

UCSC Archaeology and Biological Anthropology Lunch Talks
Wednesday, November 4th, 12:00 Noon
Zoom Registration Information coming soon!

Local Adaptations to a Colonial Economy in Spanish La Florida

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Danielle's research combines archival research, traditional artifact analysis, and chemical composition and isotopic analysis of glass beads and lead shot using Laser Ablation-Inductively Coupled Plasma-Mass Spectrometry (LA-ICP-MS) and acid dissolution to study the role that both colonial and native people played in disrupting or contributing to colonial economic institutions. Glass beads are ubiquitous on colonial period sites, common trade items for Europeans, and, most importantly, socially charged items within native thought-worlds. Lead shot is equally ubiquitous; however, it is considered a mundanely functional item. Although broadly recovered from sites, lead shot and monochrome glass beads lack diagnostic physical or stylistic characteristics that would facilitate interpretations of production, distribution, and use patterns. Innovations in methodological techniques, including LA-ICP-MS, allow the use of formerly ignored artifact categories to trace the distribution of goods across the landscape. These chemical methods are used in conjunction with a close examination of historical documents to provide evidence of how goods moved through colonial and indigenous communities, foregrounding the importance of economic agency among settlers and natives, even when these practices challenged idealized models of mercantilism and colonial government regulations.

