden drying racks and thatched huts, but it also had many other additions that made it the “most elaborately equipped rancho along the entire coast” (Covington 1959:125). He had an apartment for sleeping built for himself that had “planed and grooved boards,” “planked floors and panel doors” (Covington 1959:125). There were also numerous shops on the settlement; Bunce had a carpenter shop and a blacksmith, and many of the huts had the most up to date appliances. The fishermen of the rancho lived in circular thatched huts (Covington 1959:125).

In 1832, a tariff war began between Spain and the United States; whether this truly impacted the Spanish fishermen is a matter of debate, but it certainly placed higher restrictions on their trade. The Second Seminole War, which lasted from 1835-1842, turned out to be the nail in the coffin for even the most powerful of the Florida fishing ranchos, however. When many of the fishing ranchos began to fail after 1835, Bunce and Caldez were the only two to continue operating in full (Covington 1959). In 1835, the first incident that would spark a chain of unfortunate events was an outbreak of cholera in Havana that had a major impact on most of the Spanish fishing ranchos. Next came the war, which caused many of the military authorities to question the motives and allegiances of the Indians living on the ranchos. Bunce was known to have rallied for the full-blood and mixed-blood Seminoles who were living and working at his rancho, claiming that they had never even visited the interior of the state, they had no allegiance to the Seminole tribe, and they had never received any payments from the federal government as Seminole Indians (Covington 1959:125). In essence, Bunce was claiming
that they were not to be seen as Florida Indians; they were altogether different, and they
should not have to relocate as the Indian Removal Act stipulated. Some reports from
1837 suggested that Bunce instructed the Indians “to resist removal” (Dodd 1947). After
government raids of his property, Bunce was forced to move his operations to an area
called either Cabbage Key or Passage Key where he hoped to keep working. This did not
occur as the government again moved onto Bunce’s property, taking all people who were
suspected of having even a little Indian ancestry. They were then sent to New Orleans and
eventually relocated to Oklahoma, as was dictated by law at the time. This type of event
was replayed at all of the fishing ranchos up and down the coast, accelerating and
guaranteeing their downfall (Covington 1959). Many of the Spanish husbands and fathers
of those Indians and Spanish Indians who were forced to leave Florida followed their
spouses and children, not knowing what else to do. Others petitioned the government to
allow their families to return. According to Matthew, those who did so were well-known
in the commerce of the Gulf of Mexico. They were men such as Maximo Hernandes, Jose
Bermudas, Felipe Sevilla, Joaquin Caldes, Gregorio and Juan Montes de Oca, Antonio
Ferrara, and many more. Their argument in part, was as follows:

It had been a long established custom...recognized by the Spanish
Government at Havanna as legal to intermarry with the Indian women
of the Country. many of the children offspring of these marriages were
baptised and educated there and recognized as legitimate...Some of them
are now residing there in respectable situations enjoying all the rights and
privileges of Spanish subjects... (Matthews 1983:99).
Their pleas went unheard, however, and the demise of the Florida fishing ranchos was hastened as a result.

Whether Bunce had a role in Indian resistance during the war is not known, but his name was still highly respected in the areas in which he worked. He was elected the Hillsborough County delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1838, and he signed the first constitution of Florida in 1839. His fishery was burned to the ground in 1840 following his death (Dodd 1947). Subsequent letters to the United States government by Henry Wright, the executor of Bunce’s estate, claimed that damages needed to be paid to the estate as a result of the war. These letters claimed that Bunce had moved his original rancho, situated at the mouth of the Manatee River approximately 30 miles south of Fort Brooke, to Palm Island at the mouth of Tampa Bay in order to escape hostile Indians in the midst of the war (Dodd 1947). Both ranchos were eventually destroyed by the United States Army. In response to these letters, Wright was awarded one thousand dollars, a tenth of the requested amount for damages incurred (Dodd 1947).

Since Covington’s article and Dorothy Dodd’s written account of the fisheries of Captain William Bunce, very little further information has come to light about these particular ranchos. There have been a few studies conducted, however. In 2001, for her senior thesis at the University of Florida, Maranda Almy set out to put together a more comprehensive and accurate picture of the Spanish Fishing Rancho Period in Florida. Her work revealed some of the previously unknown locations of the fishing ranchos as well as some of the more obscure documentation on the people and places involved. In addition, she did some limited research on the Indians who were working with and marrying the
Spanish Cubans at the ranchos in order to gain a fuller picture of the vibrant cultures that were in play. From researching historic accounts, she eventually concluded that these Indians were originally Calusa, but that over time, their interactions with the Spanish and the Seminole Indians (Almy 2001:22). A burial found on what was believed to be a fishing rancho from that period in the area of Sarasota Bay was also analyzed in order to determine its ethnicity. It turned out to be of Hispanic/Cuban or Mulatto heritage instead of Native American, but it was most likely the skeleton of a rancho worker. This was the first burial to have ever been found for the Spanish ranchos of the Florida coast (Almy 2001:45). The thorough research done by Almy provides a strong foundation for the investigations necessary in order to put together a comprehensive background on the Florida fishing ranchos, and also indicates some of the most promising locations to base further studies on.

An article by Maria Z. Palov (1999) focused on the archaeological remains of the Gulf Coast Rancho Period at Useppa Island in Charlotte Harbor. After an initial visit to the area and interviews with locals about artifacts that had been found over time, Palov picked out a few specific plots of land to survey and test. While the project was merely a pilot study in order to determine the value of further excavation in the future, it revealed a number of interesting and valuable collections of artifacts (Palov 1999:142). The collection from Useppa is the primary archaeological assemblage analyzed in this thesis. Some of the recovered objects included lead bullets, beads, thimbles, and Marine and El Morro Ware, all thought to date to between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
According to Palov, these materials indicate the possibility of an earlier beginning to the Fishing Rancho Period than previously argued (Palov 1999:152-155). Many of the artifacts from Useppa were similar to ones found at Seminole sites both on the coast and further inland, all dated to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century (Palov 1999:163). These artifacts are indicative of some of the trading relationships mentioned in the article by Covington, despite the lack on Useppa of any pottery made by the Seminoles. The assemblage recovered by Palov is arguably very important due to the fact that there are a limited number of possible sites such as Useppa available for archaeological research and excavation, coupled with the dearth of information on the Fishing Rancho Period in general. As Palov (1999) noted, the collection excavated from the ballast pile at Fisherman’s Key near Sanibel Island is one of the only other known artifact assemblages collected from that area in that period. Her pilot study demonstrates that more research on the Rancho Period along the southwest coast of Florida is necessary if the historical and archaeological records of the area are to be considered complete. This collection is discussed further in Chapter 4, which discusses the fishing rancho archaeological assemblages.

An analysis of the collection found at Fisherman’s Key in 1996 is also provided in this manuscript in Chapter 4, the section on Florida Gulf Coast rancho archaeology and analysis. The assemblage was the product of two shipwrecks in the area and contained a variety of pottery, glass, porcelain, ballast, and metal, all dating from between the sixteenth century and the late nineteenth century (Snapp and Sickman 1996). In addition, there were a few prehistoric objects found but were most likely redeposited in their
current provenience due to either disturbance of the shell middens at the site or coastal erosion. Almost a full quarter of the collection is composed of olive jar sherds, which fall into three typological categories based on paste and shape. A portion of the ceramics are said to have originated in Europe, while others are clearly from areas of Mexico (Snapp and Sickman 1996). Much of the porcelain is from China (and is that of the Ming or Ch’ing dynasty) or else is a replicated version of Chinese porcelain made in Europe. The ballast may have been from Central America, most of the glass dates to the eighteenth century and is from Europe, and lead musket balls date to between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Snapp and Sickman 1996). The artifacts contained in this collection have the capacity to help paint a better picture of where the Spanish traders were traveling. These materials may also help determine what types of artifacts are diagnostic of Florida fishing rancho sites and are also indicative as to what degree of ethnogenesis or creolization is evident in the material culture (Snapp and Sickman 1996).
Chapter 3: History of the Spanish Indians

While the preceding section of this manuscript highlighted the small amount of literature that is available about the Florida fishing ranchos, much of what has been written about these settlements does not give enough weight to the most important aspect of the fishing ranchos, namely the people who lived and worked there on a daily basis. There have been numerous descriptions of the types of fish they caught, how they cured and transported the catch, where and when they would make trips to sell the fish, how much money was made during the fishing season, what types of dwellings they lived in, and how many of these residents there were. However, few sources have focused on the people themselves. Writers who have looked into the lives and identities of these people have found themselves at odds with one another. Since the very first documents were written about the Florida fishing ranchos, the people living there have been referred to as Spanish Indians, probably out of convenience or lack of a better term, if for no other reason. At the beginning of documentation on these people, those who coined this description most likely did not put much thought into the actual meaning of the term; it was just an easy way to refer to people who were obviously not purely of European descent, nor purely of indigenous descent. Of course, what these earliest historians did not fully appreciate or comprehend was that there was deeper meaning attached to such a description. They also did not seem to be concerned about lumping together a rather
diverse array of cultures under the generic label of “Indian.” Those scholars and historians who did understand that there was a distinction between the different indigenous groups soon began to dig deeper into the true identities of these rancho fishermen as well as the women and children who also lived on these settlements. There were some who claimed that the Spanish had intermarried with the few remaining Calusa of Florida (Almy 2001), others who insisted that the Spanish Indians were of Seminole descent (Neill 1956), and still others who claimed that they were neither Calusa nor Seminole, but a blending of indigenous cultures (Edic 1996; Weisman 1999; Worth 2010).

There can be very little doubt that there were interactions between the earliest Spanish fishermen and traders and the Calusa Indians of Florida. The Calusa had given their permission to Spanish fishing vessels for the purpose of fishing in Gulf waters around the middle to late seventeenth century. Due to continuous raids on the Calusa villages by migrating Yamasee and Creek Indians, however, the Calusa abandoned most of their homes to flee to the Florida Keys between 1704 and 1711 (Worth 2010:2). While the Spanish fishermen often hired indigenous people from the Keys to work as fishermen or guides, the Calusa who were living there were forced to retreat all the way to Key West by the 1740s as a result of persistent Creek militancy (Worth 2010:2). According to Worth (2010:2), by 1760, there were fewer than 70 remaining Calusa in Key West. In May of that year, the survivors left for Cuba permanently, turning over the last of their land to the Creeks (Worth 2010:2). This fact would indicate that while there may have been Calusa working on the early seasonal ranchos on the Gulf Coast of Florida, the
Spanish Indians were not descendants of the Calusa, who were essentially forced to leave the peninsula before the eventual advent of the Spanish Fishing Rancho Period in Florida. Worth claims that the true identity of the “Spanish Indians” was one that reflected “an important and largely unstudied case of creolization during the colonial period” (Worth 2010:2). He believed that the people living on the fishing ranchos were a combination of Spanish fishermen and Yamasee and Creek Indians, as well as their children who essentially became more Spanish over time, leaving their Indian traditions behind (Worth 2010:2). This idea of creolization at the Florida fishing ranchos is addressed further later in this thesis.

Maranda Almy, on the other hand, argues that the Calusa were perhaps the most likely candidates for Spanish Indian ancestry, due to their prolonged history in the area as well as their pension for a non-agricultural, hunting and fishing subsistence pattern (Almy 2001:27). As one of the largest and most influential groups of indigenous people in Florida, they were also the primary inhabitants of the lands that the fishing ranchos would come to occupy. In addition, Almy cites sources that assert the Calusa used similar cast nets to catch fish as their Spanish counterparts, and claim there were also other indications of their ability to run a large scale fishing enterprise (2001:28). She did believe, however, that while the earliest indigenous people to intermarry with the Spanish at the fishing ranchos were Calusa, it was the Seminole who would later become involved with the Spanish Cubans at the fishing ranchos (Almy 2010:33). Thus, in her estimation, there was a slow blending of Spanish, Calusa, and ultimately, Seminole culture over the course of the Florida Fishing Rancho Period.
According to Robert Edic (1996:36), the Spanish were not completely prepared for the type of fishing that was required in the estuaries of the Gulf of Mexico. He claimed that originally, the Spanish attempted to fish with hook and line in an area that was better suited for net fishing as the Calusa were known to do (Edic 1996:36). Slowly, through gradual interactions with the native Calusa, the Spanish learned to exploit the Florida estuaries more effectively. Edic postulated that the Calusa’s knowledge of the land would have been an essential tool for both the Spanish and the newly arrived Creeks, who would have also been unfamiliar with the land (Edic 1996:36). In his theory, the Calusa may have intermarried with some of the Creeks, and then became involved in working at the fishing ranchos alongside the Spanish (Edic 1996:37). If true, this situation would have eventually led to a blending of Calusa, Creek, and Spanish ancestry.

Wilfred T. Neill (1956), on the other hand, was completely convinced that the ancestry of the Spanish Indians was comprised entirely of Spanish and Seminole blood, and that the Calusa were barely involved with this blending of cultures, if at all. He claimed that these people were “Not a last remnant of the Calusa, as many students have suspected” (Neill 1956:35). Instead, he asserted that the Native Americans who married the Spanish at the Gulf Coast ranchos were “an independent band of Hitchiti-speaking Seminole who, back in the 1700s, moved out of southwestern Georgia and started down the west coast of Florida” (Neill 1956:35). They would have been in the area of Charlotte Harbor some time around 1769, where they would have first had interactions with the Spanish fishermen. Neill claimed that these Indians would have gradually assimilated to more Spanish ways of life, leaving behind most of their Seminole traditions while still
 retaining their language. They would have learned Spanish, however, and also taken on
Spanish surnames and been baptized in Cuba (Neill 1956:36).

Brent Weisman (1999:80) introduced another interesting angle to this discussion. He claims that there was archaeological evidence for the migration of Apalachee Indians to the southwest area of Florida. Diagnostic bull’s-eye-stamped pottery sherds were found sporadically down the coast, indicating this possibility. This migration would have taken the Apalachee to the Charlotte Harbor area some time in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century, and perhaps even as far south as the Florida Keys or the Ten Thousand Islands (Weisman 1999:80). If this were the case, the Apalachee would have interacted with remnants of the once powerful Calusa tribe, and eventually, with the Spanish fishermen. In this scenario, the Spanish Indians would have been a blending of Apalachee, Calusa, and Spanish ancestry (Weisman 1999:80).

By far, the most extensive research on the subject of the Spanish Indians, however, was conducted by William C. Sturtevant in 1953. He attempted to compare documentary sources on the Seminole to those on the Spanish Indians in an attempt to determine whether the Seminole truly were the indigenous group that intermarried with the Spanish. He conducted anthropological fieldwork among the Seminole in Florida, specifically looking to better understand whether there was any credence behind the possibility that the Spanish Indians were descendants of the Calusa, and whether one specific Spanish Indian individual named Chakaika was known to be Seminole (Sturtevant 1953:37). In order to determine whether the Calusa did, in fact, have any tribe members remaining on the peninsula after the middle of the seventeenth century,
Sturtevant conducted a literature review of all available documentary evidence at the time. He found that, according to Bernard Romans (1775), the Calusa, spelled “Coloosa” in his book, had essentially abandoned the peninsula of Florida by 1763. Romans claimed that approximately 80 families were known to have left the Keys and returned to Cuba in that year. Other sources, such as John Goggin (1950:20), claim that these people could not have been the last of the Calusa, since there were reports of Calusa in Florida after 1763 (Sturtevant 1953:38). In two separate sources from 1774 and 1798-1799, the town of Calusahatche or Cull-oo-sau hat-che was mentioned, located in the Charlotte Harbor area and home to some Native Americans called the “Painted People” (Sturtevant 1953:38). Whether these were Calusa is not known, however, as the town was listed as a Seminole village. A few other sources mentioned by Sturtevant that indicated the presence of Calusa after 1763 have questionable reliability, as one seems to be nothing more than a misquote of the account by Romans (Sturtevant 1953:39).

Some of the documentary evidence of the Spanish Indians from the early nineteenth century claimed that there were Choctaw Indians in and around Charlotte Harbor, who may have been living alongside remnants of the Calusa bands. This would point to a blend of Choctaw, Calusa, and Spanish heritage at the ranchos of Charlotte Harbor. In addition, there were assertions that the Muspa Indians, a Calusa sub-tribe, were in the Charlotte Harbor vicinity as well (Sturtevant 1953:41). Sturtevant noted the fact that the earliest of these “Spanish Indians” were not known to intensively cultivate the land. This fact would indicate their similarity to the Calusa tribes, although there was also evidence that these people spoke the Creek language. He discerned this information
from the account by Williams in which the “Spanish Indians” were reported to call the
Swallow River Chittahatche, or Snake River. This translation would be Muskogee or
Creek in origin, and would indicate that the “Spanish Indians” were not Calusa after all
(Sturtevant 1953:41).

There was an increase in the number of times the Spanish Indians were mentioned
in the historic record after the onset of the Second Seminole War. Much of this was due to
the fact that there was increased scrutiny of the fishing ranchos as the government and
military tried to ascertain to whom their loyalties belonged. In other words, were they
sympathetic to the cause of the Seminoles or did they consider themselves aligned with
the United States? In the end, it did not much matter either way, since they were
suspected by both sides to be aligned with the other. In fact, many of the Spanish Indians
were deported in line with the Indian Removal Act. In an account on these deportations
written by Grant Foreman (1932:365), there was a mention of seven Spaniards included
in the removal process who were left in New Orleans. Evidently, after they “objected to
going farther were left upon their promise not to return to Florida until the close of the
war” (Foreman 1932:365). They had arrived in Louisiana on a steamboat called the
Renown, which continued on to Little Rock, Arkansas. Upon arrival there on May 30,
1838, the Arkansas Gazette reported on some of the passengers, “Among those who have
gone up are about 150 Spanish Indians or Spaniards who have intermarried with the
Seminoles” (Foreman 1932:365). This account, therefore, identifies them as Seminole,
but it should be noted that there was not any indication as to how this ancestry was
known or determined. Foreman also made a habit of referring to the Spanish Indians as
“Spanish Seminole,” but again, there was no reference point for this change in terminology (Foreman 1932:373).

According to John T. Sprague (1848:99), a captain of the U.S. Infantry, there was a group of the “Spanish Indians” living in the extreme southern part of Florida, south of Lake Okeechobee, under the command of a man of mixed descent named Chakaika. Another man documented to have lived with this band was Hospetarke, a Seminole married to a Spanish woman. Sprague claimed that these people spoke “a language peculiarly their own, a mixture of Indian and Spanish. They numbered about one hundred warriors. They took no part in the war until 1839 and ’40, when, finding themselves attacked and pursued, they took arms and resisted” (Sprague 1848:99). Sprague claimed that this particular group of Indians was completely unknown and had never participated in any of the arrangements or treaties between the Seminoles and the government (1848:99-100).

The first actual uprising of this group of Spanish Indians took place along with Seminole forces against Lieutenant Colonel W. S. Harney and his troops on the Caloosahatchee river in 1839 (Sturtevant 1953:44). This group of men under Harney was there in order to establish a trading post in the vicinity, a move which had been agreed upon during a meeting between the Seminole leaders and General Alexander Macomb at Fort King. The meeting resulted in a treaty which the Seminole believed gave them the right to free use of the land in southwest Florida within the boundaries of Charlotte Harbor, the Peace River, from the Kissimmee River to Lake Okeechobee and west to Cape Sable without danger of attack by the U.S. government (Sturtevant 1953:44-46). In
other words, the Seminole believed after the meeting that they were no longer in danger of forced emigration. Not long after, they were to learn that General Macomb had not promised an end to Indian removal, but in fact, had merely suspended hostilities temporarily (Sturtevant 1953:45-46). The deception and betrayal experienced during these negotiations is most likely what led to the attack on Harney and his men, which was later referred to as a massacre (Sturtevant 1953:46). Chakaika, the known “Spanish Indian” chief or leader, was the head perpetrator of the attack on the camp, and Hospetarke was reported to have attacked the camp store (Sturtevant 1953:47). After collecting all the plundered goods they could carry, and celebrating for a reported three days after the successful attack, Chakaika and his men returned to the Everglades, where their base camp was located (Sturtevant 1953:48).

This group of Spanish Indians led by Chakaika was documented again in 1840, when they were involved in a raid on the Indian Key settlement. According to Sturtevant, not long after midnight on August 7th of that year, between 50 and 136 “Spanish Indians” were stumbled upon on Indian Key, an island located between the Upper and Lower Matecumbe Keys as they attempted to sneak up on the residents there (Sturtevant 1953:49). They then proceeded to attack the people living on the island, killing seven of them. The primary objective of the attack was believed to be the acquisition of goods from the store on the island, although it could have also been a retaliatory move (Sturtevant 1953:49). Interestingly, later eyewitness accounts of the attack by those who escaped claimed that the “Spanish Indians” knew and understood Spanish, and had been overheard speaking English (Sturtevant 1953:49).
In December of 1840, Lieutenant Harney, who had survived the raid at the camp on the Caloosahatchee River, was given the task of finding and killing the “Spanish Indians,” including Chakaika (Sturtevant 1953:49). Harney went deep into the Everglades looking for Chakaika’s camp, and eventually found and killed him. The reports after Chakaika’s death asserted that he was the largest Indian in all of Florida, and that he was around six feet tall, was over 200 pounds in weight, and was known by the members of his tribe as the strongest man among them (Sturtevant 1953:53). The other “Spanish Indians” found at the camp were either killed as well, or taken as captive and sent to Tampa. These individuals were put under the control of Major Bellnap and were sent to the Indian Territory as part of the Indian Removal Act. According to Sturtevant, these particular “Spanish Indians” then vanished from the historic record until 1932, when it is possible they may have been the Spanish ancestors referred to by a number of Oklahoma Seminole in an anthropological account written by Wilton Marion Krogman in 1935 (Sturtevant 1953:54).

The last mention of the “Spanish Indian” band that was led by Chakaika was short and vague. In this instance, Captain M. Burke was guided through the Everglades in October of 1841 by a “Spanish Indian,” possibly named “Joe,” in order to determine the number of Seminoles still present in the area (Sturtevant 1953:55). The remainder of reports on the bands still in Florida did not mention any “Spanish Indians” after 1841; the only bands listed by John T. Sprague were “Seminole, Creek, Tallahassee, Mikasuki, Yuchi, Hitchiti, and, in 1847, four ‘Choctaw’ warriors” (Sturtevant 1953:56). According
to Sturtevant (1953:64), it is possible that the Choctaw mentioned were the “Spanish Indians.”

Sturtevant concluded his investigation of the origins and ancestry of the “Spanish Indians” by claiming that these people “were perhaps Choctaw, perhaps Calusa remnants, or perhaps a more independent Seminole band” (Sturtevant 1953:64). He also noted that the contemporary Seminole groups he conducted research among claimed that Chakaika was Mikasuki Seminole. There was also a recognition among the modern Seminole that their earlier ancestors most likely interacted with non-Muskogee and non-Mikasuki indigenous groups before ever arriving in Florida. Therefore, Sturtevant claimed that it was highly possible that the “Spanish Indians were a group of Mikasuki-speakers who reached South Florida somewhat earlier than the other Seminole, and had closer relations with the Spanish in South Florida and Cuba” (1953:64). He did admit, however, that the actual solution to the mystery was still unknown, and that only further archaeological and documentary investigations could determine the truth.

