Spanish La Florida was never a staple colony and so presents a setting for addressing three questions: first to see if a creole hybridity existed in Spanish La Florida; second to see if urbanism operated as a cosmopolitan cultural force that helped retard the development of a creolized built environment; and third to see what legal, economic, religious, or social forces may have constrained the material expression of a purely local, perhaps “American” material culture. Of these questions, the last will receive only indirect attention.¹

Webster defines “creole” from the original Portuguese as a person of European ancestry born outside of Europe who preserves some of her ancestral speech and culture. In south Louisiana and other parts of the area of the American African diaspora such people may also have African ancestry.² As used here, the term has its broad sense of persons and cultures with European ancestries but varying admixtures of other peoples and cultures, and in particular such hybrid peoples and cultures as are found in the Americas.

The material practices of the Spaniards in La Florida closely mapped their political claims, especially in St. Augustine.³ A part of St. Augustine’s social history involved the incorporation of Native American women as wives and of Indian men and women as laborers and domestic servants. The result is that St. Augustine has an archaeological record in which Spanish objects and ways of organizing physical space were socially dominant, while Indian ceramics and foodways were socially defined as secondary in importance even though they were actually numerically dominant in the material culture of the town.⁴

St. Augustine today may be in its third location. The first was Cacique Seloy’s long house and a number of rectangular structures constructed with a west or east-of-north orientation on what are today the grounds of the Fountain of Youth property about a mile north of Castillo de San Marcos (see figure 1).⁵ A second St. Augustine, or at least the second and third forts and associated
The present town apparently was laid out circa 1572. The Baptista Boazio engraving of Sir Francis Drake’s raid of 1586 (see figure 2) rather schematically shows a town that consists of a core grid of six blocks that are twice as long, north-south, as they are deep, east-west. Three additional blocks south of that core are smaller, whether because the engraver ran out of space or because they were so in fact. A church (“O”) is on the southeast corner of the cleared space north of the town, and the “town house” (“M”)—almost certainly a fort—is on the western side of the same open area or plaza. Studies undertaken in the 1970s demonstrated that four small blocks that are south of barracks, was built on Anastasia Island circa 1566 and occupied until at least 1570. The present town apparently was laid out circa 1572.
the modern plaza once consisted of four lots (fifty by one hundred pies or forty-four by eighty-eight modern feet) of the exact dimensions ordered in 1563 and the 1572 Ordinances of Colonization for “peonia” or commoners’ lots. Post-1586 rebuilding of the town has obscured the two blocks to the north, but archaeology has shown evidence of the streets that would have defined them (see figure 3). This core area is also where sixteenth-century ceramics are found. Areas immediately adjacent to the six-block core also have sixteenth-century materials, more or less fitting the rest of the Boazio engraving.

The fit of the plaza to the Ordinance of Colonization is more problematic. Boazio suggests that an informal plaza probably existed prior to the laying out of a formal plaza in 1598. Both Boazio’s open space and what is known of the 1598 plaza conform to the order that in a port town the plaza should open to the waterfront and have major civic buildings on its sides. Because of modern buildings archaeologists have not been able to examine the area between Artillery Lane and the modern plaza to determine if the three northern blocks of the original grid fell there (unlikely) or if Artillery Lane was the edge of the 1586 plaza. What

Fig. 2. The Boazio engraving of Drake’s Attack on St. Augustine, 1586 (section). From Albert Manucy, “The Physical Setting of Sixteenth Century St. Augustine,” *Florida Anthropologist* 38, nos. 1–2, part 1 (March–June 1985): 36, fig. 2
can be said is that the space between Artillery Lane and the north side of the current plaza would allow a water-front plaza of two hundred Spanish feet (pies), east-west, by three hundred Spanish feet, north-south, or some other combination of the 1:1.5 ratio decreed in 1563 but oriented with the long axis to the west (like the modern plaza).12

A partial map from circa 1595 shows that in the rebuilding after Drake burned the town, the 1586 plaza was invaded by structures seemingly placed at random except along the water's edge (see figure 4).13 The creation of a formal plaza in 1598 undoubtedly eliminated some of that randomness, but the present street pattern (first mapped in 1737) shows that over the intervening centuries the residents of St. Augustine laid out additional streets and blocks without regard to the original grid, although they seem to have preserved the idea of the basic town lot and did preserve the general idea of a rectilinear street pattern.