It is also necessary to acknowledge the basic fact that as far as the documentary evidence indicates up until this point, not a single author, scholar, cartographer, historian, or anthropologist inquired as to how the Spanish Indians identified themselves. Did they see themselves as Spanish? Did they identify as Indian? Or Seminole? Or Calusa? Or did the Spanish Indians see themselves as mixed blood in the same way Europeans saw them? Perhaps they identified themselves as something different altogether. It is even possible that the Spanish Indians did not bother to place these types of labels on themselves. While a definitive answer to the above questions of identity may never be
reached, it is important to attempt to understand who the people of the Gulf Coast fishing ranchos really were. To get at the heart of these inquiries, in light of the fact that these populations of Spanish Indians have essentially disappeared, it is imperative that the material culture of the Florida fishing ranchos be consulted.

Contemporary Relevance

The research that has been conducted on the Fishing Rancho Period of Florida history not only illuminates information from the past, but also helps to create a better understanding of certain details of the present in southwest Florida. This section of the manuscript is a look into the story behind a few local area place names and their relationship with the Cuban fishing ranchos. They include Maximo Point and Bunce’s Pass in Pinellas County, Miguel Bay and Perico Island in Manatee County, and Phillippi Creek in Sarasota County.

Places are sometimes named after a particular feature of the land, either natural or man-made. Examples of this are Crystal River or Fort Myers. Places can also take on a name as a result of a misunderstanding, a miscommunication, or a poor pronunciation. A local example of this is Miguel Bay. In this case, the place name has often been anglicized from its original spelling or pronunciation. Many people may have heard of MacDill or MacGill Bay, located along the southern shore of Tampa Bay near Terra Ceia. Old maps even have an incorrect place name inscribed on them. However, this was merely the mispronunciation or anglicized version of Miguel Bay, named after Miguel
Guerrero, an early homesteader in Manatee County and fisherman of Spanish and Minorcan descent.

Places can even be given a mistaken name. An example of this is Nome, Alaska, which was originally called “no name” but was copied down wrong and ended up with its current spelling (Barber 1994:18). Within this document, however, the places that are being described were named after specific, but somewhat little known historic figures. These men were the fishermen or descendants of the fishermen who participated in the eighteenth and nineteenth century maritime trade with Cuba. Many of these fishermen and their families worked at or set up their own fishing enterprises, known as fishing ranchos, along the Florida Gulf Coast from Charlotte Harbor to Tampa Bay. So who exactly were these fishermen? What was their story? And how did their names end up affixed to the lands they operated from? To answer these questions, it is necessary to start south of Tampa Bay in Charlotte Harbor, at a little key near Useppa Island.

It is there that the historic records first make mention of a name people in Manatee County are likely to be familiar with: Perico Pompon. Beginning in 1790, the Spanish government offered free grants of land to anyone willing to settle areas of Florida, which was vastly unpopulated and a harsh environment at the time. After the United States claimed Florida as a US territory in 1821, these land grants were re-evaluated for accuracy and those that were found to be valid were honored. In 1828, Mr. Pompon lived on a small key called Key Pelew, now known as Cayo Pelau, with his wife and three children (Florida Memory 2010). He was forty years old at the time and he was
a fisherman by trade. He had evidently been fishing those waters since 1815. At the time, many fishermen based their fishing ranchos in Charlotte Harbor.

A well documented fishing rancho, located in the vicinity of Cayo Pelau, was the base for operation of Joseph Caldez (Matthews 1983:72). Perico Pompon either fished for Caldez, sharing in the profit, or it is possible that he operated his own rancho alongside Caldez. Either way, historical records show that the two fishermen were on good terms. Caldez vouched for Perico on his claim for land under the Spanish Land Grants (Florida Memory 2010). While unconfirmed and possibly invalid, this documentation indicates that for a short time, Perico Pompon laid claim to ownership rights of that island, the little Cayo Pelau.

The next mention of Perico in the historical records is 1841 and these accounts place him much further north, near the mouth of the Manatee River. At this time, he was working with two other Spanish fishermen by the names of Phillippi Bermudez and Manuel Olivella (Fogarty 1972:200). Also according to many sources, Perico was one of the men who helped Josiah Gates make his way to the land he would eventually homestead and that later became the village of Manatee, near present-day downtown Bradenton (McDuffee 1961). Perico and his two friends evidently lived on a nearby island, where they worked and lived. They would often visit Gates and his family, bringing roe, mullet, and sea-grapes as gifts (McDuffee 1961).

It is very possible that this was the island that would eventually be given the name “Perico Island”. Why he ended up so far from his original location is not known, but one theory is that due to many of the Indian raids on the fishing ranchos during the Second
Seminole War, he and his family were forced to flee along with many of the other fishermen and their families from Charlotte Harbor. Many of these people sought refuge at the fishing rancho of Mr. William Bunce, who offered them what shelter and safety he could during the war (Matthews 1983:92).

William Bunce was not Spanish nor was he a fisherman. By trade he was a sea captain in the mercantile business and entrepreneur. Originally from Maryland, Bunce witnessed firsthand the success of trade with Cuba while in Key West, throughout the 1820s, and decided to finance a fishing rancho to be located in the area of Tampa Bay. At the time, Hillsborough County encompassed all of Sarasota, Manatee, and Pinellas counties and in 1834, Florida Governor DuVal named Bunce the Justice of the Peace for all of Hillsborough County.

Not long after, Bunce found an area at the mouth of the Manatee River, a location where there had already been a fishing rancho (Matthews 1983:75-76) and built his own fishing operation. He likely employed many of the same workers from the previous rancho some of which had been born and raised along the Manatee River and southern shores of Tampa Bay. A few even had grandchildren there (Matthews 1983:76). At first, he operated the rancho seasonally and used Enterprise, a 45 ton sloop owned by his friend and associate Fielding Browne, to transport the fishermen’s catch (Matthews 1983:76).

Beginning in the winter of 1836 and 1837, Spanish fishermen and Spanish Indians of the ranchos often acted as guides for the American forces involved in the outset of the Second Seminole War. The fishing operations were often the targets of the Seminole attacks for this reason (Matthews 1983:78). However, due to the Indian heritage of many
of the rancho workers and their families, they were also targeted by the United States government. Afraid of losing his workforce, Bunce later spoke out against their removal under the Indian Removal Act (Matthews 1983:98).

Due to increased attacks on the fisheries by the Seminoles, Bunce apparently moved his rancho to a location northeast of Passage Key nearer to the safety of the large American ships (Matthews 1983:98). The location of this was probably where Mullet Key is today but is referred to in the historical record as Palm Island. Soon thereafter, in September of 1936, he had the fishing rancho moved from along the shorelines to the sparse interior of the barrier island for further safety (Matthews 1983:98). Due to the evacuation of Caldez’ rancho in Charlotte Harbor, also in 1836, Bunce’s rancho swelled to 163 people and could have been the reason for the relocation of Perico and his family as well (Matthews 1983:92).

In 1837, around 700 Seminoles escaped from Fort Brooke in Tampa the night before their removal. Suspected of involvement, Bunce’s rancho was raided and over one hundred people were taken captive, interrogated, but eventually let go (Matthews 1983:99). In the spring of 1838, Jesup ordered soldiers to the rancho while the men were gone. The soldiers seized all women and children of Indian blood and transported them to New Orleans to join a party of emigrating Seminoles. After learning of the deportation, some husbands followed their families to the northern gulf coast. Twenty one others, however, petitioned the government to be allowed to remain in Florida.

Later in 1838 Bunce was elected Hillsborough County’s delegate to the Constitutional Convention. On January 11, 1839, he signed Florida’s first constitution.
Sometime between then and October 1840, Bunce died. In that year, Captain S.M. Plummer landed ashore at Palm Island from the steamer Thomas Salmond under master Michael Frederick (Matthews 1983:101). By order of the new commander, General Armistead, Bunce’s rancho was burnt to the ground. His legacy survives, however, as Bunce’s Pass in Manatee County is named in honor of Bunce and the rancho he owned and operated in the vicinity.

Today, a small section of city-owned land in south St. Petersburg continues the legacy of another fisherman of Spanish Cuban descent. The name Maximo Point refers to the point of land where a city park, aptly named Maximo Park, is situated. This name is shortened from the full name of the first owner of the land, Antonio Maximo Hernandez. Maximo is known to have been working at Bunce’s original rancho at the mouth of the Manatee River before the war and then at the Palm Island rancho afterwards. He also spent time during the second Seminole War working at Fort Armistead where documents show that he earned $1 per day (Matthews 1983:109).

Maximo received his original permit to his land claim on March 25th, 1843 after filing on March 9th of that same year. According to one source, Maximo took Robert E. Lee up the Caloosahatchee River in search of the Seminoles during the war (St. Petersburg Times 1999). Supposedly, this is what eventually led to a commendation of Maximo from the war department. The acclamation may have also resulted in an award of a land grant under the Armed Occupation Act of 1842. The act created a policy for settlers to acquire 160 acres of land as long as they were eighteen years or older, could clear up to five acres, and carry arms. In addition, the land could not be within two miles
of a military post considered permanent, the grantee could not own another 160 acres, and coastal islands were not included.

In his land grant documentation, Maximo claims he was a Florida resident since 1814 (Bureau of Land Management 2010). Much of this time was most likely spent fishing at one of the coastal ranchos. Between the time Maximo received the land and the devastating hurricane of 1848, he operated his own fishing rancho from there. Maximo Point is located to the west of Pinellas Point, or Punta Pinal as it was known then. Maximo was St. Pete’s first homesteader, and he also supposedly worked as Colonel Brooke’s guide on hunting and fishing trips through the keys (Arsenault 1998:252).

Unfortunately, the hurricane in 1848 completely destroyed the homestead and rancho on Maximo Point. Some sources say Maximo returned to Havana (Arsenault 1998:252). But his story doesn’t end there. Some interesting circumstances surrounded this land after a likely permanent move to Cuba.

On his documentation for the land grant, Maximo claims he is a widower. However, there were suspicious claims to his land after he returned to Cuba. An alleged wife of his, Dominga, had the land transferred to her after his supposed death in 1852, four years after any mention of him in the historical record. Dominga remarried a Frenchman but never paid taxes and didn’t record the deed to the land until 1887. It was also somehow sold twice to two different people who evidently never occupied the property (Fuller 1972). Instead, it was eventually sold for unpaid taxes and ended up in the hands of the city of St. Petersburg.
Another Spanish fisherman who probably worked with Maximo at Bunce’s rancho and who certainly knew Perico Pompon was Phillippi Bermudez. Unlike Perico, who moved from a rancho in the south to give his name to an island further north, Phillippi worked at Bunce’s rancho and then gave his name to Phillippi Creek, which is south of Tampa Bay near present day Sarasota. During the Second Seminole War, Bermudez had also been at William Bunce’s rancho on Palm Island. Phillippi apparently had two Indian wives who were, along with his two sons and three daughters, taken from their rancho and deported in 1838. The next mention of Phillippi Bermudez in the historical record is in 1841, when Josiah Gates and his family met the trio of fishermen mentioned earlier in this paper (Matthews 1983:92).

Phillippi spoke good English as well as Seminole and according to The History of Manatee County by Joseph Simpson, the “kind-hearted” owner of the principal rancho near the Gates settlement was Phillippi (Simpson 1975). Josiah’s son, Edward Franklin Gates, called him “Uncle Phillippie” (Simpson 1975). Phillippi also supposedly took care of the ailing six-year old when they first moved to the area. But, Phillippi drops out of the historical record until an 1847 survey done by A.H. Jones, which revealed one neighbor south of present-day Whitaker’s Bayou in Sarasota (Matthews 1983:175). The notation, “Phillipi’s house and clearing,” is apparently the rancho of Phillipi Bermudez located in the vicinity of present-day Cherokee Park. As far as intensive research could determine, there is no record of the land ever being granted to Phillippi, so it is very possible that he was essentially a squatter. The first record of Phillippi Creek being called such was in
1878 in Charles Abbe’s postal location site record on June 18 of that year (Matthews 1983:320).

The last of these fishermen that was researched is Miguel Guerrero, one of the few remaining Spanish fishermen to occupy land in the Tampa Bay area in the mid to late 1800s. Even when he began his rancho, the era of the large, prosperous fishing ranchos was coming to an end. Miguel was born in 1810 on the Balearic Island of Minorca in Spain (Fogarty 1972:199). During the Manatee Census of 1860 he reported himself 50 years old. He arrived in Tampa Bay in 1848 and was aided by the trio of Manuel Ollivella, Perico, and Phillippi (Fogarty 1972:200). On 15 March 1856 he married Frederica Kramer who was the Bavarian niece of the Atzeroth’s, the first permanent settlers on Terra Ceia Island in Manatee County. Miguel and Frederica first settled the land adjacent to Miguel Bay and a piece of land known today as Boots Point. It is likely that their original living quarters was a palm-thatched hut (Fogarty 1972:202). But, Miguel later added a log-cabin after the birth of their first child, Michael, in 1857. In total, Miguel and Frederica had five children, four boys and a girl.

Miguel managed his rancho as a small fishing camp that relied on Cuban “smacks” to market his catch. These sloops ran between 31 and 39 tons and were outfitted with saltwater holds or tanks to keep the fish alive rather than curing the catch (Matthews 1983:72). The boats would make commercial trips to Havana every ten days to two weeks as opposed to the earlier, larger fishing rancho operations, which would have cured the fish and then made the trip to Havana only every few months (Matthews 1983:68-69). In addition to working as a fisherman, Miguel enlisted in military service
for the Second and Third Seminole Wars. He also served at the beginning of the Civil War but was forced to stop due to health problems. He suffered from chronic rheumatism, and after a hospitalization in Knoxville in 1863, the armed services discharged him due to disability (Fogarty 1972:205). He then served the war efforts back at home with Frederica by providing farm products and fish.

In 1868 Miguel homesteaded his land, the area directly next to what we know today as Miguel Bay. Unfortunately, tragedy struck the Guerrero family four months later. A yellow fever epidemic hit the area and claimed the lives of his wife and his sons, Michael and Frederick. Not long after, Miguel himself succumbed to the disease. The remaining Guerrero children, Christopher and Mary were adopted by Reverend Lee from Manatee while Robert was taken in by John and Mary Fogarty of Fogartyville near Bradenton. Robert took their last name and was later deeded his deceased fathers land (Fogarty 1972:210). Over the years and even well into the latter half of the 1900s, the body of water that had been given Miguel’s name was often times misspelled and mispronounced to MacDill or MacGill. The wrong place name even appeared on nautical charts and travel maps into the 1900s. This has now been changed to the correct spelling and pronunciation on most maps and hopefully in the lexicon of those that know of the small bay.

When navigating through Bunce’s Pass, fishing at Phillippi Creek, or picnicking at Maximo Park, it is important to remember the Spanish fishermen who once lived, worked, and raised their families on these lands. It is also significant to note that the thriving fishing market of southwest Florida had its origins in the pioneering efforts of
the men and women of the eighteenth and throughout the nineteenth centuries who worked on the Spanish fishing ranchos along the Gulf Coast of Florida.
Chapter 4: Identity of the Spanish Indians

One of the main goals of this research project is to understand the extent to which the material culture of the Fishing Rancho Period in southwest Florida suggests that fishing rancho communities underwent a process of creolization. This concept partially emerged from previous research conducted by Worth (2010), who postulated that Florida fishing rancho settlements were a unique example of the blending of cultures in the New World. In a paper he presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Historical Archaeology, Worth (2010) suggested:

The Spanish Indians of Southwest Florida were neither Seminole nor Calusa, but instead represent a remarkable example of an emergent creole community that developed during the late eighteenth- and initial nineteenth-centuries between Creek and Yamasee Indians and the Spanish fishermen based in Regla, Cuba, who together developed a symbiotic (and eventual familial) relationship among the southern Gulf coast of peninsular Florida, and who preceded the Seminole presence in southern Florida by many decades.
In addition, Worth believes that the lifestyles of the people living at the fishing ranchos had become culturally Spanish by the 1830s, and that this was an indication of “an important and largely unstudied case of creolization during the colonial period” (Worth 2010:2). Other scholars, such as Brent Weisman, have argued that the Spanish Indians were not an ethnic group, but were undergoing “a process, a historical series of intensifying responses to the unfolding of the world economy as expressed in the Florida colony” (Brent Weisman, personal communication, 2010).

Due to the lack of historical documentation on this subject, as well as the unfortunate fact that these populations were essentially lost to history due to Indian Removal during the Second Seminole War, the only evidence available to evaluate these contrasting ideas is the material culture of the Florida fishing rancho settlements. This chapter examines the archaeological theory underlying analyses of the material culture of the fishing ranchos, and also details the difficulty in attempting to understand notions of identity from material remains.

*Creolization and Ethnogenesis*

The term “creolization” is complex, a word fraught with many implications and meanings for how people identify themselves. While the word itself did not come into existence until the nineteenth century as a means for defining emergent populations in the New World, the root for the word has been in use since the sixteenth century (Stewart 2007:1). The term “creole” was originally used to identify those people who had ancestry in Europe, or the Old World, but who were born in the Americas, or the New World. The
Beginning in the seventeenth century, the word creole became used as an indicator of the blending of languages or the creation of a sub-language, which was used in some areas to allow interaction between native populations and Europeans. In the twentieth century, the generally accepted definition of creolization became “the linguistic restructuring in the domains of grammar, phonology, lexicon, and syntax involved in the formation of creoles” (Stewart 2007:2). Of note, James Deetz (1975:11) directly compared material culture to language and suggested that “the structural and syntactic analyses of language have...ready application to artifacts.” His argument stemmed from the simple fact that language, in and of itself, is the manifestation of an altered substance. He suggested that this substance “is air and the modification is in the size and shape of the vibrating air mass and the frequency variations imparted to it by the vocal cords” (Deetz 1975:11). In this way, language is as much a part of how people physically change their environment as material culture. Thus, if creolization is defined as a blending or altering of language, it can also be used to define the process involved in the blending or altering of other aspects of the human environment, including the production of material culture. In fact, as noted by Stewart (2007:5), the terms “creole” and “creolization” “have meant lots of different things at different times,” and these definitions “did not depend on the writing of academics in order to travel.” The terms themselves were being used by some of those people that they were applied to, and were spread to various locations around the world in this way. In the nineteenth century in the Americas, the word “creole” became more of a description of the “pure blood local,” opposed to the mixed “mestizo,” a person born of
the relationships between indigenous populations, blacks, and whites (Stewart 2007:7). At the same time, the term “creole” was only applied to blacks in Haiti, and only to whites in Louisiana and on the island of Martinique (Stewart 2007:8). Thus, it is apparent that there is no one standard definition of this word that can be utilized. However, it is important to note that, compared with the other definitions of the term explained above, the concept of mixture as “creole” is equally valid. According to Stewart, in Mauritius, people are considered to be “creole” if they have even one drop of non-Caucasian blood in their bloodline, thus distinguishing them as mixed rather than white (Stewart 2007:8).

It is also essential to remember that the different definitions of these terms carried with them either negative or positive implications, depending on the people involved and the context of their situation. For example, the initial reaction to those Europeans who were born in the New World and considered creole or creolized, was largely negative despite the pure blood that flowed through their veins. In other words, those who were born in the New World were looked down upon by those born in Europe. According to Deagan (1983:30), those born in Florida were called “criollos,” and those born in the Old World were called “peninsulares.” The “criollos” were seen to be inferior to the “peninsulares” in both physical and mental ability as a result of exposure to the climate of the New World, which was believed to initially cause rapid maturation followed by a decline in physical and mental capabilities (Deagan 1983:30). However, despite the way Europeans considered the “criollos” to be less intelligent or physically capable, those living in the Americas soon came to embrace their identities as creoles or “criollos.” While this mentality by the “criollos” cast a positive light on the term as such, it also
allowed for a negative or racist view toward the indigenous populations. According to Stewart (2007:1-2), communities “in the Americas appropriated and recast creolization as a more fortunate process productive of cultures and individual abilities distinct from, and possibly superior to, those found in the Old World.” In essence, in order to rid themselves of the negativity associated with the term as it had been previously applied, the Europeans of the New World simply attached the negative implications to another group. The term creolization, therefore, is one that carries both negative and positive connotations at different times and for different people. Thus, it is important to utilize the concept with caution.

Leland Ferguson (1992), in his analysis of early African American pioneer life, uses creolization theory to help describe the development of African American culture over time. He argues that, while the term “creole” evolved out of the racial and cultural mixing that took place in the New World, the idea of “creole cultures” does not necessarily need to be applied to an analysis for it to be valid (Ferguson 1992:xli). Instead, he states that there is also a place for analyses of political and social interaction in creolization theory, areas of study that would focus on the process of creolization rather than the outcome. Ferguson states that extreme differences in cultural blends, historical contexts, and simple demographics led to very different creolized populations throughout the New World. Thus, one model for creolization is not nearly adequate. In addition, he notes that even on a single plantation, vast differences in cultures caused the production of numerous identifiable cultural norms rather than one new creolized culture (Ferguson 1992:xli; Braithwaite 1971). He includes in his discussion a number of
creolization models that can each be utilized under different analytical circumstances. For instance, he describes one model in which the material items of a particular culture are analyzed as the words of a language, while the production and utilization of these items are studied as the grammar or structure of the language. This allows for a more thorough understanding of how change occurs over time in creolized communities, since the structural basis of cultural praxis is examined as well as external, observable features (Ferguson 1992:xlii; Joyner 1984). This model could be used to analyze the artifacts of the fishing ranchos as well. While the types of artifacts recovered from the fishing rancho sites were categorized as predominantly Spanish or European in origin, this observation only allows for superficial analysis of the materials. In the creolization model discussed by Ferguson, it would be equally important to study how exactly these European artifacts were utilized. It is possible that the “grammar” and structure, or the cultural rules determining the use of these items, were principally Native American in origin. This, however, would be difficult to determine without further documentation on the ways in which items were used at the fishing ranchos, or without proper evidence of methods of utilization. In addition, Ferguson notes that many scholars of archaeology, including Charles Orser, have suggested that the most significant social relationships tend to be those that are occupational. The “most appropriate analytical categories for such studies are economics and power” (Ferguson 1992:xliii). This is certainly an area for further investigation at the fishing ranchos of the Gulf Coast of Florida.

Shannon Lee Dawdy (2000), in her studies on the archaeology of creolized communities in Louisiana, provides three standard definitions of “creole” and
“creolization” that can be utilized. The first definition she discusses is the one which returns to the idea of “creole” as a person who is born in the New World as the result of colonialism. In this case, “creolization means the birth of a colonial culture with the birth of a native generation-a transplantation of the Old World in a new place-a creole tomato, a new variety” (Dawdy 2000:109; Deetz 1977, 1993; Johnson 1992:n12). Basically, a “creole” in this case is a slice of the Old World placed in the New World. Whether the new, transplanted population merely reproduces the culture of the old world or creates its own is contingent on the environment and other contextual factors (Dawdy 2000:109).

The second definition for creolization that Dawdy offers is one that reflects the immigrant experience in America. In this situation, to become “creolized” is to become part of an already established community of Creoles. Dawdy uses the example of Spanish and German immigrants arriving in Louisiana during colonial times and intermarrying with the local population, learning their customs, lifeways, and language (2000:110). While these newly arrived immigrants did contribute to the cultural mixing with their architecture and cooking, they predominantly took on the culture of the locals. According to Dawdy (2000:110), “this form of creolization also meant that shared language and culture cut across divisions of race and caste.” The final definition of creolization that she offers is the racial definition that specifically and literally means the “interbreeding of diverse peoples and figuratively the hybridization of cultures” (Dawdy 2000:110; Deagan 1983:4). In these cases, there is not an obviously dominant force that imposes itself upon another culture; instead, different cultures come together and compete, share, and eventually merge. Dawdy (2000:110) claims that “interracial and multiethnic
households are the main transformative agents of this type of creolization”. These three meanings can be shortened to “transplantation,” “ethnic acculturation” and “hybridization” (Dawdy 2000:110). Her goal in introducing these three definitions is to urge archaeologists to look at the many different ways in which creolization can be approached in both the historic and archaeological records. Along with the “vernacular uses of creole,” these meanings of creolization should lessen the amount that archaeologists merely cling to basic acculturation models and definitions to account for cultural change over time (Dawdy 2000:110). In addition, Dawdy also offers some guidelines as to what archaeologists might expect to see materially for each of these transformative stages of creolization. First, in the “transplantation” model, she argues that newly assimilated people and first generation Americans would try to reproduce the Old World in their new surroundings. If economically viable, they would attempt to use imported goods from Europe, and they would try to mimic the architecture and foodways of their home country. Their children, the “native creoles,” would try to incorporate elements of the New World into their daily lives, although remnants of the Old World culture would still be visible. Thus, “foreign materials, designs, and ideas will be common and there will be great variation in sites and artifact collections” (Dawdy 2000:111). In conjunction with the second definition, “ethnic acculturation,” material goods would be better defined in terms of household customs, consumables, diet, and architectural traditions. In other words, the newly arrived immigrants would take on more of the “material identity of one of the dominant ethnic groups” and would more readily abandon Old World traditions (Dawdy 2000:111). A large reason for this would be for the
new settlers to strengthen their ethnic identity. Finally, the archaeology of the “hybridization” creolization definition would reflect “a freer exchange of ideas, materials, and even people (through intermarriage) between ethnic groups that are now permitted to form new alliances” (Dawdy 2000:111). In this scenario, change would flow in both directions, and new customs and traditions would be formed out of a blend of the old styles and lifeways. The differences between ethnicities would cease to be clear, and much of the weight given to objects from previous generations would be lessened. Artifact assemblages would thus contain much greater variability, and site patterning for different economic classes would be varied as well (Dawdy 2000:111). This particular definition of creolization does seem to align somewhat with the Florida fishing ranchos, in that the cultural interaction at the ranchos would suggest such an intermingling of ideas and customs through intermarriage, and to an extent, new alliances. The archaeological assemblages from these sites, however, do not indicate equitable change flowing in both directions. This idea is explored further in Chapters 5 and 6. It is important to note that these definitions and descriptions of archaeological expectations are not meant as strict or predictive models, but instead are meant as the beginning of a discourse on the many possible meanings and outcomes of the process of creolization in the New World. They “begin to trace the cyclical nature of cultural creation at the material level” (Dawdy 2000:111).

Patricia Galloway also utilized creolization theory in her work on the Choctaw in the southeast. Her goal was to try to determine the origins of Choctaw tribe formation both by studying the historical documentation as well as the archaeological record. She
acknowledges that “only in exceptional cases have archaeologists been willing to attach an ethnic name to a specific pattern with any conviction,” because “in the study of archaeology it has become abundantly clear that the archaeologists model of social process is likely to bias the very evidence that is recovered” (Galloway 1995:8). This is one of the problems associated with using a creolization model to determine whether ethnicity or cultural change is evident in the archaeological record. Galloway also notes that while archaeologists tend to associate certain patterns in material culture with certain cultural groups, this is not the same as implying ethnicity from these cultural markers (1995:265). Instead, a number of factors needs to be taken into consideration when examining ethnicity, not the least of which is the “convention of boundary maintenance as understood by one particular social group” (Galloway 1995:265). In other words, once a group has decided to eliminate the cultural or ethnic differences between themselves and to call themselves by a particular name, that is when a new ethnicity has formed, and not before (Galloway 1995:265). This is also true of the historical record, in which Europeans may call a group by a certain name, as was the case with the Choctaw and the Spanish Indians. This name, given by outsiders, does not have any credibility unless that is the identity the group itself has assumed (Galloway 1995:265). This is the difficulty inherent in studies of creolization, when the documentary and archaeological evidence are hard to come by and are often at odds with one another. As Galloway describes of her own research in this arena, she is “caught between history and anthropology, using the glimpses of a few documented events and the synthetic configurations of archaeological ‘cultures,’ bound together none too securely with theories of social change” (1995:338).
One interesting notion presented by Galloway in terms of the forces behind creolization is that while the European colonizers were acting to benefit themselves, the native people were wholly aware of their place in this situation and acted in ways to avoid becoming expendable (1995:349). In other words, they deliberately interacted with the Europeans in economically viable ways in order to become “necessary to the creation of wealth for Europeans” (Galloway 1995:349). This would introduce an economic motive for intermarriage and the blending of cultures, lending agency to the native people who were forced to share their land for European profit. For example, using this idea as a model, for the Spanish Indians of the fishing ranchos, economic benefit would have been the primary impetus behind the joining together of their diverse cultures. Also of interest is the concept that Galloway (1995:353) puts forth of the maintenance of “little tradition” in colonized societies. What she proposes is that in a world where so much of the native tradition was lost during long periods of disease and warfare, the surviving material culture would be indicative of the “portable knowledge,” such as hunting, gathering, planting, and any other subsistence techniques, rather than the more sacred traditions of religion or status (Galloway 1995:352). This is a valuable concept in studies of culture contact between the Spanish and Native Americans. The Spanish Indians of the fishing ranchos may have simply utilized aspects of each of their cultures that were practical, and a portion of this may have been the “little tradition” preserved among the native segment of their population.

Mark Groover (2010:100) emphasizes the importance of agency and process involved in creolization rather than on the “static categorization” that can result from
these types of analysis. He notes that individuals within a culture can “implement a wide range of strategies to coexist, such as conscious assimilation, the maintenance of a dual public-private cultural identity, and the creation of new positions not present in society” (Groover 2000:100; Parrillo 1990:520-524). He suggests that creolization studies should form the intermediate arena of analysis that falls between a model of complete assimilation and a model of complete pluralism (Groover 2000:101). He also notes that many of the elements that are seen to be shared between two or more different cultures are those that are related to the greater culture of consumerism and capitalism inherent among the colonizing forces (Bodley 1997; Groover 2000:101; Orser 1996). In other words, it is important to recognize that economic advantage often plays an important role in the types of cultural elements that are shared between diverse groups that come together. As an example, he presents the progressive faction of the Cherokee of western North Carolina, who were primarily composed of multiethnic households, headed by a Cherokee wife and a European-American male. These households typically adopted aspects of American culture, especially those that would further their own financial interests. Groover (2000:103) states that they were often “involved in economic activities that would benefit from accommodation of American political interests.” The material culture that represented these households was comprised mostly of items that had been commercially manufactured rather than of any traditional objects (Groover 2000:103). Archaeologically and historically, there are clearly parallels to the Spanish Indians of the Florida fishing ranchos.
Finally, rather than using the concept of creolization per se, Kent Lightfoot refers to culture contact between indigenous Americans and European colonizers as “entanglement,” a situation that had very different outcomes in different places and under different circumstances. He explores the outcome of culture contact at and the archaeology of both a Spanish mission and a Russian mercantile colony in California for comparative purposes. Interethnic unions occurred at both of these sites, but the success at each was measured differently. As Lightfoot (2005:223) notes, success at the Russian mercantile colony of Ft. Ross “was not measured by the number of baptisms performed, but rather by the profits generated by the outpost.” In other words, there were two opposing colonial structures in place at the Spanish mission and the Russian colony; one was concerned with religion, while the other was concerned with economics (Osborn 1997). At the mission, Lightfoot comments that the interethnic unions between the Spanish colonists and the native people do not appear to have impacted the culture of the natives much, if at all. While it was possible for native women and their interethnic children to take on more Hispanic identities if they married into a Spanish household, it was not the trend to do so (Lightfoot 2005:228; Lightfoot and Martinez 1997:4-5). Similarly, the opportunity for cultural and ethnic transformation was available to the native Kashaya Pomo women at Ft. Ross as well. In the cases where these marriages lasted longer than a few short years, the native women would typically move away from the colony, and the change in their individual culture would not have any significant impact on the culture of the Kashaya people as a whole (Lightfoot 2005:228; Lightfoot and Martinez 1997:5). However, it is important to note that the archaeology of both the
interethnic households at Ft. Ross and at the Spanish mission indicate retention of traditional practices while utilizing European material goods. In both locations, it appears that the native women “retained their own organization of space within and immediately around residential structures” and also used “traditional native practices to prepare and cook meals” (Ballard 1997; Lightfoot 2005:230; Lightfoot, Martinez, and Schiff 1998; Martinez 1997,1998; Wake 1995, 1997). Also true of both sites is the tendency for European materials such as glass and ceramic containers to have been used as the raw material sources for the production of native material culture (Lightfoot 2005:230). This is what Lightfoot refers to as “entanglement” rather than creolization, as the native women had the opportunity to take on different cultural practices and norms, but instead held onto traditional lifeways while utilizing materials from the newly introduced culture. This concept is also reminiscent of the idea of “grammar” and structure of a culture differing from the lexicon or wording of the culture as discussed by Ferguson. The utilization of the material culture indicates some level of cultural blending or sharing of ideas, while the superficial observation of the archaeological assemblage only suggests cultural domination or complete assimilation.

Another term that is often applied when analyzing or discussing groups with mixed heritage is ethnogenesis. Defined by Fennell (2007:2), “the term ethnogenesis refers to the general process by which members of a population form a shared meaning system and a related social order that transform them into a new, identifiable culture group.” This group then shares the basic characteristics of a culture, with blended systems
of belief and meaning, shared and socially transmitted traditions and customs, and shared ways of life.

Hill (1996:1) provides a similar definition, using ethnogenesis as a term that is typically employed to “describe the historical emergence of a people who define themselves in relation to a sociocultural and linguistic heritage.” However, he goes further, attempting to enlarge the potential of the term as an analytical tool for understanding cultural change in the context of conflict and domination. Hill posits that the term should not only describe the eventual birth of a new culture, but it should detail the processes involved in the creation of new identities during oppression and colonization (1996:1). Hill (1996:1) states that:

ethnogenesis can be understood as a creative adaptation to a general history of violent changes—including demographic collapse, forced relocations, enslavement, ethnic soldiering, ethnocide, and genocide-imposed during the historical expansion of colonial and national states in the Americas.

He also stipulates that to utilize ethnogenesis as a analytical tool, the broader spectrum of political and cultural struggle must be understood within the framework of the individual consciousness of the history of these conflicts (Hill 1996:2). In other words, how the individual conceptualizes the process of ethnogenesis is just as important as the trials and tribulations leading to the process itself.
Voss (2008:1), on the other hand, provides a much more straightforward definition of ethnogenesis. She refers to the term as “the birthing of new cultural identities.” In her description of the term, she explains that, through the process of ethnogenesis, there are changes in cultural and historical trends that signify a shift in self-identification (Voss 2008:1). This shift then indicates differences in the conception of the social self. This is a cultural change, and also a political one (Voss 1996:1). As evidenced by the many different conceptions of “creole” described earlier, how an individual views himself or herself is often quite different than how others view that person. This then leads to a discussion of power and of agency. As Voss notes (1996:1), “politics of identities point to relationships of authority and coercion—the power to name oneself is, for example, quite different from the power to assign a name to others.” Thus, while ethnogenesis may be simply a unification of cultures, the implications, connotations, and power struggles associated with this blending are highly complex.

Determining Cultural Identity

The question of how to determine the identity of particular social groups is not a new one. Anthropologists, archaeologists, and historians have all struggled with this problem. For archaeologists, the issue is compounded in situations where the social group in question does not have their own written record. Often, the only history of these people beyond oral history is the one recorded by an external source who may not really have any affiliation or understanding of the group. In addition, this external source is sometimes a member of a colonizing or otherwise oppressing majority. If this is the case,
the recorded history may be written from a bias that undermines the true identity of the social group as a whole, let alone the individuals within that social group. In certain instances, such as when the group itself is no longer identifiable, the only direct evidence of the identity of that culture and those individuals is whatever remains in the archaeological record.

Trying to determine identity from an analysis of material culture, however, is fraught with difficulties. One of the main questions is whether to investigate the social group from the top-down or from the bottom-up. In other words, is it more indicative of the identity of the group if the group as an entity is examined first? Or does the real identity of the social group lie within each individual? If the social group is taken as a whole to comprise the identity of the individuals, does this take away from individual agency? If the identity of each individual is considered first, does this compromise the integrity of the identity of the group (Renfrew and Bahn 2004:220)? These are all viable questions, and there are many different approaches that attempt to reconcile these issues.

As described by Renfrew and Bahn (2004:220), there are certain advantages to approaching identity from the top-down, in that views about group identity can then be determined about the aspects of the society’s complexity and size before questions about the individuals within the society are confronted. This approach would allow for the construction of a holistic perspective about the culture that could then lead to a better understanding of the people that comprise it. The problem with this approach, however, is that it looks first at the hierarchical structures and powers within the society, and then asks how the individual fits into that specific organizational plan. The role of the
individual in terms of status, age, or gender is included as secondary (Renfrew and Bahn 2004:220). The other approach to understanding cultural identity is from the bottom-up, and looks first at the individual and the social relationships that are formed around each person within the society. This approach often tends to be the direction taken by anthropologists and other social scientists who are looking to understand the social group from the individual level. It is important to note that society is constructed and perceived by each individual in varying ways, and these differences in interpretation and behavior can impact the composition of the group as a whole.

The concept of individual construction and perception of society, the origins of which are ascribed to the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1977:72), is also referred to as habitus, and is described as:

systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively ‘regulated’ and ‘regular’ without in any way being the product of obedience to rules, objectively adapted to their goals without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to attain them.

Broken down another way, what Bourdieu believed was that “culture is the product neither of free will nor of underlying principles but is actively constructed by social
actors from cultural dispositions and structured by previous events” (Moore 2004:321). In essence, what is evident from this theory of identity is that each individual has his or her own idea of culture, and this idea is based upon the norms of the culture that are socially transmitted to the individual. Thus, the social group as an entity is a fusion of the individuals while the individuals are both products of and contributors to the composition of the society.

One of the preeminent scholars in the discussion of societal and cultural identity is Frederik Barth (1969), who argues that the concepts of culture and ethnicity should be separated rather than considered to be one entity. He reasons that differences in ethnicities are not maintained by the lack of interaction between groups, but are instead formed through social processes during such interaction (Barth 1969:10). These processes involve the systematic inclusion of certain traits and the exclusion of others, which reinforces the ethnic identities of those involved. Barth also claims that “ethnic distinctions...are quite to the contrary often the very foundations on which embracing social systems are built” (Barth 1969:10). In other words, when different ethnic groups come into contact, they often negotiate their position with one another by maintaining certain cultural distinctions rather than merging them.

In addition, according to Lucy (2005:101), it is important to consider that when analyzing communal identities, there is not simply a single concept of identity that all members of a society share. Instead, it is better to:
envision a range of different identities, from kin-based ties to large communal groupings, from weakly felt identities to those that people are willing to kill or die for. As an aspect of social identity, ethnicity would have been expressed through such things as behaviour, everyday practice, use of space, architecture and landscape, and personal appearance.

Identity is often variable across time and space in much the same way that culture is, and this idea needs to be taken into consideration when analyzing identity at both the individual and societal levels. This variability can often be evidenced in archaeological assemblages. For example, changes in gender roles on the individual level can be seen in the material remains that are left behind by a culture. As noted by Lucy (2005:24), during the Bronze Age in Europe, men began to utilize certain toiletry items such as razors and tweezers in order to alter their physical appearance so that they could emulate the warrior elite ideal of their society. The appearance of these artifacts in the archaeological record is indicative of this change in the male role (Treherne 1995). In addition, artifacts can demonstrate shifting power relations within a culture, as shown by the assemblages of Iberian women at the end of the first millennium BC. Elite women commonly ordered artistic representations of themselves depicted as goddesses in order to communicate a position of power to the other members of their society, while women of lower social classes were unlikely to do so (Diaz-Andreu and Tortosa 1998; Lucy 2005:25).

Architecture also provides clues to the structuring of identity within cultures. It is important to note that “the structuring of space can also be used to emphasize communal
similarity and difference, at both conscious and unconscious levels” (Lucy 2005:106). In Sardinia, during the Bronze Age, the stone, conical buildings called *nuraghi* were considered important spaces that strengthened and reaffirmed the way of life of the culture. Over time, the construction of these buildings changed in direct association with the emergence of social hierarchies and more diverse ceramic assemblages, suggesting that the culture was reaffirming its identity through inward social interactions rather than outward displays such as the *nuraghi* (Blake 1999; Lucy 2005:106-107).

The material culture that is produced by each society, therefore, actively indicates physical manifestations of social constructions. These social constructions are determined by the individuals within the society. An example of this concept would be how a difference in material culture can indicate a difference in individual status within a society when certain people are buried with intricate, expensive items while others are buried with nothing. Archaeologically, this indicates a separation of individuals in terms of their status in society, but this separation is a social construct rather than an objective reality. Physically or biologically, the person of greater social status is not superior to the one of lesser status, but socially, he or she is viewed in that way.

The archaeology of a group of people is not simply a passive assemblage of items that ceases to have meaning beyond their usefulness. Instead, the material culture of a society is the manifestation of a very active set of shared beliefs, customs, and behaviors. Through the active use of these artifacts, the individuals within these societies imbue material culture with “diverse meanings and significances” (Lucy 2005:101). Even after these artifacts have been buried in the ground for decades if not centuries, these items can
still allow for inferences as to their original meanings for the modern world to learn, casting light on the shadow of uncertain identity.

The issue of whether to consider artifacts as passive or active agents of the communication of group or individual identity, however, is one that has been thoroughly debated by anthropological and archaeological scholars, and a final verdict is still elusive. One of the first scholars to address this issue was H. Martin Wobst (1977:321), who argued that stylistic variation in the archaeological record is indicative of information exchange. He believed that this type of communication through material items occurred in two levels; that of emission and that of reception. The sending of information took place during emission while the receiving of the message occurred at reception (Wobst 1977:321). These messages were sent to members of society through the creation of the artifact as well as through its usage, and access to the artifact was necessary for reception of the message (Wobst 1977:321). He viewed this exchange of information as passive, however, and argued that the stylistic variation must be visible in order for messages to be received (Wobst 1977:321).

One seminal argument dealing with this topic occurred between James Sackett and Polly Wiessner. According to Sackett, in the production of material goods within a society, “there normally exists a spectrum of equivalent alternatives, of equally viable options, for attaining any given end” (Sackett 1990:33). This is what he refers to as isochrestic variation in the manufacture of materials in a cultural group. He also claims that the style and the function of each individual item are “complementary and dualistic aspects” of that item, and they are captured both in the aesthetic attributes of the artifact
(the adjunct form) as well as the utilitarian attributes of the item (the instrumental form) (Sackett 1990:33). Sackett believes that all of these aspects of material goods are reflective of choices made by the individuals within a society, thus relating back to their identity or their ethnicity. He is very clear, however, in clarifying that “the choices that they make are largely dictated by the technological traditions within which they have been enculturated as members of the social groups that delineate their ethnicity” (Sackett 1990:33). Thus, while even the most basic choices that are made when designing and producing a ceramic bowl are indicative of isochrestic variation or behavior and related back to ethnicity, perhaps even including the selection of one particular clay source over another, those choices are still housed within the broader cultural system. This behavior allows the system to function with “congruence and efficiency” (Sackett 1990:35-36). In addition, Sackett insists that the difference in the way archaeologists interpret style and function in the archaeological record is more a disagreement about the extent to which style can communicate identity than it is a debate about whether style communicates identity. He claims that when style is said to inform upon ethnicity, this is merely the “etic perception of the observer” or researcher (Sackett 1990:37). On the other hand, when there is an occurrence of “symbolic behavior upon the products of isochrestic choice,” this is an emic incident, which is an internal phenomenon and is one that mediates ethnicity rather than informing it (Sackett 1990:37). In other words, as opposed to those who claim that individuals within a society are deliberately and actively sending ethnic messages through the use of style, he believes that these types of messages are
more actively read than sent. Thus, each ethnic group is going to interpret the symbols they see in a way consistent with their own ethnicity.

Wiessner, on the other hand, argues for the communicative role of style, claiming that it is an active process both on the individual and the group level (1990:105). She believes that style is an essential form of non-verbal communication within society, and that people purposely produce certain styles to mirror and to negotiate their identities (Wiessner 1990:105). She states that there are only a limited number of ways that someone can be identified socially, and that these are “by his natural physical appearance, by what he does, or how he does it” (Wiessner 1990:106). While acknowledging that style may not always be the most efficient way of communicating individual and/or group identity (Wobst 1977), Wiessner argues that it may be the most effective, thereby negating the cost (Wiessner 1990:106; Eibl-Eibesfeldt 1989:673). She plainly states that in determining how to produce material goods, both stylistically and functionally, people are comparing themselves with others. From this social comparison, individuals within society decide “how to negotiate their relative identity” (Wiessner 1990:107). In essence, while Wiessner agrees with many of the points made by Sackett in terms of isochrestic variation, and the implication that style exists both in functional as well as decorative attributes of material goods, she does not believe that this model can be equated to what he terms as “passive style.” Her argument is that regardless of where exactly style resides in the archaeological record “should have absolutely no relation to whether or not it is used actively” (Wiessner 1990:107; Wiessner 1985; Sackett 1985a).
Specifically in cases of creolization or ethnogenesis, when cultures meet and some degree of sharing of ideas and concepts occurs, the analysis of material culture can indicate the extent to which that sharing of ideas took place. As noted by Fennell (2007:35), this “analysis can focus on the degree to which members of each group utilize material expressions to signal their collective identity, and on the ways in which that identity persists or dissipates over time” (2007:35). This concept is investigated later in a case study and subsequent discussions in order to provide some concrete evidence for how the material culture of a creolized community can indicate the manifestation of identity of a particular social group.
Currently, there are only three known Florida Fishing Rancho Period archaeological sites on the southwest coast of Florida. These are located at Useppa Island, Estero Island, and Fisherman’s Key. Part of the reason for the scant amount of material evidence for this historic period is due to the development of much of the land that would have previously been settled by Spanish Cuban fishermen. Another reason is simply the lack of information available on the subject, as well as a lack of work toward determining what specifically constitutes a Fishing Rancho Period site. The goals of this chapter are two-fold. First, this chapter aims to synthesize existing information currently available on Rancho Period archaeological assemblages. In addition, a “typical” material assemblage of a Fishing Rancho Period site is outlined, both in terms of chronology and the form and function of the artifacts contained within such an assemblage.