That is, modern St. Augustine still shows the marks of the grid tradition of urban layout that was found throughout the Spanish American empire and that was ordered by the decrees of 1563 and 1572. The modification of that pattern

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Fig. 3. Locations of excavations and features in the sixteenth-century settlement of St. Augustine, Florida. From Kathleen Deagan, “The Archaeology of Sixteenth-Century St. Augustine,” *Florida Anthropologist* 38, nos. 1–2, part 1 (March–June 1985): 10, fig. 2.
after 1586 is a mark of the weakening of metropolitan influences, of the rise of creole Floridano dominance, and of adaptation to the local geography as well as other, presently unknown factors. That adaptation likely was well advanced by 1665. In sum, a creole hybridity of sorts is evident in the street pattern of St. Augustine.

A final note on urban design: St. Augustine got its walls between 1708 and 1721, first across its northern approaches and then along its western side. However, by then it had largely assumed the shape it retained for the rest of the colonial era.

As to the houses, Boazio’s rendering, the 1595 description by Fray Andrés de San Miguel, the crude drawings on the map of the same year, and Kathleen Deagan’s finding of daub and post molds provide such evidence as there is. In 1595 the city was newly rebuilt after Sir Francis Drake had burned it in 1586. The houses at that date were of rectangular European plan and framed in wood set

![Fig. 4. A section of a c. 1595 map of San Agustin. Spain, Ministerio de Educacion, Cultura y Deporte, Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla, Mapas y Planos, Florida y Luisian, 3](image-url)
into the ground or attached to wooden sleepers in trenches. Each house had a long side on the street, just as is common in all Spanish villages. Deagan has shown that in the eighteenth century the north walls of houses had no openings against the winter’s cold, while a loggia or arbor sheltered the south walls and their doors from the summer’s heat. There were no chimneys; in the Andalusian manner, such winter heat as was wanted came from a charcoal brazier. In design, then, houses in St. Augustine were pure southern Spanish except that ordinarily they did not have entrances directly from the street.

The poor with Andalusian origins (a majority of the Spanish population) probably used thatch to cover both the sides and roofs of their pole-framed structures until they could join persons with more means in the use of wattle-and-daub walls with thatch roofs. The wealthy, mostly of northern Spanish origins, used squared timbers for the house frames and vertical boards nailed to horizontal supports set between the framing beams, perhaps with wattle and daub between the beams to serve as insulation. According to Father San Miguel, all of the houses were built of boards, but the archaeological evidence of wattle and daub suggests that is not correct, or was not before Sir Francis Drake burned the town in 1586. It must be said that the archaeology is too chronologically imprecise to clarify if there was an evolution of building techniques. Such an evolution seems doubtful because in 1763, when Elixio de la Puente made his property map of the town, there were still wattle-and-daub and wooden structures as well as masonry ones that date after James Moore’s destruction of the town in 1702. The use of “flat” roofs covered with lime-cement, documented for Santa Elena after 1576, is not known for St. Augustine. The church of circa 1595 was built in the same way as were the houses of the wealthy.

The late Albert Manucy thought that many of the basic framing and thatching techniques used in the pre-1586 town(s) were probably Indian because that population was more familiar with the local materials. If that is true, then the non-board-sheathed buildings were actually creole hybrid constructions incorporating European squared design, a mixture of European and native ideas about and techniques for framing, and Native American thatching and material selection (see figure 5). The use of wattle and daub could have come from Native Americans, Spaniards, or Africans because all three peoples used it (see figure 6). The board-sheathed structures were purely European in design and technique (see figure 7). Since they predominated until masonry construction began after 1702, they are another sign that the Spanish, urban, built environment showed a strong adherence to European norms even though creole constructions such as the wattle-and-daub houses were present as well.

So little is known about the placements of windows and other openings and the lengths of eves and existence or not of porches that no statement can be made...
Fig. 5. House and plot plan for the home of Francisco González, drummer and town crier; aa: primary framing, b: wall posts, c: roof post, d: roof plate, e: tie beam, f: ridgepole, g: rafter, h: joist, i: loft floor (canes); aaa: eastern elevation; aaaa: southern elevation; aaaa: floor plan, j: hearth, k: stool; l: fuel for hearth, m: food jars, n: bunks, o: table and benches. Courtesy of the St. Augustine Historical Society

Fig. 6. Plot plan for the home of Juan Calvo, settler, farmer, and soldier; eastern (a) and southern (b) elevations of a 12 × 6 foot wattle-and-daub house. Courtesy of the St. Augustine Historical Society
about a pre-1665 development of a creole style of architecture such as was appearing in the Caribbean. The late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century buildings one sees today in St. Augustine in some cases do represent a Caribbean-derived creole style. Examples such as the Arrivas house fuse the Spanish one-story masonry tradition with Caribbean porch and wood construction ideas possibly having western African origins.20