Useppa Island

Useppa Island is a barrier island in Lee County, Florida, located off the coast directly west of Pineland, in the northwest portion of Pine Island Sound. Charlotte Harbor, where the majority of the Gulf Coast ranchos are known to have operated from, is located immediately to the north of this area (Figure 2). From north to south, the island stretches 1.7 kilometers, while from east to west, it is merely .5 kilometers wide (Palov
Figure 2. Location of Useppa Island (after Marquardt 1999:2).

1999:152). This island was originally known as Josefa Island, named so by the Cuban fisherman Caldez, who successfully operated a fishing rancho enterprise from the island for decades. The name “Useppa” is thought to be a corruption of the word “Josefa.” Other historic sources also referred to the same island as “Toampa” or “Toampe,” most likely
the name given to the land by its later inhabitants, the Calusa (Covington 1959:121).

Since this island was named in the historical records as an area that had been occupied by the Cuban fishermen, it was an inevitable choice for archaeological investigation.

The motivation for this research was prompted in 1992, when the president of the Useppa Island Historical Society, Barbara Sumwalt, contacted William Marquardt at the Florida Museum of Natural History. She had in her possession the remnants of some pottery sherds that had been unearthed by a Useppa resident while he was gardening on his property (Palov 1999:149). When the pottery fragments were analyzed by experts on the Spanish colonial period and antique dealers who specialized in nineteenth-century pieces, it was their unanimous opinion that the pottery dated to the early nineteenth century. This date was contemporaneous with later dates of the Cuban Fishing Rancho Period, indicating the presence of associated artifacts (Palov 1999:149). Since there is not much information about this particular chapter in Florida history, and as a result of this discovery and subsequent analysis, William Marquardt and Maria Palov decided to follow up with some deeper investigation, including interviewing local residents and conducting surface survey. From what they learned, they settled on a few areas for excavation that seemed likely to contain fishing rancho materials (Palov 1999:149). One problem with excavating any part of Useppa Island was the continuous expansion of development on the island over the last few decades. While four different areas were chosen for archaeological investigation, all located on the south end of the island, many of these were disturbed. They were designated Operations F, G, H, and I (Figure 3). While F and I were further broken down into provenience zones, G and H were each
reported as single zones due to extreme post-depositional disturbance of these areas (Palov 1999:152).

Operation F was placed on the southwest corner of the island on a slope that led down to the water. This location was probably subjected to tidal erosion and subsequent disturbance over time. In fact, many artifacts and shells were found on the surface of this area as a result of topsoil erosion (Palov 1999:152). The units were numbered so that F-1 was on the highest ground while F-4 was nearest to the water. F-5 was an additional unit that was excavated after the first four, and was located slightly to the west of the other units. The surface scatter of this Operation included pearlware, stoneware, dark green and olive green glass shards, blue on blue floral transfer-print sherds, a blue rim sherd with a shell edge, glass beads, a glazed container sherd with an orange paste, and two unglazed sherds with an orange paste. Fragments of unidentified metal were also recovered from the surface (Palov 1999:152).

Unit F-1 contained five provenience levels below the surface scatter. The layers were mainly topsoil, although the deepest levels were comprised entirely of sand. According to Palov, there were no post-contact or historic artifacts excavated from more than 30 cm below the ground surface in this unit (Palov 1999:152). From the top level, only a piece of red plastic and an iron screw, most likely modern, were found. The next level contained metal fragments, blue pearlware, and some aboriginal pottery sherds. These sherds were sand-tempered with large granule inclusions evident on all sides, and had a deep orange-red paste. They appeared to be heavily burned; one of the sherds had been essentially turned black. The third level of this unit that was excavated yielded a
fragment of wood that appeared to have been carved, a small lead ball or possible lead fishing weight, sandstone, and faunal remains. In level four, a shell hammer was recovered along with more faunal remains, while in the deepest level, a rusted iron bolt was found. This individual unit contained more historic artifacts than prehistoric ones, but none were found in great abundance nor were they diagnostic of the period.

Figure 3. Detailed Map of Excavation Operations and Units at Useppa Island (after Palov 1999:153).
As with Unit F-1, as described by Palov, Unit F-2 also did not contain any post-contact material past 30 cm below the ground surface. The first level contained one blue-on-white ceramic sherd, one small piece of aboriginal pottery with a thick firing core, and some green glass. In the next level, a possible fish gorge made of shell was found, along with some bone, more green glass, metal fragments, and more aboriginal sand tempered pottery. There was also a Cornaline d’Aleppo bead recovered from this level. These are usually indicative of a site from the late seventeenth or eighteenth centuries (Palov 1999:152). The next deepest level yielded more metal fragments, bone, shell, green glass, and charcoal. Excavations in the next level of this Unit unearthed a shark’s tooth that could have been used as a tool, and the deepest level yielded more bone and clamshell.

Unit F-3 was the second nearest to the water of any of the excavations conducted on Useppa Island, and it contained post-contact artifacts all the way own to 60 cm below the ground surface. As noted by Palov (1999:153), however, this could have been due to erosion and disturbance over time. The first level of this Unit seemed only to contain items that could be classified as modern. The second contained both clear and green glass, along with earthenware, faunal bone fragments, and metal fragments. The earthenware sherd was unglazed, and the paste was light in color, almost tan. The third level below the surface yielded metal nails, bone, metal fragments, clear glass, charcoal, and pieces of concrete. One ceramic sherd was found in the fourth excavated level of Unit F-3. This piece was a sand tempered sherd made from a light orange paste and containing no firing core. In addition, the fourth level contained green glass, bone, fragments of metal, shell, and more concrete fragments. The fifth level yielded metal and
faunal remains, while the sixth level only unearthed pieces of bone. Below 60 cm, Palov (1999:153) reported the presence of only trace amounts of charcoal, shell, and bone, in context with root disturbance.

Unit F-4 was the nearest to the water of all the excavated units. No significant artifacts were reported from the first level, while the second level yielded only one small aboriginal sherd with a rough paste and sand temper. The third level below the surface contained many glass fragments, including blue, clear, and metallic or iridescent shards, as well as metal fragments. The fourth level of this unit yielded more glass of similar color and type, faunal remains, metal, and one aboriginal pottery sherd with a deep orange paste and sand temper. More metal and green and iridescent glass was excavated from the fifth level below the surface. The sixth layer of the unit contained concretion, shell, green glass, and a very thick piece of sand-tempered pottery with rough, light orange paste and very large firing core. The final level of this excavation unit contained another aboriginal pottery sherd with dark orange or red paste, sand-tempered and heavily burned.

Unit F-5, as previously stated, was located up the slope from Unit F-4, and slightly to the west of the other units within the Operation. This unit, as opposed to the others, contained a much greater number of modern artifacts and the remains of construction materials. According to Palov (1999:153), this was probably created during the construction of a building adjacent to the lot Operation F was located on. In addition to these modern materials, there were also faunal remains recovered, along with shell tools, many broken and rusted metal fragments, and glass. Pearlware was also recovered,
and one particular shell-edged piece likely dates to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century (Palov 1999:154). There were also stoneware sherds unearthed in this unit, and two historic period glass beads.

Operation G was located approximately 250 m northeast of Operation F, placing it on the southeast edge of the island and directly next to the residence of the Useppa Island resident who had discovered pottery sherds while gardening. As mentioned previously, this Operation had some level of post-depositional disturbance, making temporal analysis difficult, if not impossible. As a result, all of Operation G was analyzed as one provenience zone (Palov 1999:152). The test unit was placed at the bottom of a shell midden. One of the pottery sherds that the island resident had found on the surface of his property was determined to be Rey Ware from the era of the Cuban fishing ranchos. According to Kathleen Deagan (1987:51-52), it was a “lead-glazed coarse earthenware known to date to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.” The surface scatter surrounding the unit as found by Marquardt and Palov included metallic glass shards, one sherd of polychrome annular ware, one earthenware sherd with orange paste and green glaze on the interior, and one aboriginal pottery sherd (Palov 1999:155). As with the first two units of Operation F, there were not any post-contact artifacts found below the first 30 cm of Unit G-1. The water table was reached at approximately 50 cm (Palov 1999:155). One coarse earthenware sherd with an interior glaze of bright yellow was determined to be in the fashion of Late Style Spanish olive jars, placing it temporally in the early nineteenth century, and thus indicating that it was contemporaneous with the Cuban Fishing Rancho Period (Palov 1999:155). Glass and metal fragments were
plentiful throughout the excavation units, along with other stoneware and coarse earthenware. The glass tended to be iridescent, metallic, or green in color, although a large piece of light blue glass was also recovered. Faunal remains were found throughout the levels, as well as charcoal and chert. The most prevalent artifacts found within Operation G, however, were aboriginal pottery sherds. The total of these sherds collected from the unit added up to 592 (Palov 1999:155). These sherds were not uniform in composition, despite the fact that they were all undecorated. Some sherds were made from a beige or gray paste so light that it could almost have been considered white, while there were also sherds of deep and dark orange paste, light orange paste, and brown or red paste. Some of these aboriginal sherds had very thick firing cores along with very thick bodies, while others were thin sherds with little or no firing core to be seen. Some were made of extremely rough or coarse temper, while others were very smooth and contained evenly distributed temper. The majority of the pieces were burned if not completely blackened, and there were very few diagnostic pieces. Almost every sherd, if not all the sherds, were sand-tempered.

Operation H was also placed on the southeast part of Useppa, approximately two meters to the southwest of Operation G (Palov 1999:155). This Operation was also a one zone Operation, due to similar problems with disturbance as Operation G, and was a single unit of excavation measuring 2 m x 2 m. Operation H was placed in this location based on information given to Marquardt and Palov during their interviews with locals on the island. Garfield Beckstead and Bill Hopp had stated that when the area had been excavated for the purpose of installing a new transformer, Spanish olive jar sherds had
been found in the vicinity (Palov 1999:155). The artifacts found in this unit varied considerably. Similar to Operation G, there were aboriginal pottery sherds recovered from every level of the unit. These had similar composition and variation as those found in Operation G. A sherd of glazed yellow earthenware resembling the sherd from Operation G that was given the label of Late Style Spanish olive jar was also recovered from Operation H, indicating an eighteenth or nineteenth century date for the unit (Palov 1999:157). In addition, many other olive jar rim sherds were recovered from this excavation (Figure 4). El Morro earthenware sherds with brown, orange, and olive green lead glazes were unearthed (Figure 5). These were made from red or brown paste. There were also a number of pieces that could be classified as Marine Ware (Palov 1999:157). Pearlware sherds were also found in this unit, as well as sherds of Mocha Ware (Palov 1999:157). Coarse glazed and unglazed sherds made of brown, red, or orange pastes were recovered in the hundreds. In addition, one shell-edged blue on white earthenware sherd was found, and could be dated to between 1780-1795 (Palov 1999:157). Rey Ware sherds were also found that dated to the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. Faunal remains, almost one hundred pieces of glass, hundreds of both modern and historic metal fragments, and charcoal were also found throughout the unit. Of special interest were the white clay pipe stems (Figure 6) described as similar to an “English kaolin tobacco pipe,” lead weights, bullets, and other lead chunks or remnants, glass and bone beads, and buttons made from bone, shell, or metal (Palov 1999:157-58). Two children’s toys were also recovered; one was the lid from a sugar bowl for a toy tea set, and the other was a doll leg made of ceramic (Palov 1999:158).
Operation I was less disturbed than Operations G and H, and could be separated into different zones. While it was initially broken into four units, the first two were not excavated (Palov 1999:160). Thus, only I-3 and I-4 are referenced after this point. These units were placed between Operation H and Operation F, to the southwest of Operation H. Most artifacts dating to after contact were only found in the first 40 cm of excavation (Palov 1999:161). Unit I-4 was not explored past 20 cm below the ground surface due to a lack of artifacts, although some aboriginal pottery, a glass bead, and some coarse earthenware were collected. Unit I-3, in the other hand, was excavated down to 140 cm below the surface as additional artifacts continued to be unearthed (Palov 1999:161). It was in the last 80 cm of excavation that a large number of aboriginal pottery sherds were recovered (Figure 7), along with stone and shell tools (Palov 1999:161). Table 2 illustrates the number and diversity of these aboriginal sherds. Many of the aboriginal sherds were large, and most were blackened, similar to the ones unearthed in

![Figure 4. Olive Jar Sherds from Unit H-1.](image1)

![Figure 5. El Morro Sherds from Unit H-1.](image2)
the other operations. However, many of these sherds appeared to have fiber temper as opposed to sand temper, or, in some cases, the sherds had both sand and fiber temper. The variation in tempers as well as the blackening of many of the aboriginal sherds is probably indicative of an indigenous trash midden. In addition to the aboriginal sherds, a thimble dating to the eighteenth century and a shell sinker were recovered from the lower levels of the excavation. It is unknown whether the sinker was a tool utilized by the Cuban fishermen or by the early aboriginal people who lived on Useppa (Palov 1999:161). The thimble was determined to have been manufactured for use by a child, due to its small size. A hole that had been drilled in the top of the artifact indicates its possible use by Native Americans, who may have acquired the piece by trade or while living and working on the fishing ranchos with the Cuban fishermen. Native Americans would often add a bell hung from a leather cord to thimbles, and then would wear them as decorative accessories (Palov 1999:163). In the upper levels of this excavation unit, three glass beads were recovered, including one that was identified as a Cornaline d’Aleppo bead dating to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Salt glazed stoneware pieces,
Table 2. List and Count of Aboriginal Sherds from Useppa Unit I-3 (Marquardt 1999:96)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Sand-tempered plain</th>
<th>SPCB Plain</th>
<th>Belle Glade Plain</th>
<th>Goodland Plain (SANDC)</th>
<th>Grog-tempered Laminated Paste Plain</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surface</td>
<td>5 (71%)</td>
<td>94.8g (64%)</td>
<td>26.7g (18%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0g (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>1 (100%)</td>
<td>0g (0%)</td>
<td>0g (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0g (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69</td>
<td>2 (100%)</td>
<td>0g (0%)</td>
<td>0g (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0g (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>2 (100%)</td>
<td>0g (0%)</td>
<td>0g (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0g (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71</td>
<td>29 (91%)</td>
<td>3.2g (100%)</td>
<td>3.2g (100%)</td>
<td>0g (0%)</td>
<td>0g (0%)</td>
<td>0g (0%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>72</td>
<td>13 (93%)</td>
<td>7.6g (2%)</td>
<td>7.6g (2%)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>13 (100%)</td>
<td>0g (0%)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>74</td>
<td>35 (100%)</td>
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<td>17.9g (5%)</td>
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<td>0g (0%)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>24 (89%)</td>
<td>9.9g (6%)</td>
<td>9.9g (6%)</td>
<td>0g (0%)</td>
<td>0g (0%)</td>
<td>0g (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76 and 77</td>
<td>10 (67%)</td>
<td>139.1g (79%)</td>
<td>139.1g (79%)</td>
<td>0g (0%)</td>
<td>0g (0%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>78</td>
<td>5 (50%)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>79</td>
<td>11 (73%)</td>
<td>12.9g (7%)</td>
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<td>0g (0%)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>22 (56%)</td>
<td>9.9g (6%)</td>
<td>9.9g (6%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0g (0%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>330.4g</td>
<td>0g</td>
<td>293.9g</td>
<td>40.3g</td>
<td>8 99.1g</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7. Burned Sand Tempered Pottery from Unit I-3
pearlware, white ware, coarse earthenware, Mocha Ware, and Rey Ware sherds were all recovered from Unit I-3 as well. The Mocha Ware was dated to between 1799 and 1860, while the Rey Ware sherd was also dated to the late eighteenth or nineteenth centuries (Palov 1999:162). Metallic glass shards and metal fragments were also unearthed in this unit, along with limestone and chunks of modern concrete (Palov 1999:161-163).

**Useppa Artifact Analysis**

*Aboriginal Artifacts.* Before beginning a discussion of the aboriginal artifacts unearthed during excavations at Useppa Island, it is pertinent to note that according to Marquardt (1999:94), the area was “not intensively occupied by aboriginal Native Americans subsequent to the Caloosahatchee II period, which ends at A.D. 1200, and this is something of a mystery.” This statement, however, is based solely upon excavations of the southern portion of the island, and so it is highly possible that artifacts dating to later Caloosahatchee period occupations are located on other areas of Useppa Island. In addition, the amount of disturbance that the archaeological sites on the island have been subjected to leaves open the possibility that post-A.D. 1200 artifacts have been lost or destroyed. It is also important to take into account the fact that most of the nearby islands in the Charlotte Harbor or Pine Island Sound area were continuously occupied through the Caloosahatchee V period (Marquardt 1999:94). This makes it highly unlikely that Useppa would not have also been occupied during these same periods. Furthermore, some of the aboriginal artifacts contained within the collection recovered from Useppa appear to have characteristics indicating that they may belong to later Caloosahatchee
periods. Despite their association with pottery that dates to the Caloosahatchee I or II periods, the disturbed nature of the units they were recovered from makes it difficult to analyze them temporally with any certainty. However, it is worthwhile to consider the possibility that some of these pottery sherds date to a later time period, and thus could indicate a more continuous occupation of the site. This is relevant when discussing the later, historic occupation of the Florida Fishing Rancho Period, and could indicate the transition from prehistoric to historic occupation of the island. In addition, the presence of transitional artifacts could help to classify artifact markers for Florida fishing rancho archaeological sites. In other words, when the Spanish Cubans first set up their fishing enterprises in Charlotte Harbor, were they doing so in conjunction with or in spite of the Native American populations already living in these areas? Did they target islands such as Useppa due to the presence of Native American fishing communities? Or were there, in fact, no aboriginal settlements in the areas where the Spanish Cuban fishermen chose to establish their communities? If the final question is eventually answered in the positive, perhaps the absence of transitional artifacts will prove to be the artifact marker for the Fishing Rancho Period. Thus, regardless of the presence or absence of aboriginal artifacts post-dating A.D. 1200, an analysis of the excavated pottery is important if for no other reason than to offer clues about the occupations of Useppa Island prior to the Fishing Rancho Period.

At first glance, the hundreds of aboriginal pottery sherds recovered from Useppa Island seem to fall directly into the typical pattern of collections excavated in south Florida. According to Milanich (1994:275), for the greater part of the beginning of the
twentieth century, the majority of excavations conducted in the southern portions of Florida unearthed collections predominantly composed of sand-tempered pottery without decoration of any kind. The diagnostic sherds that have decoration allow for the development of a chronology for artifacts post-dating A.D. 500. However, unlike the northern parts of Florida, the overwhelming majority of aboriginal pottery sherds recovered from south Florida are completely undecorated, bowl body sherds, and almost all are tempered with sand (Milanich 1994:275). These sherds are referred to as either Glades Plain or sand-tempered plain (Cordell 1992:105). It had long been difficult to establish any sort of chronology for the southern archaeological sites of Florida due to the prevalence of undecorated pottery (Cordell 1992:105). This description also fits the pottery sherds collected from Useppa Island if there had not been any further technological analysis. According to Cordell (1992:105), “this situation is probably due more to the lack of systematic quantification and standardization of observations of temporal differences in plain pottery than to the absence of such differences.” Thus, it is important to look closely at the aboriginal pottery collected from Useppa in order to determine subtle differences that could indicate a more specific chronology.

Marquardt and Susan White specifically analyzed many of the aboriginal sherds from Useppa in order to determine their temporal placement. Their focus was the pottery recovered from Unit I-3, which was determined to be a midden and was excavated to 150 cm below the surface (Marquardt 1999:86). White examined the 212 pottery sherds that were collected from that unit using techniques for paste characterization developed by Cordell (Marquardt 1999:95). This investigation included looking for variation in the
paste based on the number, size, and type of inclusions. The variability then allowed for the placement of each sherd into a decorative or paste category, which could then be compared to the resulting stratigraphic distribution. The ultimate result of this analysis led to relative dating of the plain pottery based on Cordell’s regional chronology and Revised Caloosahatchee Ceramic Sequence (Marquardt 1999:95). It was determined that the majority of sherds from Unit I-3 were, in fact, sand-tempered plain, with five of the 12 excavated levels containing only sand-tempered plain (Marquardt 1999:95). Also present in this unit were sherds of Pineland Plain pottery, characterized by common to abundant quartz sand, ranging from very fine to coarse, and common minute sponge spicules not macroscopically observable. Unmagnified, this paste category was typically included under the sand-tempered plain characterization (Cordell 1992:111). One of the Pineland Plain sherds possibly had grog in the temper, while another may have had limestone, but further studies were not conducted to address these questions (Marquardt 1999:95). Grog-tempered Plain sherds and Laminated Paste sherds were also present in this unit, along with a number of sherds comprised of quartz sand tempered calcareous clay (Marquardt 1999:95, Cordell 1992: 113). Not a single Belle Glade sherd was recovered from this unit, and there was also a marked absence of decorative pottery. This fact, coupled with the prevalence of sand-tempered plain throughout the unit, indicates that the date range for the unit should fall between A.D. 400 and A.D. 500 (Marquardt 1999:95). Radiocarbon dating on shell from this unit confirms that date range, indicating that the material culture of the unit dates to the Caloosahatchee I period (Marquardt 1999:95).
White’s analyses of the pottery from Unit I-3 were based on the work of Cordell, who analyzed aboriginal pottery from another area of Useppa Island, excavated in 1988. This was the Collier Inn site, from which over 1,400 pottery fragments were recovered for analysis. In this particular case, the sherds seem to have been placed specifically in the area they were found, meant to act as a cover for the skeletons uncovered within the midden (Cordell 1992:141). The pottery recovered from the midden included a majority of San-tempered Plain, along with Belle Glade Plain, Orange Plain, Orange Incised, St. John’s Plain, Pineland Plain, possible Fort Drum incised, Pasco Plain, and one Weeden Island Incised (Cordell 1992:142-143). While the presence of Orange Plain and Orange Incised represents a much earlier occupation dating to between 2550-1850 B.C., there was very little recovered from this time frame. The majority of the pottery sherds were from a much later time period, from between A.D. 595 and A.D. 666, placing them in the Caloosahatchee II period. This date range was confirmed with radiocarbon dates from a human skeleton in association with the artifacts (Cordell 1992:145). In addition, the lack of any Glades Tooled, St. Johns Checked Stamped, or Safety Harbor diagnostic sherds indicate that this area was not occupied during the Caloosahatchee III or IV periods.

It is also interesting to note that the thickness of the sand-tempered plain sherds can itself be an indicator of an earlier or later time period. According to Cordell (1992:156), sand-tempered plain pottery from the Caloosahatchee II period displays a marked change from the earlier Caloosahatchee I sherds in terms of a decrease in the thickness of the vessel walls, less variability in color, and less surface finishing. She hypothesizes that the changes could indicate a shift in the function of the vessels, from
storage containers in the Caloosahatchee I period, to cooking, serving, transferring, and storing subsistence goods (Cordell 1992:157). In other words, it is possible that after around A.D. 500 or A.D. 600, pottery vessels became functional in all areas of domestic life for the Calusa, whereas they had simply been used to store goods prior to that time.

*Historic Artifacts.* Since the collection from Useppa Island is currently the most complete and extensive assemblage that has been recovered from the Fishing Rancho Period, it is imperative to try to use these artifacts to develop an accurate picture of the people who used them. At the very least, this assemblage could prove to be representative of Florida fishing rancho collections in general. If so, it can be used in the future to identify fishing rancho sites in the archaeological record that have not been documented in historical records.

There were a number of beads collected from Useppa, a few of which offer relative indications of the chronology of the historic portion of the assemblage. Two of these were Cornaline d’Aleppo glass beads, which “are of two-layered, drawn construction distinguished by an outer layer of opaque red glass and an inner layer typically of dark green transparent glass” (Deagan 1987:168). These beads ranged from under 1 mm in size to 4 cm long, and could possibly have originated in France (Deagan 1987:169). Other beads found at the site were a few light blue or turquoise tubular beads, which could fall under Ivor Noel Hume’s category of opaque pale-blue glass beads. This type of bead is typically found at seventeenth century sites (Hume 1969:54). Also of note were the tubular faceted beads recovered at Useppa. According to Hume, the beads that
were most common during the beginning of the nineteenth century were manufactured from glass tubes and were meticulously faceted. He observed that “these facets are restricted, on the smaller beads, to an average of seven facets cut around each end...but larger examples, usually in ultramarine blue, have many more” (Hume 1969:54). He also noted, however, that due to the wide variety of bead colors and a relative lack of distinguishing features, beads in general were hard to date accurately (Hume 1969:54). Another bead recovered at the site was a large amber bead that had a seam in the middle. According to Palov (1999:156), through a personal communication Deagan surmised this bead could be Czechoslovakian and could date to the nineteenth century. Thus, based on the types of beads found at Useppa, there is a tentative range of dates for the site between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries.

A number of lead artifacts were collected from the site, including lead bullets. Of the four that were recovered, three measured around 1.7 cm in diameter, indicating they were 65 caliber bullets. One smaller piece of lead shot measured only 1 cm. As noted by Palov (1999:159), Spanish colonists used guns such as the escopeta, or light musket from between 1735 and 1770. The bullets that were found would have been compatible with such guns. Also recovered was a lead sinker used for fishing that had a hole drilled through the middle for fishing line. Other lead fragments that were found were thought to have been worked, possibly for use in firearms or as patch for damaged ships. It was not known whether this lead came from the Gulf Coast Fishing Rancho Period or whether it was deposited later (Palov 1999:159).
A substantial amount of pottery was recovered at Useppa, much of it falling into the category of coarse earthenware. Of the nearly 300 sherds of coarse earthenware that were found, there were many glazed sherds, one being a fragment of an orange-paste glazed storage container, and also many unglazed sherds with varying paste colors, from orange to red to pale pink. One particularly interesting earthenware rim sherd had an interior glaze of bright yellow, and a rim that matched the form of a late-style olive jar. This would mean the sherd could date somewhere between the late eighteenth century and into the nineteenth century (Palov 1999:155).

Many pearlware and white ware sherds were also recovered from the site. Some of these were transfer-print sherds with floral designs, others were blue on blue, and others were blue on white. There were also plain white pearlware sherds and pink on white sherds unearthed as well (Palov 1999:152-154). In Operation H, a total of 47 pearlware sherds were collected, while others were recovered from other areas of the site. According to Hume (1969:130), pearlware tends to be the most abundant artifact recovered from sites dating to the early nineteenth century. In addition, he claims that after 1820, pearlware began to be used much less frequently, being replaced by white wares and semi-porcelain (Hume 1969:130-131). Thus, the presence of both types of ceramic at the Useppa site could indicate a change in usage of certain types of pottery at the site over time. Typically, pearlware was used most frequently in the form of shell-edged plates rimmed with blue or green (Hume 1969:131). The shell-edged sherds found at Useppa fall into this category and can be accurately dated to the late eighteenth century (Hume 1969:131). In addition, pearlware was also found frequently in the form of jugs or
mugs with horizontal color band decorations, called annular ware. A number of these sherds were found at the site, and can be dated to between 1795 and 1815 (Hume 1969:131). A specific annular ware designated as mocha ware was also found at Useppa; several sherds were recovered from various units. This type of ceramic is “characterized by brown fernlike ornament on otherwise annular wares, the fronded device being created from a mixture of tobacco juice and urine” (Hume 1969:131). The dates for this type of ceramic fall between 1799 and 1860 (Hume 1969:131). Thus, the pearlware sherds recovered from the site can be dated to between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

A few other types of ceramic were also recovered from Useppa Island. The first of these is the type known as Rey Ware, a lead-glazed coarse earthenware. A number of these sherds were found by a resident of the island on his own property (Palov 1999:155). This type of pottery is characterized by a compact temper and smooth surface, as well as a very reflective, glassy glaze found on both the interior and exterior of the vessel (Deagan 1987:51). This ceramic type tends to be found in the form of plates, bowls, or pitchers; typically items found on the table. It can be accurately dated to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Deagan 1987:51-52). Also found at the site was a large number of El Morro sherds. This ceramic type is also a lead-glazed coarse earthenware, and typically is found in utilitarian forms, such as bowls, plates, and bacines. As opposed to Rey Ware, El Morro ware has a rough temper, often with quartz sand or red clay inclusions (Deagan 1987:50-51). In addition, the vessels tend only to be glazed on the interior, and the temper is often roughly compacted and can protrude through the glaze (Deagan 1987:51). El Morro ware dates to between 1600 and 1770 at St. Augustine, and
is typically assumed to range from the seventeenth to late eighteenth centuries (Deagan 1987:51). Marine Ware sherds were also found at the site. These are typically green majolica wares with tin enamel glaze found in utilitarian forms such as bowls, bacines, storage jars, or plates (Deagan 1987:95-96). Marine Ware sherds are typically identified with sites dating to between 1700 and 1763 (Deagan 1987:96). Thus, other ceramic types unearthed at Useppa date to between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries.

Olive jar rim sherds, the quintessential Spanish colonial artifacts, were also found at the site. All of these sherds were identified as late-style olive jar rims, which according to Deagan (1987:28), would have dated to between 1800 and 1900. These olive jars were used for storage and transportation of goods, as well as possibly being used within the household as water containers (Deagan 1987:32).

Glass fragments were recovered from the site. In total, over 200 shards were collected, but most of these did not have any distinguishing markings or characteristics (Palov 1999:158). These fragments ranged in color from green to amber to blue to black, and many had a metallic patina, while others were clear. Most, however, were too small to recognize as diagnostic pieces. According to Palov, many of the glass shards may have come from wine bottles, and one certainly came from a spice jar; this one was stamped with the manufacturer “McCormick & Co., Baltimore.” Since this company was not founded until 1889, this particular jar could not have been manufactured prior to the nineteenth century (Palov 1999:158). The lack of diagnostic fragments and the disturbance of the units where the glass pieces were found do not allow for secure dating of these artifacts.
A significant amount of metal fragments were collected at Useppa. The exact number is unknown. The majority of these were rusted nails, tacks, or other rusted metal fragments, most of which were unidentifiable. Many fragments were contemporary pieces of metal that had filtered down through the units over time and after several disturbances. The deteriorated state of the metal that was recovered did not allow for dating of any of these artifacts (Palov 1999:160).

Pipe stems made from white clay were recovered in Operation H. There were 11 of these artifacts, seven of which dated to between 1680 and 1800, while the other four dated to between 1710 and 1800. Using Binford’s straight-line regression formula, Palov (1999:158) determined that the mean date for the pipe stems was A.D. 1754. This is an important date, as Hume observes that the pipe stem of an English kaolin tobacco pipe is a great diagnostic tool for historic sites due to the fact that it “was manufactured, imported, smoked, and thrown away, all within a matter of a year or two” (1969:296). In addition, since pipes were an inexpensive commodity but much longer lasting than a cigarette, they were typically saved in relatively strong numbers within the archaeological record (Hume 1969:296).

One very unique artifact was found at Useppa; this was a tiny thimble with a worn base and a hole drilled through the top. The size of this thimble indicates that it was intended for the hand of a child, and studies of this artifact by Erica Hill put it in a date range within the eighteenth century (Palov 1999:163). The hole in the top was the possible indicator that this artifact was used by a Native American as a decorative addition to clothing. According to Hume, during the nineteenth century, thimbles were
often traded to Native Americans, who would then utilize them as accessories. At known Native American sites, they have been found “with small holes punched through the crowns enabling them to be hung on thongs over a bead as ‘tinklers’ to ornament clothing and pouches” (Hume 1969:257). This is one of the very few artifacts from the Fishing Rancho Period assemblages that has a distinct Native American aspect to it.

In summary, the historic assemblage from Useppa is composed of a collection of various ceramics, including pearlware, white ware, unglazed coarse earthenware, and olive jar rims. There was also glass, rusted metal, pipe stems, glass beads, and lead fragments. The majority of these artifacts date to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, squarely within the accepted date range for the Fishing Rancho Period of around 1760-1840. There were, however, a number of items recovered that could date to earlier than that date range, expanding the possibility that there were fishing rancho sites dating to the seventeenth century as well. In addition, the types of items collected were essentially from utilitarian forms of objects, such as those used in cooking, storing, eating, or transporting goods. Very little evidence exists for anything outside of basic subsistence activities at Useppa Island.

Estero Island

Estero Island is located in Lee County, south of Fort Myers and north of Bonita Beach, and is part of the town of Fort Myers Beach (Figure 8). It is bordered on the west by the Gulf of Mexico and on the east by Estero Bay, a rich estuary that is home to an array of fish and other marine life. This estuarine system was likely a draw to the earliest
people to settle on the island and was also the reason that the Cuban fishermen probably chose this area to set up a fishing rancho. The first people to inhabit the island were the Calusa, just as at Useppa Island, and there is evidence of their occupation dating back to over 2,000 years ago at Estero. The Calusa left behind a shell mound on the bay portion of the island, which accumulated gradually over time, and was excavated numerous times beginning in 2002. Excavations of the site have focused on the mound itself, which has been disturbed on numerous occasions during the building of the house, (the William H. Case house, or as it is commonly referred to, Mound House), which now stands upon it. Unfortunately, much of the most recent past is not represented by this mound due to the removal of its uppermost layers during construction in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Theresa Schober, personal communication 2011). This property was also expanded several times, and an in-ground pool was built alongside the home in the 1950’s. In addition, some of the mound itself was leveled at different times in order to accommodate the building of a park and the canals needed for the park. The least disturbed portions of the mound are those furthest removed from the surface or the deepest levels, representing the earlier occupations. However, historic artifacts have been recovered from the site. Due to the proximity of Estero Island to Charlotte Harbor and Pine Island, in addition to the fact that the estuary is a prime environment for fishing, it can be assumed with some certainty that there would have at least been limited fishing rancho activity at the Estero Island site if not a permanent settlement (Theresa Schober, personal communication 2011; John Worth, personal communication 2010).
The earliest occupations of the Estero Island site are represented by a large amount of aboriginal pottery recovered from all levels of the mound. Worked shell and bone, faunal remains, and charcoal have also been collected from the site, allowing for accurate dating of the different levels of the site. Theresa Schober, Director of the Department of Cultural Resources of Fort Myers Beach, directed the excavations of the shell mound beginning in 2002 and is currently in the process of conducting intensive analyses of the aboriginal artifacts recovered from the site. The information available at the time of this writing point to a chronology similar to that of Useppa Island. The majority of aboriginal artifacts recovered appear to be sand-tempered plain, while Belle Glade sherds also make up some of the total assemblage. According to Schober, the top level of the shell mound as it exists today dates to around A.D. 900, placing it approximately in the middle of the accepted dates for the Caloosahatchee II period of occupation. Also important to note is the possible presence of limited use sites along the periphery of the island that could date to later time periods, but these have not been firmly established, and they would still not be indicative of an actual occupation of the site after around A.D. 1200 (Theresa Schober, personal communication 2011). This pattern of occupation demonstrates a similar pattern to the one documented at Useppa Island.

The historic artifacts recovered from the Estero Island site have been categorized in conjunction with Al Woods from the Florida Museum of Natural History. A brief analysis of certain pieces was conducted by Marvin Smith and John Worth, but most of the historic material from this site has not been thoroughly investigated or analyzed.
Figure 8. Location of Estero Island (from USGS, Florida Quadrangle Map).
While not overly extensive, the post-contact artifact assemblage from Estero Island may offer clues as to the composition of an archaeological assemblage of a Fishing Rancho Period site and can be compared to the assemblages at Useppa island and Fisherman’s Key. The details of this assemblage are listed in Table 3. There were 11 test units excavated at the Estero Island site that contained historic or post-contact artifacts. In some of these units, historic material was only found in the first 40 cm of the unit, while in others, artifacts were collected throughout the profile, indicating the possibility that many of these had filtered down over time. The first unit contained 16 clear glass shards with different levels of metallic patina on their exterior, a fragment of ceramic tile, metal fragments and nails, and some green glass shards with patina. The second unit, in which historic artifacts were only found in the upper 40 cm, yielded 14 clear glass shards with patina and two clear glass shards without, green glass, brown glass, and a number of rusted metal fragments. Historic ceramic fragments were also found in this unit, including a white earthenware rim sherd, a pearlware sherd with a decorative brown band, a blue on white pearlware sherd, a brown glazed earthenware sherd, three glazed earthenware sherds, and four unglazed earthenware sherds (Theresa Schober, personal communication 2011). A third unit contained historic artifacts; those collected were limited to metal fragments, one glass sherd with patina, and one glass sherd without a patina. The fourth unit excavated that yielded historic artifacts contained a Cornaline d’Aleppo bead, rusted metal fragments and nails, a piece of clear glass with patina, and a white earthenware sherd. The fifth unit was the richest in terms of number of post-contact artifacts.
Table 3. List of Post-Contact Artifacts from the Estero Island Site (Courtesy Theresa Schober 2011).

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recovered, due in part to its proximity to a raised area that may have been a post-contact constructed pathway (Theresa Schober, personal communication 2011). This unit yielded 40 shards of clear glass, some with patina and some without, two brown glass shards with patina, five green/brown glass shards, and one mint green glass shard. There were also hundreds of rusted metal fragments, possible limestone-based concrete pieces, tar, chalk, and lead. A total of eight olive jar sherds were recovered, some plain, and others with interior lead glaze (Theresa Schober, personal communication 2011). This unit also yielded 10 unglazed coarse earthenware sherds and nine lead glazed interior coarse earthenware sherds, one of which had an incised line on its exterior. Two rim sherds with a glazed red slip were also collected. Seven transfer-print blue on white pearlware sherds were recovered, along with three undecorated white pearlware sherds, one hand-painted blue on white pearlware sherd, two brown-banded annual ware sherds, one Mocha Ware sherd, and one annual ware sherd with a brown, blue, and white design. In addition, a button, one white faceted bead, one blue faceted bead (Figure 9), and one blue wire round bead were recovered (Theresa Schober, personal communication 2011).

Figure 9. Blue Faceted Bead from Estero Island.
The sixth unit to yield post-contact artifacts only contained such artifacts in the upper 40 cm of the unit. This unit yielded 10 pieces of clear glass with differing levels of patina, four shards of clear bottle glass, one frosted glass shard, and one green glass shard. Four blue on white transfer-print pearlware sherds were recovered, along with two dark brown and brown banded annular ware sherds, one sherd with a thin brown band, five white refined earthenware sherds, six unglazed coarse earthenware sherds, one unglazed Olive Jar sherd, two glazed Olive Jar sherds (Figure 10), and seven interior lead glazed earthenware sherds (Theresa Schober, personal communication 2011). One glazed red ware sherd that is probably a Reyware sherd was recovered along with two majolica sherds that were made in Mexico City (Theresa Schober, personal communication 2011). Also recovered from this unit were two colonoware pipe fragments, and around 50 pieces of rusted metal. The seventh excavated unit yielded only one historic artifact: a piece of red glass. The last four units were clustered around one area at the southernmost part of the site, and excavations here led to the recovery of a variety of post-contact artifacts. These included two ridged pieces of clear glass, five clear glass shards without patina, six clear glass shards with patina, two brown glass shards with patina, one opaque white glass cap and one frosted glass shard with patina. Also recovered were a number of rusted metal fragments, two blue faceted beads, one lead musket ball, and one piece of rubber.

**Historic Artifact Analysis.** The historic artifacts recovered from the Estero site in many ways mirror those found at Useppa, despite the lower overall number of artifacts unearthed. There were ceramics found, as well as glass beads, metal fragments, glass
fragments, pipe stem pieces, and lead bullets. These are all be listed and analyzed in the following section.

There were a total of seven beads found at Estero; four of these were translucent faceted blue beads, one was a translucent white faceted bead, one was a blue wire round bead, and one was a Cornaline d’Aleppo bead. The white faceted bead is most likely one similar to what Hume referred to as “Russian” beads due to having been unearthed at Russian sites in Alaska (Hume 1969:54). The larger examples of these beads always have a high number of facets, and in this case there were 18 on the white bead (Theresa Schober, personal communication 2011). There were also 18 facets on the blue bead (Figure 9) but this one may have been what Lyle Stone referred to as a barrel type, blue translucent necklace bead, semi-glossy with light, silvery patina. It may have been
manufactured by the hollow-cane method, similar to Class I beads recovered from Ft.
blue wire round bead would date to between 1675 and 1800. It is also important to note,
however, that “most of the beads from eighteenth century Spanish contexts are spherical
wire-wound beads, either simple or marvered” (Deagan 1987:178). This additional
information could place this particular artifact directly in the center of the proposed date
range for this type of bead. The Cornaline d’Aleppo bead, as analyzed in the Useppa
portion of this chapter, can be accurately dated to the seventeenth and eighteenth
centuries (Deagan 1987:168). Thus, the beads for the Estero site date between the
seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The ceramics that were found at the Estero site were limited to pearlware,
including annular ware such as mocha ware, as well as glazed and unglazed coarse
earthenware. Of the pearlware, one sherd was determined to be hand-painted, 13 were
transfer-print, seven were non-mocha annular ware, one was mocha ware, and one was
identified as wormy finger painted pearlware (Theresa Schober, personal communication
2011). As noted in the previous section, pearlware was utilized most frequently between
1780 and 1820, at which point white wares became more popular (Hume 1969:130-131).
Therefore, in general, these artifacts date to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth
centuries. More specifically, the annular ware had a more narrow date range, from
between 1795 and 1815, and the mocha ware has a date range of 1799-1860 (Hume
1969:131). The transfer-print pearlware had its origins in Britain around 1750, and this
style continued to be made until around 1835 (Hume 1969:128-129).
Of the other coarse earthenware collected from the site, 27 items were lead glazed, two were tin enameled, and 29 were unglazed (Theresa Schober, personal communication 2011). Of the lead glazed sherds, three were from olive jars, and of the unglazed sherds, nine were from olive jars (Theresa Schober, personal communication 2011). One of these sherds was a middle or late style rim sherd that indicates a date range of between 1560 and 1800 (Deagan 1987:28). Two of the sherds were identified as possible El Morro ware, dating to between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and one sherd was thought to be Rey ware, a ceramic type identified with eighteenth and nineteenth century sites (Deagan 1987:50-52).

Similar to the Useppa site, the site at Estero Island also yielded clay pipe fragments. These artifacts, according to Hume, are valuable date markers for historic sites due to the short amount of time that passed from the date of manufacture to the eventual discard of the pipe (1969:296). The fragments recovered from this site dated to the 1800s and were found on colonial as well as Seminole sites in Florida (Theresa Schober, personal communication 2011).

Only one lead bullet was recovered from Estero Island and, while it only measured 49 caliber, it could have been used in the escopeta or Spanish light musket, much like the smallest of the bullets recovered from Useppa. If so, this bullet would have a date range of 1735 to 1770 (Palov 1999:159).

Finally, there were glass fragments in many colors and metallic patinas found at Estero along with hundreds of rusted metal nails and other metal fragments. The majority of these, however, did not contain any diagnostic elements that would allow them to be
identified chronologically. Therefore, these glass shards also did not contribute any additional information to the chronology of the site.

In summary, the historic assemblage of Estero Island is a much smaller version of that from Useppa Island. Many of the same types of artifacts were collected, and the analysis of both sites places the date range for proposed fishing rancho activities at each throughout much of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Artifacts at both sites, however, indicate the possibility of earlier historic occupation and perhaps an earlier beginning to the fishing rancho settlements. Also of note once again is the lack of any artifacts other than those that would be considered utilitarian. Just as at Useppa, the majority of the assemblage is composed of items that would be necessary for the procurement, processing, and ingestion of staple foods and water, or for the transport of these types of subsistence goods.

*Fisherman’s Key*

The small barrier island of Fisherman’s Key is located to the northeast of Sanibel Island and is southwest of the mouth of the Caloosahatchee River (Figure 11). The island is in Lee County, situated in San Carlos Bay directly west of Punta Rassa. It is also part of the Matlacha Pass National Wildlife Refuge. Much like the environment of Estero Island, Fisherman’s Key rests within an estuarine zone due to the conflation of saline water from the Gulf of Mexico and the freshwater from the Caloosahatchee River.
Figure 11. Location of Fisherman’s Key (after Snapp and Sickman 1996:3). (Snapp and Sickman 1996:23). The estuarine environment makes the island a prime location for targeting a wide variety of fish, which would have been of great benefit to the Cuban fishermen who were reported to have been living on and working from Fisherman’s Key in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Snapp and Sickman 1996:13).
Archaeological sites on the island indicate that there was prehistoric occupation long before the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but there have not been any intensive archaeological investigations that would offer a more thorough chronology for the area. In 1951, Goggin recorded a site on the northeast corner of Fisherman’s Key that contained a five foot high shell mound. He collected artifacts from the surface of the site, including three European trade pipes made of red clay. He did not report any aboriginal artifacts beyond the mound itself, and did not return to excavate the mound (Snapp and Sickman 1996:4). Another site, located toward the center of the island, was recorded by Diane Boyle in 1987 as part of a survey of Lee County by Piper Archaeological Research. Again, the site was not intensively investigated, and only surface artifacts were recorded but not collected. Both prehistoric and historic artifacts were listed in the site report, including aboriginal worked shell tools and ceramics, shell food remains, coins, and a metal button with the stamped date of 1792. According to Boyle’s informant for the site, Ray Childers, artifacts indicating the presence of a fishing operation were also present, but these items were not individually listed (Snapp and Sickman 1996:4).

The final site to be recorded for the island was the one investigated by Annette Snapp and James Sickman in 1996 on the northeast corner of Fisherman’s Key. This site is believed to be composed of the remains of a shipwreck, as well as of a collection that is indicative of a Gulf Coast rancho site. According to Snapp and Sickman (1996:14), numerous sources reference the fishery located at Fisherman’s Key in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In 1824, James McIntosh was sent aboard the U.S. Terrier to the Charlotte Harbor area to look for runaway slaves, smugglers, and pirates. While he did
not find anyone guilty of these activities, he did report that on Fisherman’s Key, there was a settlement of a number of buildings including a storehouse used for provisions and salt, nine thatched huts, and a shack used for drying fish. He also reported the presence of a small agricultural plot that contained melons, pumpkins, and corn (Snapp and Sickman 1996:13). This historic documentation, coupled with artifacts that date to the Fishing Rancho Period, would seem to indicate the presence of a Gulf Coast rancho archaeological component on Fisherman’s Key.