The other feature of material life that has been extensively studied for early St. Augustine is the use of ceramics. Deagan and her students routinely classify all pot shards as belonging to Stanley South’s “kitchen group” because they are mostly associated with trash pits (including abandoned wells) that also contain bones discarded from meals. Chinese export porcelain, eleven types of majolica, thirteen types of other European wares, and thirteen types of Native American wares constitute the ceramic assemblage from closed provenances of the five sixteenth-century sites that have been excavated.21 Including unidentifiable shards, majolicas constitute 6.16 percent, other European wares make up 38.97 percent, and local aboriginal wares (four types) constitute 48.71 percent of sixteenth-century ceramics. The remaining 6.16 percent of the shards are non-local aboriginal wares (nine types) reflecting trade with the Guale and other, unidentifiable peoples. Among “other European wares,” olive jar shards are the
most numerous (81.55 percent; that is, 3,155 shards of 3,869) and rank second (at 31.78 percent) behind the St. Johns and San Marcos aboriginal shards in the overall assemblage. Clearly the residents of St. Augustine in the sixteenth century depended on imported olive jars for storage and locally made Native American wares for the majority of their other needs, especially for cooking.22

Deagan found that this predominance of Indian ceramics, especially with evidence of their use in cooking, “increased in intensity through time” from an average of 48.71 percent (54.87 percent if nonlocal Indian ceramics are included) in closed sixteenth-century provenances to 66 percent in those of the seventeenth century and 76 percent in those of the eighteenth-century.23

In another indication of the rise of a creole, hybrid material culture, Deagan found that four circa 1763 house sites chosen to reflect documented rising incomes and increasingly higher social status as measured by distance from Native American parentage24 showed a decreasing percentage of Indian ceramics as wealth, with a rise in “Spanish” ethnicity and status (from 92.22 percent of all kitchen items to 47.9 percent) and a corresponding increase in majolicas (2.61 percent to 16.9 percent), Hispanic coarse earthenware, and glassware.25 That is, the distinctively local or creole pattern of ceramic usage first evident in the late sixteenth century had continued and become a permanent part of the material culture of the town. “Spanishness,” status, and wealth were publicly marked by more frequent use of majolicas and other ceramics of European types even as all social strata depended on Indian ceramics for day-to-day use in the kitchen.

The evidence of high usage of aboriginal ceramics, especially for cooking, is the material counterpart of the fragmentary documentary evidence for the formation of an increasingly mestizo, or creole, society in St. Augustine during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Indian women were the wives of common soldiers in late sixteenth-century St. Augustine and constituted about 70 percent of the sixty or so wives in the town of the early seventeenth century. With time the percentage of Indian wives seems to have decreased as more of the married women were locally born of people best described as “Hispanic”—that is, creoles with some Indian ancestry but probably fewer Indian physical features as, over time, locally born women married new levies of Spanish soldiers sent to reinforce the garrison. However, Native American wives did not entirely disappear.26

Africans were present in the town from 1580 onward, but so little is known about them or most aspects of the local culture that no observations can be made about their influences on the material or any other aspect of the culture of St. Augustine in 1565–1665.27 It seems likely that their main contribution was labor. Only with the advent of fugitive slaves from the Carolinas in the late seventeenth century did blacks become numerous enough to have a cultural impact, and even that is unknown.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE AND PLACE OF MANUFACTURE</th>
<th>FIRST DATE</th>
<th>LAST DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Majolica</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caparra blue (Spain)</td>
<td>1490</td>
<td>1600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia plain (Spain)</td>
<td>1490</td>
<td>1650</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fig sprigs / San Juan polychrome (Mexico)</td>
<td>1590</td>
<td>1650</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ichtucknee blue on white (Spain)</td>
<td>1600</td>
<td>1650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabela polychrome (Spain)</td>
<td>1490</td>
<td>1580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ligurian blue on blue (Italy)*</td>
<td>1550</td>
<td>1630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico City white (Mexico)</td>
<td>1575</td>
<td>1650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Luis blue on white (Mexico)</td>
<td>1575</td>
<td>1650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seville blue on blue (Spain)*</td>
<td>1550</td>
<td>1630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santo Domingo polychrome</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yayal blue on white (Spain)</td>
<td>1490</td>
<td>1625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic Ware</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown Cologne stoneware</td>
<td>1530</td>
<td>1600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese porcelain†</td>
<td>1550</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coarse Earthenwares</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feldspar inlaid redware</td>
<td>1530</td>
<td>1600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Bacín / Green Lebrillo</td>
<td>1490</td>
<td>1600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexican red painted</td>
<td>1550</td>
<td>1750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive jars (early, to 1570; middle, 1560–1800)</td>
<td>1560</td>
<td>1800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange micaceous</td>
<td>1550</td>
<td>1650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redware</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>1750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage jar</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>1800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yucatán colonial earthenware</td>
<td>1570</td>
<td>1650</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


†End date varies with type.