In 1995, heavy storms in the area of Fisherman’s Key caused a large number of ceramic artifacts to suddenly begin washing ashore, in an area of the island where there had not been any previous reports of artifacts being found (Snapp and Sickman 1996:1). This led archaeologists James Sickman and Annette Snapp to speculate on the presence of a shipwreck off the coast of Fisherman’s Key. In addition, Snapp and Sickman noted that since the residents of a fishery located on the island would have been dependent on European goods arriving from Cuba, ships would have needed to visit Fisherman’s Key on a semi-regular basis. Furthermore, it was determined that the bottom structure of the bay surrounding the island had the potential to be hazardous, due to the presence of a sandbar overlaying dead coral on the northeast section of the island (Snapp and Sickman 1996:23). This information led Snapp and Sickman to conduct an archaeological survey of the underwater area directly to the northeast of the island, as well as a survey of the terrestrial portions of the land where artifacts were washing ashore. The methodology in the field did not include excavation, but a large number of historic artifacts were collected and recorded during underwater survey and pedestrian survey of the site. Only one
aboriginal artifact, a sand-tempered plain sherd, was found at this site. It was determined to have washed into the site from the shell mound reported in Goggin’s site report from 1951 (Snapp and Sickman 1996:60).

One of the primary materials found at this site was ballast stone, an item used to regulate the weight of ships as they picked up and dropped off goods. Maps drawn of the bottom of the bay indicated a significant amount of ballast located parallel to the beach in an east/west pattern of around 100 m. The stones were almost all composed of the same material, indicating that they probably came from the same ship (Snapp and Sickman 1996:33). The area that was contained within this pattern of ballast stones also had the largest cluster of olive jar sherds. This area was determined to be the boundary for the site as it was recorded during the survey (Snapp and Sickman 1996:33-34). According to Snapp and Sickman (1996:34), there was the possibility that multiple shipwrecks were located off the coast of Fisherman’s Key due to the large number of ballast stones and olive jar sherds found.

Ceramics were also collected, ranging from coarse earthenware plato forms to olive jar fragments. Fifteen ceramic Plato form sherds were specifically analyzed to determine country of origin and date range of manufacture and use based on paste, type, and glaze or exterior pattern. The Plato form was designated as such by Kathleen Deagan (1987:27) and is essentially a bowl that resembles a triangle turned upside down. Eight of these sherds were composed of red paste; all of these also had glazed interiors, exteriors, or both. Three of the red paste sherds were determined to be huejotzingo variants, manufactured in Puebla, Mexico in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and known
for the “single band of color at the edge of the vessel rim” (Snapp and Sickman 1996:35, 54). A cream earthenware sherd was also determined to be a glazed huejotzingo variant with yellow and orange design on the rim. Two other Plato form sherds were beveled and glazed with dark tan paste determined to be Spanish, dating to the mid-late eighteenth century. Two tan glazed sherds were determined to be from Spain from the eighteenth century. One white sherd with an orange and blue petal design was of European origin from the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. Finally, an orange Rey Ware sherd with a lead glazed interior was recovered. Rey Ware pottery, as described by Deagan (1987:51), typically had very shiny lead glazed surfaces, both interior and exterior, a smooth surface, and a fine, compact paste. This type of pottery also dated to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Four sherds identified as ceramic mortars were also collected. Three of these were coarse earthenware with red paste that originated in Spain and dated to between the late sixteenth century to the middle of the eighteenth century. The other was determined to be a Colono Ware sherd, possibly made in Cuba, dating to the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This type of pottery was known for essentially being a copy of traditional European form, often manufactured with local techniques and materials by indigenous people or enslaved Africans in the Spanish colonies (Snapp and Sickman 1996:54).

There were five glazed red paste coarse earthenware sherds collected from the site that were determined to have come from ceramic bowls. Two of these were in the Bacin form as designated by Deagan (1987:27); this form was a taller, bucket-shaped vessel
with or without handles. One of the Bacin form sherds was of European origin from the early to late eighteenth century, while the other was of Spanish origin from the late seventeenth to early eighteenth centuries. There was also a huejotzingo variant classified as an Escudilla form, which was typically a short, squat compact bowl-shaped vessel. This dates to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries (Snapp and Sickman 1996:37; Deagan 1987:27). Also collected was a sherd with an eroded interior glaze and rough rim in the Lebrillo form, a slightly larger, rimmed bowl-shaped vessel (Snapp and Sickman 1996:37; Deagan 1987:27). Finally, the last bowl body sherd recovered was of unknown type or date range, but was thought to be of Spanish origin (Snapp and Sickman 1996:37).

A number of ceramic sherds were determined to have been storage vessels. Of these, five were red coarse earthenware originating in Spain and dating to the early to late eighteenth century. Four were also red coarse earthenware dating to the early to late eighteenth century, but these were of European origin. These were all glazed body sherds. Also collected was a very thick pink coarse earthenware sherd with interior brown glaze thought to be of European origin dating to the same time period. A cream or tan stoneware storage vessel was also recovered that originated in Britain or America and that dates to the early nineteenth century. This artifact showed evidence of heat damage (Snapp and Sickman 1996:38).

One of the most prominent artifacts collected from the site was the olive jar sherd, which typically allows for accurate dating of an historic archaeological site. Snapp and Sickman (1996:33, 40) listed 37 olive jar sherds in her site report. This only included the
artifacts collected, and many more were left behind at the site. The pastes of these sherds ranged from tan to orange to red, and olive jar rims, bases, and body sherds were recovered. The majority of these artifacts were determined to be Middle Style Olive Jar fragments, dating to between 1580 and 1800, while there were also a number of Late Style Olive Jar sherds, dating to after 1800, collected as well (Snapp and Sickman 1996:40). According to Snapp and Sickman, based on her research of John Goggin’s work on olive jars, the primary function of this type of vessel was to carry liquids, most often wine, olives soaked in brine, and olive oil. Sometimes they would serve a secondary purpose as a water jug as well (Snapp and Sickman 1996:45). Goggin also seemed to believe that the olive jar vessels would often become a light substitute for other heavy stone in fill for construction (Snapp and Sickman 1996:45). The olive jar sherds recovered from Fisherman’s Key mostly fit into Goggin’s typology for the Middle Style Olive Jar (Figure 12), which would have been “an elongated or compressed egg-shaped vessel with a ring mouth” (Snapp and Sickman 1996:48-49). Some were determined to be Late Style Olive Jar sherds, indicating the vessel would have had thinner walls and more variability in terms of the film on the surface, the paste, and the shape (Snapp and Sickman 1996:49).

Some of the other ceramic fragments recovered did not fall into neat categories or typologies. Two Plain Creamware sherds with green shell-edged design and one white pearlware sherd were thought to be British from the late eighteenth to early nineteenth century. According to Hume (1969:131), most recovered pearlware was originally from shell-edged plates that had painted blue or green rims. One blue on white pearlware sherd
was a European piece dating to after 1800. A European white clay pipe stem piece was recovered but was not dated (Snapp and Sickman 1996:42-43). Four painted white refined earthen transfer ware sherds were found that originated in Britain and dated to the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. A blue-green Bacin form sherd with cream paste was determined to be from Spain from the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries. This type of pottery was considered a utilitarian majolica made in Spain from 1565-1821. The latter part of this time frame, 1784-1821, is typically when this type of artifact appears in Florida assemblages (Snapp and Sickman 1996:53). A white porcelain blue on pearlware hand-painted sherd was recovered that originated in Britain and dated to after 1800. One artifact was tentatively labeled as an El Morro Ware pottery sherd, due to the red clay and sand inclusions in the temper. This type of utilitarian pottery also typically had a lead glaze, was wheel-thrown with hand-made handles, had paste colors ranging from tan to red, and often had irregularly compacted temper highly visible in the paste (Deagan 1987:50-51). According to Deagan (1987:50-51), it originated either in Puebla, Mexico or Havana, Cuba, and could be dated to the late sixteenth century to the eighteenth century. Of the remaining ceramics, many were determined to be of unknown origin and/or date range.

An unknown number of glass fragments were also collected at the site. Seven of these are green glass, suspected or known to have come from bottles of either European or North American origin and that date to between the middle of the seventeenth century to the late nineteenth century (Snapp and Sickman 1996:39). Two emerald green case gin bottle fragments (Figure 13) of European origin were recovered that date to the early to
late eighteenth century (Snapp and Sickman 1996:39). One emerald green glass fragment was from a Dutch or British bottle dating to the late seventeenth or middle eighteenth century. One large free blown aqua glass fragment originated in Europe and dated to the early or middle eighteenth century (Snapp and Sickman 1996:39). Two other aqua glass fragments were determined to be free blown bottle or hourglass shards from Europe dating to the late seventeenth or early eighteenth centuries. One glass fragment with amber/green hues was determined to be sand cast. It was possibly a “European demijohn-type bottle”, and originated in Europe between the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century (Snapp and Sickman 1996:39). Another amber/green fragment was a free blown bottle with an applied ring lip that originated in Europe and was dated to the eighteenth century. There was also a dark amber glass neck and partial body fragment recovered (Figure 14). This neck and body fragment was determined to be from either a demijohn or other large storage vessel, originating in Europe and dating to the middle of the
eighteenth century or the early nineteenth century (Snapp and Sickman 1996:39). A transparent blue bead in a ring shape was also found and was dated to the eighteenth century (Snapp and Sickman 1996:57). Thus, as noted by Snapp and Sickman, the majority of glass shards recovered from the site at Fisherman’s Key dated to the eighteenth century.

There was also metal found at Fisherman’s Key, including iron nails, wire copper nails, lead musket balls, a lead sounding weight, a one-piece forged iron anchor, and a large anchor arm and shank that could not be recovered due to size and weight (Snapp and Sickman 1996:44). The iron nails were determined to be Early Spanish, dating to

Figure 13. Dark Amber Glass Fragment.  
Figure 14. Green Mold Made Case Bottle Fragment.
before the seventeenth century. The lead musket balls were made from a mold and dated
to between the seventeenth and late nineteenth centuries. The sounding weight dated to
the eighteenth century, and the iron anchor was from between 1700 and 1780 (Snapp and

In terms of lithics, the main artifact recovered was ballast as stated earlier. In
addition, a French gun flint was found that was amber colored and dated to between 1750
and 1835 (Snapp and Sickman 1996:59). One flake of silicified coral was also recovered
that was determined to be exotic to south Florida. It was also thermally altered. This
artifact was assumed to have filtered down from the shell mound on Fisherman’s Key and
was not considered to be part of the assemblage for this site (Snapp and Sickman
1996:60).

In summary, the majority of the artifacts recovered from this site were either
Middle Style Olive Jars, Late Style Olive Jars, or ballast stone. There were also many
other ceramics found, most of which dated to the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, with
a few artifacts dating to the late seventeenth century. The metal and glass artifacts found
also date to the same period, indicating that the site was contemporaneous with the
Florida Fishing Rancho Period. Thus, the artifacts found at this shipwreck site are most
likely indicative of the types of items that a ship would bring to a fishing rancho
settlement. They appear to be utilitarian in nature, necessary items for an economic
enterprise. The ceramic vessels included utilitarian majolica, bowls, storage vessels, olive
jars, and other utilitarian items. There also appeared to be a blending of origins for the
artifacts; some came from North America or Britain, others from Spain, and still others
were made in what was referred to as “New Spain,” which included areas of Mexico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico.

Discussion

After a thorough discussion of the artifacts recovered from each of the three sites known to be from the Gulf Coast Fishing Rancho Period, it is apparent that many of the materials recovered from these sites comprise a very similar assemblage. Table 4 lists the types and counts of artifacts for the sites under study. It also includes summary statistics indicating central tendency (mean and median) and dispersion (standard deviation). Mean and median could be compared to give an indication of the shape of the frequency distribution. As shown, at Useppa Island, the majority of artifacts recovered were aboriginal ceramics, followed by metal fragments and coarse earthenware. There were also over 200 glass fragments found. In total, over 2,000 artifacts were unearthed. At Estero Island, the majority of the artifacts that comprised the collection were also aboriginal, but were found in far greater numbers than at Useppa. Over 11,000 of the artifacts were aboriginal pottery sherds, while metal fragments numbered 350, and glass fragments numbered 129. At Fishermen’s Key, far fewer artifacts were recovered in total, only numbering 151. This was due mainly to the fact that the site was merely surveyed, rather than excavated. Almost every last one of these artifacts were historic, and the majority were olive jar sherds or coarse earthenware sherds. Aboriginal artifacts made up the majority of the collection at the de la Cruz site in St. Augustine, numbering 8,359.
Table 4. List of Artifact Types, Counts, and Descriptive Statistics at Each Site.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artifact Type</th>
<th>Useppa Island</th>
<th>Estero Island</th>
<th>Fisherman’s Key</th>
<th>de la Cruz Site (St. A.)</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>StDev</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Glass Beads</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coarse Earthenware</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearlware/Whiteware</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>102</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stoneware</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annular ware</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Pottery</td>
<td>992</td>
<td>11231</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8359</td>
<td>20583</td>
<td>5146</td>
<td>4676</td>
<td>5510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive Jar Sherds</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mocha Ware</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Morro Ware</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine Ware</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rey Ware</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass Fragments</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal Fragments</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>431</td>
<td>1238</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Shot</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Clay Pipe Stems</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lead Sinker</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buttons</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toys</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thimbles</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Rubber</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithics</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2205</td>
<td>11867</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>9393</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>447</td>
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<td>Median</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>StDev</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>2445</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1816</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Metal fragments numbered 431, and 232 pearlware sherds were recovered. In sum, the artifacts that made up the majority of the collection across the different sites were aboriginal pottery sherds, glass fragments, metal fragments, coarse earthenware, and pearlware. The dates for these artifacts also match very closely, most of which place the chronology for the material culture of these sites from the early or middle eighteenth century through the middle to late nineteenth century. There are, however, a few outliers at each of the sites that hint at an earlier historic occupation, perhaps sometime in the middle of the seventeenth century. Without historic documentation or further material
evidence, however, there is not enough information to surmise that the dates for the Fishing Rancho Period settlements should begin earlier than 1760.

The stacked bar graph shown below (Figure 15) indicates the differing amounts of ceramic artifacts recovered from each of the sites addressed in this thesis. It also includes the amounts of ceramics unearthed at the site of de la Cruz, a creolized site in St. Augustine, for comparative purposes. These are relative frequencies of artifacts collected, and it is necessary to mention that procedures for collection were different at each of the sites. In addition, the collections may be biased toward certain ceramic types at each of the sites. At Useppa, the majority of historic ceramics recovered were coarse earthenware sherds, while aboriginal pottery sherds were found in the greatest abundance. Pearlware, Marine Ware, El Morro Ware, and Stoneware were also found in significant quantities. At Estero Island, aboriginal pottery was found in such great quantities that the other ceramics are barely visible on the bar graph. Fishermen’s Key yielded the highest number of coarse earthenware in comparison to other ceramic types, while there were also a relatively large number of olive jar sherds and pearlware sherds recovered. Finally, the de la Cruz site most resembles the Estero Island site in terms of relative quantities of ceramics. The greatest number of sherds found were aboriginal, while there were also pearlware sherds found in great enough quantities to appear on the graph.

Also, despite the lack of any known aboriginal occupation of these sites immediately prior to the settlement of the Gulf Coast ranchos, there is an obvious similarity in that fact shared among the three historic sites. The presence of any aboriginal artifacts cannot be directly compared and contrasted between these sites due to
the fact that the archaeological record indicates the absence of any aboriginal populations on these lands after around A.D. 1200. Therefore, the aboriginal artifacts included in these sites are from much earlier and most likely unrelated occupations. The reason for the lack of occupation after the Caloosahatchee II period is unknown and should be researched further.

However, the very fact that aboriginal populations did, in fact, occupy the same lands many centuries earlier would lead to the conclusion that there were certain advantages to settling that particular land. This advantage was most likely related to the availability and abundance of certain types of marine and terrestrial resources. It is also possible that the reason the Spanish Cuban fishermen chose the settlements they did was

Figure 15. Relative Frequencies of Ceramic Types at Each Site
due to the availability of the land in question. In other words, it is worth considering the idea that the lack of any occupation of those particular lands at the time led to the Florida fishing rancho settlements being established where they were. Perhaps the Spanish fishermen wanted to settle on land that would not have to be fought for or shared.

In addition, it is important to note the types of historic materials that were recovered at each of these sites. At each of these locations, there were Cornaline d’Aleppo glass beads, ceramic pipe stem fragments, olive jar fragments identified as middle or late style, shell edged pearlware sherds, large numbers of utilitarian glazed and unglazed ceramics, lead shot, El Morro ware, Rey ware, and annular ware. There were also very large number of glass fragments and rusted metal pieces, most which were unidentifiable. Despite not having diagnostic elements, these metal and glass fragments were still important, however, since they appeared with such frequency at each of the sites. Furthermore, it is also pertinent to note that the composition of the historic component of each of these archaeological sites tends to mimic the composition of a typical Spanish colonial archaeological site despite the known presence of an indigenous component to these settlements. The question then becomes how to distinguish these sites from other Spanish colonial sites in the archaeological record if there is not historic documentation to differentiate them. On that same note, a related question pertains to the individuals who lived on these settlements, and how they identified themselves to the world outside of the fishing rancho, especially if their material culture identified them as Spanish.
Investigation of Other Rancho Sites

While the previous section listed the types and number of artifacts recovered during excavation and survey at the three known Gulf Coast fishing ranchos, there has been little investigation or insight into how these collections compare to other rancho sites in Florida and elsewhere. One of the primary goals of this research project is to determine how to identify a Florida fishing rancho in the archaeological record. In order to do this, it is necessary to examine the archaeology of other known ranchos from approximately the same time period. It is also important to clarify the definition of a rancho, which is a type of settlement not necessarily related to fishing or to Spanish Indians.

Ranchos, according to Amy Bushnell (1978:407), were major indicators in Florida that the Spanish were making an attempt to become economically self-sufficient in the New World. These settlements tended to appear during times of relative peace, when the Spanish creoles who had born in Florida would travel from St. Augustine in search of native villages they could take advantage of for labor and land (Bushnell 1978:408). As the Old World diseases began to take their toll on the native populations, the creoles had access to more of the land, which they used to raise livestock. The products that resulted from these ranches were then partially used to supply the Spanish troops stationed in St. Augustine, but were also sent to the ports on the Gulf of Mexico to be shipped out for profit (Bushnell 1978:408). While these settlements indicated that the creoles were economically independent from their homeland, their origins were based on the intentions of the Spanish Crown. The purpose of the colonization of Florida was to create a
productive and profitable area for settlement. Each of the adelantados, or governors of Spanish colonial provinces, were given horses, cattle, sheep, pigs, seeds, and tools to distribute to the colonial families so that they could effectively settle their own land (Bushnell 1978:408). Later, these governors imported cattle from Cuba in order to try to develop a commercial hide enterprise. They tried to keep the cattle on the coastal islands to protect them from hungry soldiers and natives, but the lack of fresh water and grazing land on the islands proved deadly. Some of the cows even died from mosquito bites (Bushnell 1978:409). Eventually, following a long process of conquest against the Indians who possessed the lands that would support the cattle ranches the best, the Florida Spanish established areas for large-scale ranching. These ranches of the interior of Florida, which operated from the beginning of the seventeenth century, were the precursors of the lucrative fishing ranches or ranchos of the Gulf Coast of Florida. One of the most important of these interior cattle ranches was the La Chua ranch of the seventeenth century, located in north central Florida, where the town of Alachua is today (Bushnell 1978:408).

La Chua. The hacienda de la chua, or the “ranch of the sinkhole,” was established sometime between 1637 and 1646 by the Menendez Marquez family, relatives of Pedro Menendez de Aviles, the Spanish conquistador who had founded St. Augustine in 1565 (Bushnell 1978:408). It was not until 1675, however, that the first mention of its exports appeared in the historical record, and its name was not mentioned in these records until 1682 (Bushnell 1978:408). The La Chua ranch continued to operate until the beginning of
the eighteenth century. While large for Florida, this ranch was not as big as many of the ranches or haciendas of Mexico, but it was important for the area due to its “relative position within the economic framework of Spanish Florida” (Baker 1993:82). This ranch was the main beef supplier for the troops at St. Augustine and was also a provider of beef for Cuba at times (Bushnell 1978:424). The native populations of the area were not pleased with the establishment of the La Chua ranch; they often attempted to undermine the success of the ranch by killing many of the cows and burning the trees and other vegetation on the settlement (Bushnell 1978:410). Later in the seventeenth century, to prevent continued Indian attacks, the Spanish established a defensive garrison at the site (Baker 1993:82). This was also important due to pirate raids, which occurred twice at the La Chua ranch (Baker 1993:82).

The site, which is located at present day Payne’s Prairie, most likely had its headquarters at Alachua Sink, a large sinkhole which at times becomes a large lake, and at others, merely provides a fantastic vantage point for surveying the prairie floor (Baker 1993:84). As noted by Baker (1993:84), the advantages of this location “were not lost on the early Spanish ranchers or the prehistoric inhabitants...who were no doubt interested in observing the movement of game on the prairie below, in addition to living near a dependable water source.” In fact, before the Spanish occupation of the site, there were humans living there uninterrupted from between 6,000 and 8,000 years prior. Survey conducted at the site revealed both prehistoric artifacts near Alachua Sink as well as historic artifacts representing the Spanish occupation. Sue Mullins, a graduate student from the University of Florida, conducted extensive survey east of the sink, and
recovered thousands of prehistoric artifacts (Baker 1993:86). Included in the 3500 artifacts she collected were “Orange Incised, St. Johns Plain, St. Johns Check Stamped, chalky fiber tempered, fiber tempered and sand tempered plain” sherds, although these were in the minority (Baker 1993:86). She also recovered a large amount of worked lithic material, including a point tip that was very similar to a Clovis point (Baker 1993:86). At the sinkhole itself in 1950, a young resident of the area discovered a large amount of historic materials after a bulldozing project. Hundreds of metal fragments, majolica fragments, and olive jar sherds were collected from the interior of the sinkhole (Baker 1993:87). The 274 olive jar sherds were measured for thickness, and were subsequently determined to be from “Middle Period” olive jars, which would place their date from between 1590 and 1800. The majolica collected included San Luis Blue on White, which was used the most 1630 to 1690, San Luis Polychrome, used the most from 1650 to 1750, Abo Polychrome, used the most from 1650 to 1750, Aucilla Polychrome, used most frequently from 1650 to 1685, and Puebla Polychrome, most popular from 1650 to 1700 (Baker 1993:87). Of the metal collected, a sword crossguard and metal padlock were dated to the seventeenth century and, along with the olive jar sherds and majolica, were diagnostic of a Spanish occupation during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries (Baker 1993:87). A separate survey conducted by Henry Baker in 1986 investigated the area directly adjacent to the main sink. This survey revealed lithic materials in great abundance, mostly undiagnostic aboriginal pottery sherds, and diagnostic historic artifacts (Baker 1993:87). The artifacts dating to the historic period included additional San Luis Polychrome, San Luis Blue on White majolica, olive jar sherds, daub fragments,
a diagnostic strap hinge dating to the seventeenth century, and a wrought nail with an
attached wood fragment (Baker 1993:87). Baker’s research indicated that large portions
of the ranch site may still be intact, and that the concentrations of artifacts could point to
the locations of buildings or other structures (Baker 1993:97).

The artifacts recovered from the La Chua site indicate a Spanish occupation of the
ranch site during the seventeenth century, a fact which is backed by historic documents.
As indicated by the large number of prehistoric artifacts, the site was also heavily
occupied for thousands of years prior by native populations, which was true of the Gulf
Coast fishing ranchos as well. This is merely indicative of the human capacity to locate
and settle productive and habitable areas of land. It is important to note that unlike the
Gulf Coast fishing ranchos, the people residing and working at La Chua were not families
of intermarriage between the Spanish and the natives; in fact, the natives were strongly
against the utilization of that land by the Spanish. Thus, while this cattle ranch was
specifically created as a for-profit enterprise like the fishing ranchos, it was different in
that it did not bring together natives and Spaniards, and it certainly did not lead to any
possibility of a mutually sustaining enterprise between the two. Thus, the artifact
assemblage collected from this site would necessarily be different in its composition. All
of the historic artifacts from this site are typical of a Spanish site from this time period;
the utilitarian majolica wares are similar to those found at the Gulf Coast rancho sites,
most likely due to their prevalence in use among the Spanish of the New World. Olive jar
sherds make up much of the assemblage, again due to the amount this particular type of
artifact was utilized by the Spanish, especially at a settlement where the residents and
workers would need to store lots of items. The types of ceramics recovered from the La Chua ranch were different from those recovered at the fishing ranchos, however, in that the majolica was decorated and glazed and of higher quality than much of the basic coarse earthenware collected from the fishing ranchos. This could be reflective of the fact that the La Chua ranch was established by members of the prominent Menendez Marquez family, while the fishing ranchos were settled by Spanish Cuban fishermen, not likely of elite lineage.

In addition, there is a notable lack of glass artifacts from the La Chua cattle ranch, as glass fragments were found in great abundance at the fishing ranchos, totaling 360 shards. Since the total number of olive jar sherds collected from all of the known fishing rancho sites was only 57 in comparison to the 274 recovered from just one small area of the sink at La Chua, this could be indicative of a preference for certain types of storage vessels at each of these ranchos. Perhaps the types of materials being stored at the cattle ranch fared better in ceramic containers while those at the fishing ranchos were kept better in glass. Or the particular environmental conditions encountered by those living in the interior could have been dealt with more effectively through the use of ceramic rather than glass.

It is also important to note that the building material, or daub, found at the cattle ranch site indicates that the structures built on the La Chua ranch were vastly different from those at the fishing ranchos. The wooden thatched huts that were occupied by the Spanish fishermen along the coast were not to be found at the cattle ranch. Further excavations of known cattle ranches in interior Florida could reveal additional
differences between the types of artifacts and structures that are indicative of these sites and those that are representative of fishing ranchos on the Gulf Coast of Florida.

*Rancho Petaluma.* In order to develop a more thorough assessment of the ways in which Gulf Coast Florida fishing ranchos differ, both archaeologically and historically, from other ranchos that existed at roughly the same time in Florida and elsewhere, it is important to acknowledge that ranchos were in existence across the country in the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries. One of these, a rancho by the name of Rancho Petaluma, was thousands of miles away in California, north of San Francisco Bay. This nineteenth century rancho was a 270 square kilometer settlement owned by the Mexican-Californian Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo (Silliman 2005:78). It is particularly interesting to investigate this rancho due to the difference in the way the labor was distributed at this site in comparison to the other ranchos so far discussed. Unlike the La Chua rancho, which was essentially worked by creole Spanish, and the Gulf Coast fishing ranchos which were occupied and worked by Spanish Cubans and Spanish Indians, Rancho Petaluma was occupied by between 600 and 1000 hunter-gatherers and other Indians who had been converted by the Spanish (Silliman 2005:78). These Indians came from many different backgrounds, language groups, and areas of California, and were expected to perform all the labor on the rancho, which produced agriculture, raised livestock, and also manufactured certain products (Silliman 2005:78). While some of these laborers were there as a result of becoming incorporated into seasonal rounds of employment, most were basically worked on the rancho due to indebtedness or simple force or coercion.
(Silliman 2005:78). This was a very different situation from that of the fishing ranchos of Florida, where the Spanish Indians chose to intermarry and work the settlements for various reasons that did not include forced labor. Also of note about this rancho is the lack of Spanish or Mexican-Californian occupation; despite ownership of the land, they did not work the lands themselves. This immediately suggests that the archaeological assemblage should be vastly different from the other ranchos studied.

The areas that were part of Rancho Petaluma have been the focus of archaeological investigation for the last forty years, in part due to a need for further research on Native American activity on the site (Silliman 2005:78). One particular native occupation area, located to the east of the primary colonial building of the site, has revealed a large number of artifacts from the California Rancho Period. According to Silliman, excavation of this area resulted in the collection of around 3000 glass shards, around 1000 metal fragments and 1000 glass beads, ceramic sherds numbering approximately 300, and a small amount of clay pipe stems, buttons, and roof tile pieces (2005:78). In addition, and found in association with the historic artifacts, were large numbers of Native American or “traditional” artifacts such as chert fragments, obsidian, chipped stone artifacts, ground stones, clamshell disk beads, and worked bone fragments (Silliman 2005:78). The lithics were found with consistency in direct association with all the other artifacts, indicating “the continuity of stone tool technology into the 19th century” (Silliman 2005:78). The very presence of lithic artifacts co-occurring with the colonial artifacts demonstrates a stark contrast to the archaeology of the fishing ranchos of Florida. It is apparent that the Native Americans working at Rancho Petaluma
continued to use “traditional” technology during the colonial period, while at the fishing ranchos, the aboriginal artifacts all dated to a much earlier occupation of the same lands. Once the Gulf Coast ranchos were settled by Spanish Cuban fishermen, their native wives and Spanish Indians, their technology appeared mainly Spanish, European, or New World versions of the same in origin or manufacture. In addition, the types of materials utilized for these tools were indicators that the workers at the ranchos utilized the materials of their local or regional environment, as the presence of obsidian at Rancho Petaluma indicates. At the Florida fishing ranchos, the materials used tended to be those that would be readily available at other Spanish or colonial sites. This was most likely also a reflection of the intermingling of cultural tools and traits at the fishing ranchos, which would have been much more fluid and between consenting family members and laborers rather than those forced into labor because of debt or coercion. At the Florida fishing ranchos, it is possible that the Spanish and Spanish Indians were using the tools that were economically most advantageous and readily available, while the Native Americans of Rancho Petaluma were potentially holding on to “traditional” methods and tools in an attempt to retain some of their cultural practices in the face of forced assimilation.

However, it is important to recognize that it is a simplification of meaning and usage if only the cultural relationships are examined when interpreting the material culture of rancho sites. As Silliman emphasizes, it is inherently difficult to isolate the traces of the past that are specifically indigenous in nature and those that are either colonial in nature or some blending of the two, especially within shared spaces. He notes that it is overly simplistic to assume that “acculturation” is the ideal model for
interpreting material culture in colonial spaces since indigenous “experiences in, resistances to, accommodations within, and manipulations of colonialism are not easily captured” (Silliman 2010:31). In fact, where many archaeologists may be tempted to claim that one group involved in this type of relationship is the “colonizer” and the other the “colonized”, it is essential to recognize that the social dynamics involved are far more complex than such labeling allows for (Silliman 2010:31). Instead, he argues, it is more appropriate to look at the labor practices that were common at each colonial site in order to better understand the “attendant effects on material culture and space” (Silliman 2010:31). Through such a theoretical lens, it becomes easier to acknowledge the broader implications of the usage of material culture at the rancho sites within the context of social interaction and cultural entanglement.

This theory applies equally well at Rancho Petaluma and the Florida fishing ranchos, as they were both explicitly colonial spaces, defined by Silliman as “those specific spaces where indigene and colonist, Native and settler lived, worked, procreated, interacted, and negotiated a daily existence” (Silliman 2010:32). In such locales, the associated material culture was “fraught with ambiguity, alternate functions, and multiple users” (Silliman 2010:32). In other words, the origin of a particular artifact may not have had any specific meaning, since the user of that artifact may have manipulated it in a unique and individual way. The mere fact that an item may have been manufactured in Spain did not necessarily mean that its use could only be attributed to people of European descent living and working at the site. Instead, it is just as likely that the indigenous workers of that land utilized that item more often and in a specific manner not utilized by
those whose country it originated in. Thus, it is irresponsible to assume that without the presence of items that are specifically considered indigenous, that indigenous people did not inhabit or utilize certain spaces within colonial areas. It is also equally irresponsible to attribute the presence of European items in areas known to have been occupied or worked by indigenous people to the all-encompassing model of acculturation (Silliman 2010:32-33). Instead, it is essential that individual agency is considered in the archaeological investigation of colonial spaces, and the focus on labor practices, economics, and labor relationships when interpreting material culture may provide greater transparency in this regard.

Silliman approached his own analysis of Rancho Petaluma by “looking at the formation of identities through specific material practices rather than the assignment of ethnicity through general categories of material culture” (2010:36). At this site, owned by the Mexican-American Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, hundreds of Native Americans occupied the land, working, living, and engaging in daily activities. Most of these activities took place at or near the Petaluma Adobe, which was the central area investigated by Silliman. While the numbers of indigenous people at the site far outnumbered the number of settlers, or Mexican-Californians, the interpretation of Rancho Petaluma historically stressed the experiences of the settlers over the indigene. Much of the reason for this misinterpretation is due to the material culture found at the Petaluma Adobe, which was primarily comprised of wine bottles made from dark green glass, plates of refined earthenware, and silverware, all of which suggest European manufacture. The automatic assumption of many of the visitors to this site is that the
items “reflect non-Native, non-laborer activities; they were acquired by, belonged to, and used by Vallejo and his family members in their domestic spaces” (Silliman 2010:46). However, historical documents mention the presence of many indigenous people at the Petaluma Adobe, where they worked, cooked, and occupied much of their time. In fact, the Native Americans at Rancho Petaluma often labored as cooks and servers at the central adobe, meaning that they utilized the material culture of that area of the site more often than the Mexican-Californian settlers. In addition, the same types of materials were found in trash deposits near the areas where the Native Americans lived, “further highlighting the ambiguity of material culture meanings” (Silliman 2010:47). Thus, it is important to recognize that the labor practices and economic divisions at the site were more indicative of how material culture was utilized than origin of manufacture or cultural labels. This is certainly true of the Florida fishing ranchos as well, since the items identified as European in origin from these sites were undoubtedly used by the Spanish Cubans, the Native Americans, and the Spanish Indians in one capacity or another. The distinctions lie in the economic advantages that were present when certain items were utilized or the particular labor practices that were in effect at the time. As noted by Silliman, within colonial sites, time was often more of an interpretive indicator than space (2010:32).

Quantitative Comparative Analysis

The previous chapters and sections of this thesis have outlined the research conducted by other scholars on the Florida Gulf Coast Fishing Rancho Period as well as
offered comparative studies of other ranchos from around the same time period.

Excavations conducted at three of the fishing rancho sites as well as at a cattle ranch in Florida and a colonial rancho in California have been discussed. One area of interest that has been neglected up until this point, however, is an actual quantitative comparison of these sites in order to determine similarities or differences between the compositions of their archaeological assemblages. In order to accomplish this goal, a Brainerd-Robinson Coefficient Matrix (Table 5) was developed so that the fishing rancho sites could be directly compared to one another statistically.

The Brainerd-Robinson Similarity Coefficient \( (br) \) was developed in order to determine the amount of similarity between archaeological assemblages of pottery that are listed in percentages of different types (Wells 2006:38). In essence, this particular statistic sums up “the absolute value of the differences of the type percentages between defined categories for pairs of assemblages” (Wells 2006:38). Since the maximum distance between two archaeological collections based on percentages is 200, the calculated difference is then subtracted from 200. The resulting formula is:

\[
br_{AB} = 200 - \sum_{i=1}^{N} |P_i^A - P_i^B|
\]

where the representation of the percentage of type \( i \) in assemblage A is \( P_i^A \) and the representation of the percentage of type \( i \) in assemblage B is \( P_i^B \). The differences are added together and then subtracted from 200. The result is that a \( br \) coefficient of 200 means that the two collections are the most similar, while a \( br \) coefficient of zero means that the two collections are not similar at all. If the coefficient is scaled and divided by
a \textit{br} of 1 indicates that the collections are the most similar, while a \textit{br} of zero means that the two assemblages are completely different in composition (Wells 2006: 38-39).

The table that resulted from this analysis indicates that of the different fishing rancho assemblages included in this study, the assemblages from Estero Island and the de la Cruz site in St. Augustine are the most similar of the four sites, as their \textit{br} coefficient is 0.94. This statistic is very close to 1, indicating that the two assemblages are very alike. Much of this is due to the fact that the two collections had a majority of aboriginal pottery sherds in relation to the other artifacts found at the sites. The similarity between the two could be explained by excavator bias, as the Estero Island site was primarily targeted as a location for aboriginal artifact analysis, while the historic artifacts were secondary to the study (Theresa Schober, personal communication:2011). In addition, it is highly probable that the length of occupation by Calusa and other aboriginal groups on Estero Island was far greater than that of any Spanish fishermen and their families, which would result in a disproportionate amount of aboriginal artifacts in comparison to historic artifacts. At the de la Cruz site in St. Augustine, the aboriginal artifacts were primarily those utilized in household contexts, such as tablewares and other kitchen wares (Deagan 1983:116-123). Since this was an urban site where social visibility of material culture was an important aspect of the household, those types of artifacts were hidden away but still plentiful. The aboriginal artifacts were the utilitarian wares, and thus were abundant. There were, however, still many historic artifacts due to the integration of cultures at the site. At Estero, since there were multiple occupations of the site, both aboriginal and historic wares would have been dominant at different times. In addition, the collections
from Estero and de la Cruz are the two largest collections, which would allow for better representation by the assemblages across the sites. This could account for the relative similarity of artifact percentages at each of the sites, and certainly provides less possibility for statistical error.

Useppa Island and de la Cruz were the next most similar sites, with a $br$ coefficient of 0.55. While this is relatively weak, it is still interesting to note, since the collection at Useppa Island was the third largest, but was much smaller than that of Estero Island or de la Cruz. It is possible that had there been further excavation with a larger assemblage, the Useppa collection would have been found to be more similar than is currently demonstrated. However, the fact that the majority of the assemblage at Useppa Island is aboriginal pottery is most likely the reason that the two sites are statistically similar. Useppa Island is almost just as similar to Estero Island as it is to the de la Cruz site, which is to be expected. The $br$ coefficient for these two sites is 0.50. These two sites were occupied by the Spanish fishermen at almost the same time in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and would have been using similar techniques for fishing, subsistence practices, cooking, and shelter. It is more interesting that the two sites are so weakly correlated because of those facts. It is possible that the Estero site had more intensive or continuous aboriginal occupations, accounting for the greater amount of aboriginal artifacts. It is also possible that since the archaeologist excavating Useppa was looking for evidence of fishing rancho occupation, the aboriginal pottery sherds were not as well accounted for, indicating researcher bias. The Fishermen’s Key site was essentially an outlier, as its $br$ coefficient in relation to Useppa was 0.36. Its $br$ coefficient
in relation to Estero Island was 0.06, and its $br$ coefficient in relation to de la Cruz was 0.11. Much of this dissimilarity was certainly due to the small number of artifacts recovered from the Fishermen’s Key site, since only 151 artifacts comprise the assemblage. This is because the site was never fully excavated, and the artifacts represent a survey that was conducted of one small area of the island. Since this site was also thought to be the location of a shipwreck, it would make sense that the artifacts were almost all historic. They would have been deposited after the ship sank, and would represent whatever materials were being delivered to the island by a Spanish ship. This, of course, makes the Fishermen’s Key site a difficult one to analyze, since the small collection cannot be considered to be fully representative of the entire site. It is worth mentioning, however, that this site is the most similar to the Useppa site, primarily due to the similar percentages of coarse earthenware. To a lesser extent, the percentages of pearlware are also similar.

To further test the results of the statistical analysis provided by the Brainerd-Robinson Similarity Coefficient Matrix, a dendrogram was produced using chi-squared measure and between-groups average linkage (Figure 16). This graph illustrates which sites are most similar to one another by clustering them together based on artifact types and numbers. The results indicate that Estero Island and the de la Cruz site have the most similar archaeological assemblages. The dendrogram demonstrates that Estero Island and the de la Cruz site are somewhat similar to Useppa Island, and Fishermen’s Key is shown to be the least similar to the other three sites. The graph also indicates that Fishermen’s evidence in support of the analysis conducting using the Brainerd-Robinson Coefficient.
Table 5. Brainerd-Robinson Similarity Coefficient Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Useppa Island</th>
<th>Estero Island</th>
<th>Fisherman's Key</th>
<th>de la Cruz Site (St. A)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Useppa Island</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estero Island</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisherman's Key</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de la Cruz Site (St. A)</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 16. Dendrogram Indicating Comparison of Site Assemblages.
Chapter 6: Determining Spanish Indian Identity at Florida Gulf Coast Rancho Sites

Case Study-Creolization at Spanish St. Augustine

From the years 1972 through 1978, Deagan (1983:5) undertook a massive project in historical archaeology in St. Augustine, Florida, attempting to discern “patterns of eighteenth century Spanish colonial life in Florida.” During this project, it became increasingly obvious that much of what was being illuminated in the archaeological record was, in fact, evidence for an adaptive relationship between the Spanish colonists and the Native Americans of the area.

During the early 1700s, the population of St. Augustine was much like that of any other Latin American colonized area. Of the 1000 people that lived in the city in 1702, a portion of them were European, some were of African descent, and the rest were American Indians. The Europeans were either criollos, born in the New World, or peninsulares, born in Europe (Deagan 1983: 29-31). These titles, as explained earlier in this manuscript, were an important social distinction at the time. The majority of Europeans were criollos, but despite their numbers, most were not allowed to hold the most important positions within the colony. Instead, these higher posts were reserved for those who came from the Old World, due to their perceived higher mental acuity and social standing (Deagan 1983:29-31). Interestingly, almost all of the European women in
the area were *criollas*, indicating an obvious difference in gender roles and expectations among the eighteenth century Spanish, as only men were originally sent to the New World (Deagan 1983:31).

The population of St. Augustine grew rapidly and by 1763, there were over 3000 residents in the city. At this point, according to Deagan (1983:30), the Europeans made up 82 percent of the population, Africans accounted for 10 percent of the population, Indians made up 3 percent of the residents, and 5 percent were of mixed ancestry. The American Indians residing in the area were also from different backgrounds. There were native groups as well as groups that had migrated to the area from elsewhere. The Timucuans were the only truly native group, having originated in the St. Augustine area, but there were also Apalachees, who were originally from west Florida; Guales, who hailed from South Carolina and Georgia; and the Tequesta and Jororo Indians from southern Florida (Deagan 1983:32). It is interesting to note, however, that of the over 1000 Native Americans in the area in 1738, only around 20 of them physically lived within St. Augustine. The rest lived in villages surrounding the city. Also of note was the fact that in terms of Spanish-Indian interaction, it was apparently the Guale who intermarried with the Spanish more than any of the other American Indians in the vicinity. In fact, over a period of 15 years, from 1735 to 1750, only two of the marriages between the Spanish and Indians were not Spanish-Guale marriages (Deagan 1983:32). In addition, all of the aboriginal pottery used by the Spanish colonists at this time was of the Guale style (Deagan 1983:32). It is also important to consider that during this period, there were not any marriages recorded that involved a European woman marrying a
Native American, mulatto, mestizo, or African male. Thus, all of the intermarriages were between Spanish men and women of other ancestry. The majority of these were between Indian women and Spanish men, and in the middle of the eighteenth century, these marriages comprised about 11 percent of the total (Deagan 1983:34). This number may have been much higher, however, due to the fact that many of the mixed marriages would have taken place where the bride resided, oftentimes a mission village. As noted by Deagan (1983:103), the records from these missions no longer exist. In addition, since the mestizos were not considered to be of high social status, there was certainly a considerable amount of Indian ancestry within families in the community that was not reported (Deagan 1983:104).

The generally lower opinion of families that had Indian ancestry would most likely have prompted attempts to gain better social standing over time through whatever social mechanisms allowed for mobility within the society. Thus, Deagan (1983:104) suggested it is important to look at “forms, proportions, and combinations of Spanish and Indian traits” within these mixed marriage households. In other words, if a family had low prestige within the community due to the non-Hispanic origins of some of their relatives, it is likely that they may have wanted to obtain better social standing over time. If this were the case then, as Deagan (1983:104) explained, it should be expected that the “socially visible areas of culture would be Hispanic rather than Indian.” Thus, the material culture that was the most visible would be reflective of Spanish ancestry, while any material culture that indicated Indian ancestry would be hidden away. This shift in social behaviors would lead to a “gradual ‘criollo-ization’ of a family with an Indian
Following this reasoning, it would then be expected that, due to the prevalence of marriage between Spanish males and Indian females, only the females would be completely familiar with both Spanish and Indian culture. Thus, gender roles take on much greater meaning in this case, as women were the ones to affect the “screening mechanisms involved in cultural exchange” (Deagan 1983:104). This gender difference would also have an impact on the visibility of this cultural exchange within the archaeological record. Deagan suggested that as a result, the highest level of Native American impact would be apparent in the areas represented by female activities. Based on what was known of both Spanish and Indian culture, the arena for women was suspected to be typically in the kitchen and any areas important for raising children. Thus, the material culture that reflected Native American traits was expected to be found in areas of presumably low social visibility; where the food was prepared and cooked, and where children were clothed and fed (Deagan 1983:104). On the opposite end of the spectrum, “since there was no regular direct link between male areas of Indian culture and male areas of Hispanic culture in St. Augustine,” the material culture of the men of these households would not be expected to reflect any Indian influence whatsoever (Deagan 1983:105). Instead, those activities associated with the males of the colony, such as hunting, politics, military involvement, or home construction, would have primarily, if not wholly, exhibited Hispanic rather than Native American influence (Deagan 1983:105). The question of socio-economic status in relation to the Hispanic or *mestizo*
identity of the people in the village has been further evaluated and determined to be respectively positively and negatively correlated to the material aspects of the household (Deagan 1983:265). In other words, in households with an archaeological assemblage dominated by Spanish majolica, there are records indicating correlations with higher levels of income. On the other hand, in households with assemblages dominated by aboriginal pottery, there are records indicating strong correlations with much lower income (Deagan 1983:265).