Regarding costume or clothing, because the accounting records of Spanish Florida seem to have disappeared for the years after 1617, little can be said about what sorts of clothing Spaniards used after that date. However, for 1565 to 1617 good records exist. They show various styles of European clothing in use among the Spaniards.28 There is no documentary evidence that the Hispanic population adopted Indian styles or items of dress or modified the costume norms of the Spanish world to fit local conditions. Probably access to the markets of Mexico and Spain (via Havana and Mexico), social conservatism, and an intention to appear other than Indian account for this and most other retentions of Spanish material culture even when it was less functional than that of Native Americans.

In sum, wherever Spaniards were in La Florida during its first century, they used certain signs in the built environment and public displays of ceramics of European design, decoration, and clothing to mark their status and identity even as they were heavily dependent on Indian building techniques for their structures and on utilitarian wares for the actual preparation and storage of foods. That is, the degree of hybridity was limited. The Spaniards’ village of St. Augustine likely provided enough cosmopolitan cultural force to keep them from a more extensive creolization of their material culture.

Answers to the three original questions can be posited. First, did a creole hybridity exist in La Florida? Yes, in limited ways. Second, did urbanism operate as a cosmopolitan force to retard the development of a creolized built environment? Again the answer appears to be yes, although the force of metropolitan laws clearly diminished after 1586. Third, what legal, economic, religious, or social factors constrained the material expression of a purely local, “American” material culture? On this issue the answer seems to be that such factors were at work, but their influence must be largely conjecture. The strength of Spanish village life evident in the built environment and an apparent preference for Spanish-style ceramics as individuals rose in status can, however, serve as proxies for the influence of these other factors. It can be shown that the presence of Indian women in St. Augustine helps to account for the predominance of Native American ceramics in cooking contexts and gave rise to a population and pattern of ceramic usage that was “creole” in the varying meanings that word came to have in areas where there were no Africans.

Notes

1. The question of cultural formation in Spanish La Florida is complicated because the Spanish frontier in La Florida was by definition an inclusive, incorporating frontier unlike the excluding Anglo-American frontier pioneered in Virginia in 1634. This meant that for the entire century under consideration, 1565–1665, perhaps 95 percent to two-thirds of the people in the colony were Native Americans, the percentage declining over time. For them, La Florida was defined as a relationship of a paramount people, the Spaniards and
their Hispanicized mestizo, African, and mulatto coculturalists, and subordinate but independent peoples: themselves. Thus the material culture of La Florida has two arenas, but only the Spanish one qualifies as “creole.”

2. In a clear case of the use of material culture to mark political and social lines, within the mission villages the mission churches and rectories and even the kitchens of the friars followed European rectangular patterns, setting them apart in a visible symbolism of connection to the secular paramounts of the land. That visual symbolism was more important than the fact that many of the (early) churches were pole-framed wattle and daub construction with thatch roofs, following Native American building traditions (although there seem to have been pole-framed, thatched structures in Spain as well). The later, larger churches were probably timber framed and board sheathed in the Spanish manner. In the same way, Spanish ceramics (and later ceramics made locally but to Spanish patterns) seem to have been almost exclusively used by the resident friars, with Indian utilitarian wares numerically dominant on mission grounds as well as in the villages. See David Hurst Thomas, “The Archaeology of Mission Santa Catalina de Guale: Our First Fifteen Years,” in The Missions of La Florida, ed. Bonnie G. McEwan (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1993), 9, 12–19; and in Florida Anthropologist 44, nos. 2–4 (1991): 110–17. See also other essays in these volumes.

Yet by a twist, the friars’ own custom of having housekeepers and female cooks became, with but little amplification, a means of identifying their high status in Indian terms. High-status Indian males had traditionally had more than one wife. Forbidding that, some friars appropriated the symbol by filling the rectories and their kitchens with serving, cooking, and cleaning women. At least that was the case with one “abusive” friar in the 1680s (Archivo General de Indias, Santo Domingo 226, no. 105, Lockey Collection, Library of Congress per microfilm at P. K. Yong Library of Florida History, University of Florida, Gainesville; Paul E. Hoffman, Florida’s Frontiers [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001], 165–66).