Excavations and subsequent analyses of an eighteenth century criollo site and a mestizo site from the same time period supported Deagan’s expectations. In fact, of the socially visible activities represented in the archaeological record, such as decorative ornamentation, construction of houses, and predominant tablewares, items of Hispanic origin were more conspicuous than expected (Deagan 1983:265). As postulated, the archaeological assemblages of the household kitchens were composed of the aboriginal artifacts and other items that could have been obtained locally (Deagan 1983:265). Thus, when coupled with the fact that the proportion of Hispanic items in a household correlated positively with the level of income for the household, the material culture of these households indicated that Hispanic artifacts were related to higher social status, while aboriginal artifacts were related to lower social status. In addition, the prevalence of the higher status items in locations of high visibility would indicate a desire to identify with that aspect of the household. By displaying the Hispanic objects for the community to see as opposed to the Native American material culture, the residents of the mestizo household were visibly identifying with their criollo side over their Indian side. This was
an obvious step toward the criollo-ization or creolization of the Spanish-Indians living in St. Augustine in the eighteenth century.

Ethnogenesis and Belief Systems

When searching for patterns or processes of ethnogenesis or creolization in the archaeological record, one obvious place of reference would be within the belief systems or the “cosmologies” of the people in question. As defined by Fennell (2007:1), a cosmology is “the way a group understands the workings of the world, nature, and the cosmos,” encompassing “what we think of as religion, physics, and philosophy in a comprehensive framework.” Since the term ethnogenesis refers to the coming together of two distinct cultural groups with particular customs, traditions, and view of the world, it would seem reasonable to expect that the mixing of the groups would invariably imply some mixing of these views. In other words, it would be highly unlikely that a group of people who had come from two socially different arenas would adopt all aspects of one another’s culture after coming together. Instead, over time, the group as a whole would determine which traits of the culture to adopt, and which not to (Fennell 2007:35). Often, the identity of a social group would then be communicated to the outside world through symbolic spiritual or religious imagery (Fennell 2007:35).

In archaeology, one way of determining ethnic or cultural markers would be to identify religious artifacts that could indicate “purposeful creation in material culture of symbolism expressing core religious beliefs and spiritual invocations” which would then express an individuals membership to a larger social group (Fennell 2007:34). This type
of symbolic communication could demonstrate a shared system of meaning, or the existence of a cultural or ethnic group. According to Fennell (2007:34), the creation of this group would be defined as the process of ethnogenesis.

Fennell (2007:127) specifically researched the ways in which core symbols were materially expressed to the world among African diaspora populations. The history of African diasporas was a reflection of the colonization of the New World by European powers in much the same way as the acculturation of Native American populations, who were forced to assimilate to the European colonizers. Both of these populations would have been forced to change their own methods of social structuring and symbolic communication as they came into contact with other cultures and as they became acculturated. The changes would be apparent in the ways in which these populations adopted new belief systems, altered belief systems already in place, and eventually asserted new identities of their social group. This procedure, along with the creative expression of symbolism that resulted, was defined by Fennell (2007:127) as “ethnogenic bricolage.” Through this process, the “expression of those new emblematic configurations” would “then enhance the cohesiveness of new social networks in which those individuals participate” (Fennell 2007:127). In other words, Fennell argued that one of the primary ways that a cultural or ethnic group would communicate their cultural affiliation would be through core symbols or emblems. The ways in which blending of these forms of communication occurred would thereby indicate the ways that the cultural groups came together. He refrains from calling this process creolization due to the lack of concrete consensus on the actual definition of the term, as well as the fact that the term
itself was somewhat of an abstraction based first on social distinctions in the New World, and later on linguistic analysis of New World populations (Fennell 2007:128).

His ultimate conclusion is that this “ethnogenic bricolage,” which is an idea similar to that of creolization as explained by Deagan (1983:104), was apparent in the New World within the interactions between those of African descent, European descent, and Native Americans when their cultural customs, beliefs, and traditions came together and were “reconfigured to form new social networks--new, socially constructed ethnicities--and related domains of symbolisms, ritual, and practice” (Fennell 2007:130).

Discussion

The case study and discussions of cultural identity detailed above allow for an interpretive framework that can be used to better understand how creolization or ethnogenesis, or the lack of these cultural syntheses, might be identified within the archaeological record. When the archaeological assemblages of the known Florida fishing rancho sites are analyzed within this framework, a number of interesting facts become immediately apparent.

First, as mentioned by Deagan (1983:271) in her analysis of the Spanish Indians of eighteenth century St. Augustine, one of the elements that might be indicative of creolization in the archaeological record is the aspect of social visibility. Deagan detailed the fact that during colonial times, there was a standing hierarchy or social ranking system that placed peninsulares at the top, criollos in the second social tier, and anyone other than Europeans as below them. Thus, anyone considered a mestizo, or of mixed
Spanish and Indian ancestry, would fall below *criollos* in the hierarchy. The majority of the population was also *criollo*, and so it was very likely that many families of lower social status would try to make themselves as creolized as possible for the community to see. This would be the case in most urban settlements, such as the one at St. Augustine. Therefore, their homes would reflect Spanish architectural styles, their hunting techniques would follow traditional Spanish customs and their hunting tools would be Spanish in origin. In addition, the indigenous influence would be hidden away, and would be found archaeologically in those areas that women would have frequented, such as the kitchen.

If this was the case in Spanish St. Augustine in the eighteenth century, it is plausible that despite the difference in contexts, a similar situation may have been occurring on the Gulf coast of Florida as well. St. Augustine was an urban settlement and the Gulf Coast ranchos were more rural, in that they were island and coastal settlements. However, it would stand to reason that there were similar hierarchies in place to some extent, or at least the conceptualization of rank and social status in regards to origin of ancestry. Even if the residents of the fishing ranchos were not looking to gain upward social mobility amongst or between themselves, they would have had some sense of themselves they wanted to project to outsiders. If so, then it would be expected that similar patterns would emerge for fishing rancho sites in terms of social visibility. This, however, is not the case. In fact, the evidence from the material culture of the Gulf Coast ranchos would seem to indicate the exact opposite of Deagan’s findings. Before providing a thorough analysis of the aspect of visibility at the Florida fishing ranchos,
however, it is important to acknowledge that there are always at least two points of view when discussing visible attributes of an archaeological site. While those looking at the site may have one interpretation of it, those involved in creating the visible aspects of the site may have planned to present something different. In other words, the most outwardly visible aspects of the site may not have been perceived as such, while other, more hidden aspects were specifically presented in a certain way in order to communicate socially through visible means. This is true both of how people viewed material culture at the time it was utilized as well as of how archaeologists often tend to interpret visible aspects of sites. As noted by Silliman, there are always certain “signs” left behind at archaeological sites that suggest specific “material and architectural arrangements of space and activity” (2010:38). The problem lies in the fact that the way archaeologists immediately perceive that space is in a controlled or designed fashion, not consistent with how that space would have been lived in (Silliman 2010:38). What is visible can only be understood through a deconstruction of the conceived space as it stands. While the discussion that follows indicates the most objectively visible aspects of the fishing ranchos, it is important to consider that the subjectively visible aspects might have been quite different.

At the fishing ranchos, the most socially visible aspects of the settlement would have been the architecture and the mechanisms used for catching, drying, salting, and transporting fish. The second most visible aspect would have been the gardens that were planted at many of the establishments. Finally, the least visible element of the fishing ranchos would have been the tablewares and any other material culture that remained
within the living quarters of the fishermen. At these sites, since the houses tended to be simple palm thatched structures, the architecture was not reflective of the supposed dominant European culture, but was instead indicative of the indigenous cultures of Florida. This was, of course, also dependent on the local materials available and the environmental demands of the region. Additionally, the methods that the Spanish fishermen used to catch fish were those that were shown to them by the Native Americans of the peninsula. As observed by Robert Edic (1996:36), when the Spanish first arrived on the southwest coast of Florida, they attempted to fish using hooks and fishing line rather than properly exploiting the estuaries of the Gulf. Later, they learned the proper techniques for fishing, drying, and curing the fish from the native populations (Edic 1996:36). While there was lead shot and other Spanish musket related artifacts recovered at these sites, there is little reason to believe this was used for anything other than protection. Also of note was the fact that many of the fishing rancho settlements eventually cultivated small gardens for food. These were grown and tended in a way similar to that of the Creek or the Seminole, again indicating a native American origin. Thus, even the subsistence practices of the Spanish Indians indicated a shift away from the *criollo* identity. According to the model suggested by Deagan (1983:104), this would indicate that the Spanish Indians of the fishing ranchos were trying to demonstrate the Indian aspects of their group rather than their creole identity. As maritime technology improved, advancements for the drying and transportation of the fish were adopted by the fishing rancho dwellers in order to make the process easier (Edic 1996:36). Thus, the utilization or abandonment of different aspects of material culture at the fishing ranchos
was probably more indicative of convenience and ease of use than any deeper cultural meaning or synthesis. It seems that the fishermen and their families tended to adopt and utilize those aspects of each of their cultures that would make their lives and their jobs less challenging. The lack of any aboriginal pottery dating to the Florida Gulf Coast rancho time period would seem to support this idea, as the tablewares and other utilitarian items at the settlements would have been brought over from Cuba with the first Spanish fishermen, and the continuous maritime trade would have facilitated the provision of European utilitarian wares.

A second interesting aspect of the identity of the Spanish Indians living at the fishing ranchos is illuminated by Fennell’s study on cosmology and ethnogenic bricolage (2007:127). As he argues, in the process of cultural synthesis, there is often a creative reaction in which individuals attempt to indicate their membership within the emergent social group by developing religious or spiritual emblems or symbols that then illustrate some system of meaning that exists within that new cultural or ethnic group. Worth (2008:8) states, the Spanish Indians were “indeed a creole population...which represented an ethnic and cultural blend of Spanish and Creek identities...the result of a decades-long process of creolization...an entirely new ethnic group spawned during the European colonial era” (Worth 2010:8). If this were the case, however, would not there be some indication of a blending or partial adoption of cultural systems of belief? Should not there have been some signs of religiosity or spirituality, be they Catholic, Christian, or indigenous in origin? While there are only a few sources that document the fishing ranchos in explicit detail, it would seem unusual that anyone documenting the people
living at these settlements would not have included information on religious or ceremonial practices, if there were any. Only one source mentions even a single artifact of religious significance; this was the figure of an angel observed by the Key West customs inspector Whitehead hanging in an otherwise practically empty thatched hut on the fishing rancho of Joseph Caldez (Hammond 1973:364). While it is possible that any religious or spiritual items were taken along when the Spanish Indians and their families permanently left the settlements, it still seems unusual that there would not have been more documentation on that aspect of the fishing ranchos by those who visited them. It should be kept in mind, however, that due to the small number of archaeological collections from the Gulf Coast Rancho Period, sampling bias is certainly an issue. Further excavation could reveal the symbolic or religious material culture that has so far been missing. Despite these caveats, the lack of religious iconography or ceremony could point to a cultural synthesis that was more for the sake of convenience and economic benefit than any deeper meaning or significance.

Finally, it is necessary to test the cultural integration of the Spanish Indians of the fishing ranchos against the definitions of creolization and ethnogenesis presented earlier in this thesis. If the root of the word creolization, or creole, were applied in the nineteenth century to those who lived at the fishing ranchos, this would have been a false title in the context of the times. Then, in the Americas, an individual would not have been seen as creole unless that person had solely white European ancestry (Stewart 2007:7). In the twentieth century, the concept of creolization was used by scholars to specifically indicate the restructuring of linguistics during the formation of a creole, or blended,
language (Stewart 2007:7). This would not have been applicable either. Later in academia, the concept of creolization came to be understood as a type of cultural synthesis, by which certain aspects of two different cultures were shared and adopted. One of the definitions being investigated here, however, is the one proposed by Worth, who stated that a new ethnicity was born at the Gulf Coast fishing ranchos during a period of creolization (Worth 2010:2). It would be expected that if a new ethnicity did emerge, or if the culture of the Native Americans who married the Spanish fishermen was slowly absorbed into the culture of the Spanish, this total integration would be evident in the material culture. In other words, over time, the material culture of the Native American portion of the population would slowly become more Spanish in nature or usage or would only be utilized in areas that were not socially visible. There would be a multidirectional flow of new ideas, customs, and materials. As Dawdy explains, in ethnic acculturation, “entirely new styles, forms, and habits are created out of a blending of formally parallel but separate traditions” (2000:111). This is not what the archaeology of the fishing ranchos demonstrates. Instead, there are basic, common aspects of both cultures evident in the material culture, but no indication that rapid change or major sharing of ideas occurred. Once again, this would indicate that the people who lived at the fishing ranchos adopted those practical aspects of each culture that would allow them the fullest and richest existence.

If the archaeological assemblages of the fishing rancho settlements are studied next to the definitions of ethnogenesis discussed earlier in this thesis, there is not much evidence that would suggest such an integration. For instance, if the people of the Florida
Gulf Coast ranchos experienced ethnogenesis as defined by Fennell, they would have formed “a shared meaning system and a related social order” and would have been transformed “into a new, identifiable culture group” (2007:2). There is not any evidence for this being the case at the fishing rancho settlements. Hill (1996:1) describes ethnogenesis as the “historical emergence of a people who define themselves in relation to a sociocultural and linguistic heritage.” The Spanish Indians of the fishing ranchos did not share a linguistic heritage, and had there been a process of a historical emergence underway, it was likely halted after the Indian Removal Act forced a large portion of the population off of the fishing rancho settlements. It is perhaps more valuable to look at the identity of the people of the fishing ranchos from the perspective of Voss (2008:1), who describes part of the process of ethnogenesis as “changes in cultural and historical trends that signify a shift in self-identification.” This concept gives agency back to the “Spanish Indians,” who were not given the opportunity to identify themselves before the Second Seminole War essentially destroyed their families. The term “Spanish Indian” was placed upon them by outsiders, while they were not given a voice. Thus, the only ethnogenesis that can be proved to have occurred at the fishing ranchos is that which was invented by those who had the power to assign the Spanish Indians a name. The material culture of the fishing ranchos does not appear to indicate any specific individual identity of self that could be interpreted as representative of the group. Therefore, while there is still much research that needs to be conducted on the Fishing Rancho Period and these sites, the preliminary analysis would indicate an economic basis for cultural interaction and
intermarriage rather than an actual cultural synthesis, creolization, or ethnogenesis, which would imply shared cultural systems of belief and meaning.
Chapter 7: Conclusion and Future Recommendations

As this thesis has shown, there are only three known Florida Gulf Coast Fishing Rancho Period archaeological sites on the southwest coast of Florida that allow for the study of the Spanish Indians who once lived there. These are located at Useppa Island, Estero Island, and Fisherman’s Key. Part of the reason for the small amount of material evidence for this historic period is due to the development of much of the land that would have previously been settled by Spanish Cuban fishermen. Another reason is simply the lack of information available on the subject, as well as a lack of work toward determining what physically constitutes a Fishing Rancho Period site.

At the Useppa Island rancho site, a large number of aboriginal artifacts were recovered, but none of these were contemporaneous with the Fishing Rancho Period. These pottery sherds dated to the Caloosahatchee II period or earlier. The majority of the historic artifacts date to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, squarely within the accepted date range for the Fishing Rancho Period of around 1760-1840. There were, however, a number of items recovered that could date to earlier than that date range, expanding the possibility that there were fishing rancho sites dating to the seventeenth century as well. In addition, the types of items collected were essentially from utilitarian forms of objects, such as those used in cooking, storing, eating, or transporting goods.
Very little evidence exists for anything outside of basic subsistence activities at Useppa Island.

The historic assemblage of Estero Island is essentially a much smaller version of that from Useppa Island. Many of the same types of artifacts were collected, and the analysis of both sites places the date range for proposed fishing rancho activities at each throughout much of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Artifacts at both sites, however, indicate the possibility of earlier historic occupation and perhaps an earlier beginning to the Gulf Coast rancho settlements. Also of note once again is the lack of any artifacts other than those that would be considered utilitarian.

At Fisherman’s Key, the majority of the artifacts recovered were either Middle Style Olive Jars, Late Style Olive Jars, or ballast stone. There were also many other ceramics found, most of which dated to the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries, with a few artifacts dating to the late seventeenth century. The metal and glass artifacts found also date to the same period, indicating that the site was contemporaneous with the Florida Fishing Rancho Period. Thus, the artifacts found at this shipwreck site are most likely indicative of the types of items that a ship would bring to a fishing rancho settlement. They appear to be utilitarian in nature, necessary items for an economic enterprise.

The material culture found at the three Florida fishing rancho sites all points to an economic basis for the integration of cultures. This fact is more apparent when the identity of the Spanish Indians is further investigated and analyzed in relation to the theoretical concepts of creolization and ethnogenesis. It appears that the utilization or abandonment of different aspects of material culture at the fishing ranchos was probably
more indicative of convenience and ease of use than any deeper cultural meaning or synthesis. It seems that the fishermen and their families tended to adopt and utilize those aspects of each of their cultures that would make their lives and their jobs less challenging. In essence, without further research and excavation, the current evidence suggests that creolization did not occur at the fishing ranchos on the southwest coast of Florida.

Recommendations

The lack of information available on the Gulf Coast Fishing Rancho Period of Florida history is an indication of the urgent need for further archaeological research and investigation. The need to learn more about the record of the fishing rancho sites is becoming ever more pressing with every passing day due to the continuous development of the lands that may have once hosted these settlements. The popularity of the lands chosen for prehistoric and historic fishing establishments and communities persists into contemporary times. Development companies have located the best unprotected coastal areas and islands and have built large resorts, condominiums, and gated communities on them. In these cases, had there been evidence of Gulf Coast rancho occupation, it would either have been destroyed during development or disturbed to the point that any recovered artifacts would not be dated accurately. Without a doubt, as this thesis is being written, more potential fishing rancho sites are being targeted for development and destruction.
Since past fishing rancho sites exist in prime areas for development, the first step for future research is to identify possible fishing rancho sites in areas of southwest Florida that are not overdeveloped. One potential way of doing this would be to conduct non-systematic purposive surface surveys in many of the areas that seem likely to have had fishing rancho activity on or near the site based on the intensive background research already conducted. Many factors could influence the ability to conduct these surveys, including ground disturbance, actual development, and erosion. In light of these possibilities, this project would need to be continuously adaptive to the circumstances encountered. Any areas that show promise could be investigated using non-systematic pedestrian survey in order to determine whether any surface artifact scatters exist. If more than 10 identifiable historic or prehistoric artifacts are found in one area, then the possibility of more intensive survey should be considered based on the location and the likelihood of obtaining permission to conduct minimal subsurface testing, possibly leading to a full-scale excavation. In addition, limited shovel testing would need to be conducted in order to determine sub-surface artifact density in some of these areas. Another potential way of locating more fishing rancho settlements would be through the use of GIS. The estuarine conditions that seem to have drawn the Spanish fishermen originally to certain locations could be determined, and then similar conditions could be mapped and analyzed using a probability model.

At the very least, it is important that some future research does take place in order to develop a better understanding of the material culture of the Spanish fishing ranchos.
and to determine more concretely to what extent these archaeological assemblages record ethnic change.
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Appendices
Appendix A: Perico Pompon’s Unconfirmed Land Grant (Florida Memory 2010)
Territory of Florida
Nashville County
Dec. 29th, 1825

Domingo Alava, being of lawful age and first duly sworn deposes and says that he is well acquainted with Tomas Pomponi—his name is—of his dwelling on the above mentioned place and that he is in actual possession of the land. That he has a few live trees planted at his place and that he is in possession of it more than ten years. Further states that the said Tomas Pomponi has a family of a wife and three children who now resides on the said land and the defendant also states that he is not now interested for or with the aforesaid Tomas Pomponi in his claim to the land.

Domingo Alava

Sworn and subscribed to before me this 29th day of September 1825. At my Office near

[Signature]

Edward Brown, M.P.
Testimony offered by Bennie Ponsford in support of his claim to six hundred and forty acres of land situated on Key Bolo in the vicinity of Charlotte Harbor. If as set forth in his memorial hereunto attached.

Joseph Caldwell, being of lawful age and sound of mind, was interrogated as follows, viz.:--
Lues. 1st. Do you know Bennie Ponsford?
Ans. Yes, I do, and have known him for twelve years.
Lues. 2d. How long has he occupied the land on his proposition now claimed in this memorial?
Ans. Twelve years.
Lues. 3d. Is he a Minor?
Ans. No, he is about forty years old.
Lues. 4th. Is he the head of a family?
Ans. Yes, he is.
Lues. 5th. Is he a resident of Florida?
Ans. Yes.
Lues. 6th. Does he to your knowledge claim any land by virtue of any title derived from either the British or Spanish Governments?
Ans. No, to my knowledge.
Lues. 7th. Has he been in the actual possession of the land he claims since up to this date?
Ans. He has.

Joseph Caldwell

Wrest and subscribed to before me This 26 day of May 1828

Rev. Mr. W. A. M. (E.)
To the Hon. the Secretary of Public Affairs and Register of the Land Office,
On this day, 14th August 1811, deposing as follows, to ascertain claims by
settlement in Calle Florida in the Memorandum of Prudencio Pompon.

He respectfully states that your Memorialist claims title
to one hundred and forty acres of land on the Northwest corner of
the seaport of China in the Province of Florida, as previously occupied by
the Memorandum, which title your Memorialist claims
by virtue of an act of Congress of the twenty-fifth of May
1820 in favor of actual settlers in Florida, and your
Memorialist farther states that he is and has had
actual possession of said land since 1815, that he
claims as such land by virtue of any tenure received
from the British or Spanish Government that he is
over the age of twenty-one years, in the honor of a
family an resident of said land and a citizen of the
United States, all of which is respectfully submitted.

John Deacon

Prudencio Pompon

Mark
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

REGISTER & RECEIVERS
CERTIFICATE No. 380

To all to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting:

WHEREAS Domingo Hernandez, Hebrew of Maximo Hernandez,

has settled upon and entered according to the act of Congress approved the 5th of August, 1842, entitled “An Act to provide for the armed occupation and settlement of the unsettled part of the Peninsula of Florida;” and the other acts amendatory of the same, the

East half of the North East quarter and the West half of the North East quarter of Section Twenty, Township Twenty-five North, Range Twenty-four East, in the District of Lands subject to sale at Newnанville, Florida, containing one hundred and thirty acres and twenty-five hundredths of an acre, being the lands included

in Descriptive three hundred and thirty one, signed to the said Domingo Hernandez, dated the twenty-fifth day of October, one thousand eight hundred and forty-five,

according to the official plat of the survey of the said lands, returned to the General Land Office by the SURVEYOR GENERAL.

NOW KNOW YE, That the United States of America, in consideration of the premises, and in conformity with the several acts of Congress, in such case made and provided, GIVE AND GRANT, and by these presents DO GIVE AND GRANT, unto the said Domingo Hernandez;

and to his heirs, the said tract and boundaries described: TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the same, together with all the rights, privileges, immunities and appurtenances, of whatsoever nature thereto belonging, unto the said Domingo Hernandez.

In Testimony Whereof, I, Millard Fillmore

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, have caused these letters to be made PATENT, and the SEAL of the GENERAL LAND OFFICE to be hereunto affixed.

Given under my hand, at the CITY OF WASHINGTON, the First day of October in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five, and of the Independence of the United States, the Twenty-fourth.

BY THE PRESIDENT: Millard Fillmore

By alax. W. bermick, clerk.

E. S. Tery

Receiever of the General Land Office.