6. “Ordinances for the governing of areas to be conquered in the Indies,” Segovia, July 13, 1563, in Colección de documentos inéditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista y organización de las antiguas posesiones españolas de América y Oceania, sacadas de los archivos del reino y muy especialmente de Indias, 42 vols. (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia,
St. Augustine

1864–84), 8:519–20; also in Dora Crouch, Daniel Garr, and Axe Mandingo, Spanish City Planning in the New World (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1982).


9. Of particular note are the three houses shown west of the first row of blocks south of the plaza. Excavations at “Palm Row,” SA 36-4, have turned up sixteenth-century materials whose location corresponds to the structures shown. The De Leon site, SA 26-1, falls within the small southeastern small block in Boazio’s nine-block grid. It too has sixteenth-century materials and post molds from an eighteen-by-twelve-foot wooden post building. See Deagan, “Archaeology of St. Augustine,” 10 (fig. 2), 13.

10. Archivo General de Indias, Santo Domingo 224, Gonzalo Méndez Canzo to Crown, St. Augustine, February 23, 1598.


16. Boazio’s rendering and excavations at SA-26-1 show this.


18. Manucy, Sixteenth-Century St. Augustine, 51 (San Miguel), 70, 77, 79, 83–88, 42–48 (drawings of probable houses); AGI, Mapas y Planos, Florida y Luisiana 3, St. Augustine, c. 1595; Deagan, “Archaeology of St. Augustine,” 13, 16 (fig. 8); Deagan, Spanish St. Augustine, 26–27. Manucy, Sixteenth-Century St. Augustine, 113, argues without any evidence that “fireproof tabby must have become the preferred reconstruction material” after 1586.

19. Manucy, Sixteenth-Century St. Augustine, 52. On the other hand, the use of pole-framed, thatched structures was common in rural Andalucia, so that is an alternative source for construction techniques.

21. Deagan, “Archaeology of St. Augustine,” 11–12 (table 1). For the subsurface survey, findings of aboriginal St. Johns wares (to 1670), the Spanish majolicas Columbia plain (1500–1650), Ichucknee blue on blue (1550–1640), Santo Domingo blue on white (1550–1650), orange micaceous ware (1550–1650), and Mexican redware (sixteenth century onward) were used to delimit the sixteenth-century part of town. Given the wide temporal spread of manufacturing for these wares, the dating is not certain.

22. Deagan, “Archaeology of St. Augustine,” 19. The percentages may be biased by the large size of olive jars and aboriginal storage and cooking jars, all of which would break into more shards than smaller ceramic objects such as majolica plates and bowls.


24. A Guale woman and a Mexican soldier, likely a mestizo (Maria de la Cruz site, 91–132 pesos annual income, SA-16-23); a criollo soldier (de Hita site, 264 pesos income, SA-7-4); a criollo officer (Ponca de León site, 480 pesos income, SA-36-4); and a Spanish official (Avero site, >590 pesos income, SA-7-5). See Deagan, *Spanish St. Augustine*.

25. Deagan, *Spanish St. Augustine*, 236–40, 242. She found that a statistical study showed that the sites are essentially the same except for the frequency of coarse earthenware and possibly majolicas but concluded that the generalization remains correct that high usage of Indian ceramics is characteristic of all social statuses in eighteenth-century St. Augustine and, as would seem obvious given cost factors, especially so for those who were poorer, that is, mestizo or Hispanicized Indian.

26. Hoffman, *Florida’s Frontiers*, 54, 75–76 (forty-two of sixty wives were Indians or mestizos in 1607), 116, 141–42.

27. Ibid., 70. Four women came in 1580 with Doña María de Solís, wife of Governor Gutiérre de Miranda. Thirty men and women (mostly men) arrived in 1583 to work on the fort; they had been in Havana working on that fort. Deagan thought that black slaves may have had a role in the production of colonoware during the eighteenth century (Kathleen Deagan, *Artifacts of the Spanish Colonies of Florida and the Caribbean, 1500–1800* [Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1987], 104).

28. Eugene Lyon, *Richer Than We Thought: The Material Culture of Sixteenth-Century St. Augustine*, a complete number of El Escribano 29 (1992), publishes several personal property inventories from 1566, lists of supplies sent from Spain in the 1570s, and other lists that include cloth and clothing prior to the 1580s. For gifts given to Indians and trade goods in 1611, see Hoffman, *Florida’s Frontiers*, 102. We know that gifts were given after that, but we do not have any lists.