


2005

Commentaries

Florida Historical Society
membership@myfloridahistory.org

 Part of the [American Studies Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

Find similar works at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq>

University of Central Florida Libraries <http://library.ucf.edu>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by STARS. It has been accepted for inclusion in Florida Historical Quarterly by an authorized editor of STARS. For more information, please contact STARS@ucf.edu.

Recommended Citation

Society, Florida Historical (2005) "Commentaries," *Florida Historical Quarterly*. Vol. 84: No. 1, Article 8.
Available at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq/vol84/iss1/8>

Commentaries

Jack E. Davis, with Thomas Castillo, Jay Clune, James M. Denham, Russell D. James, Alex Lichtenstein, Dave Nelson, Joshua Parker, and Lee L. Willis III

Comments on Andrew Frank's "Taking the State Out of Florida"

Professor Andrew Frank's "Taking the State Out of Florida" represents an exciting and challenging project. Using historian Daniel Richter's suggestion that "facing east from Indian country" will change our perspective on familiar events and processes, Frank proposes to re-write the geographic and chronological foundations of Florida's history by "look[ing] outward from settled Indian villages and into settling and often struggling colonial outposts." Native peoples and local places, Frank rightly argues, must move to the center of our narratives if we are ever to understand the complicated reality of early Florida's history. Such a perspective is a critical one for a forum of this sort. A global perspective on Florida's past must acknowledge that world-wide forces were refracted through—and therefore experienced within the context of—local realities; an internationalist's interest in European empires must not be allowed to obscure the agendas and values of Florida's still powerful Indian peoples. As disorienting as it may be to de-emphasize St. Augustine and imperial officials in favor of Alachua and Native headmen, Frank is certainly correct that such a strategy presents early Florida "in terms that its inhabitants would have understood best."

As Frank moves forward with this project, I urge him to further develop the implications of his evocative phrase "Taking the State Out of Florida." More specifically, I hope that he will work to

make clear that “state” has two meanings relevant to his project. “State” could, of course, mean “Florida,” the geographic entity which we know today. Frank’s project will take the state out of Florida by re-casting our understanding of Florida geography so as to include Indian country and the margins of various European empires. “State” could also, though, mean “nation-state,” a type of socio-political organization, a system for organizing loyalties, marshalling resources, and exerting power. Frank’s discussion of the relative weakness of European imperial power in Florida shows that he is intent on removing this sort of state as well. In doing so, however, Frank should acknowledge that Florida was a “power vacuum” for Indians as well as for Europeans. None of the traditional Native power centers in the eighteenth-century Southeast had much influence in Florida. The Creeks and Seminoles who moved into Florida were thus every bit as much “on the margins” as British, French, or Spanish colonists. In other words, Native “states” need to be taken out of Florida’s early history as well. In Florida at least, Indian country and zones of Euro-American occupation were both “stateless” territories.—*Joshua Piker, Oklahoma University, “Symposium Week 3: Comment,” in H-Florida [H-Florida@h-net.msu.edu], 20 October 2004.*

“In short, the lack of clear geopolitical boundaries in eighteenth-century Florida provided opportunities for sustained Native autonomy rarely found in North America.” This statement by Andres Frank is true, and he best expounds on it by bringing Pantón, Leslie, & Co. into the picture. The trading firm had a definite monopoly in most of East and West Florida in its commercial ventures. A short history can demonstrate: the firm was run by Scots with British citizenship who spoke English, French, Spanish, and, in some cases, Portuguese, not to mention Native languages. The firm’s partners worked under Spanish, British, and American rule in Florida and were friendly with colonial governments of the Portuguese, Dutch, French, and Danish, as well as others.

I believe the reason Pantón, Leslie, & Co. influenced the Indians was not because of their monopoly or business practices, but because they broke down the language barrier. A Creek or Seminole chief or clansman could come to Pensacola or St. Augustine to trade furs for processed goods and be assured he could speak to a person in company management (or even lower) who spoke the language(s) that the trading Native American

spoke. This fact made it possible for neighboring villages with separate influences from Spain or Great Britain to trade with one single company.

Although I have a limited familiarity with the many Panton, Leslie, & Co. papers located in special collections in the South and elsewhere, I have read enough of the original documents to have seen John and James Innerarity mediate disputes between Creeks, between Seminoles, between the French and Seminoles, or the Spanish and Creeks. The firm of Panton, Leslie, & Co., broke down the language barrier experienced in other regions (Old Northwest, Mississippi River Valley) as the geographical area passed from ownership of one European nation to another. When Florida passed from Spanish to British or British to Spanish, the company's trade with the Natives survived and flourished. With this influence, it mattered not in Florida who controlled the land through divine kingship ownership, only that one company could be trusted and traded with continuity.—*Russell D. James, "Symposium Week 3: Comment," in H-Florida [H-Florida@h-net.msu.edu], 20 October 2004.*

Author's Response:

Piker is quite right in pushing me to explore both aspects of "the state." Clearly, there is a double meaning in my title, and this was intentional. During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Florida was a largely stateless society, both from a Native and non-Native perspective. Too often scholars have assumed a powerful and centralized Spanish, Creek, British, or Seminole presence. The play-off system employed by some Creek leaders, for example, has been posited as a means for the Creek nation to survive and thrive in a tumultuous era. Creek and then Seminole survival, however, was more localized and village-oriented than we have been led to believe. The play-off system was equally local, as it resulted in the uneven presence of trade goods and power in Florida villages. Perhaps this is one of the many reasons for the controversies surrounding William Augustus Bowles and Alexander McGillivray.

At the same time, I hope that Florida historians will begin to downplay the geographic boundaries that have defined Florida. Because the region was relatively stateless in the political sense, few traders, diplomats, or warriors abided by the dividing line that sep-

arated Georgia and Florida. Many of the disputes of the era resulted from this lack of regulation and constant movement across the dividing line. Georgia, Great Britain, and the United States (and residents from all three) had active roles in the shaping of Florida even while Spain claimed the territory.

James's comments about the Panton, Leslie, and Forbes Co. were equally insightful and useful. He is quite right to point to the statelessness of the company and its history. The importance of "breaking the language barrier" was indeed an essential component to keeping the Indian trade. Yet, at the same time, I think that we can slightly modify or extend James's insights. Yes, the ability to speak Muskogee, Alabama, Spanish, French, and English were essential traits for the factors. When chiefs, warriors, and traders came into Spanish, British, and American territories, good interpreters were mandatory, and the Panton Leslie Company employed many. Yet, if we look at this history from the Native vantage point, it is clear that most if not nearly all of the traders were employed within Indian villages, not within European/American territory. They lived in Indian villages, married Indian women, and lived according to the rules of Creek/Seminole society. Rather than interpreting their experience from the European vantage point, the key is to see their experience from the Indians' perspective. Rather than examining Pensacola and St. Augustine, we must examine Alachua and Tallassee. Scholars have overemphasized the importance of European sanction (passports); not enough has been said about the importance of clan and village sanction. The story of the Panton, Leslie Co. can be best understood in this light. The enterprise survived the transfer of power between Spain and Great Britain because its resident traders had the sanction of clan and village leaders. Thus, the permanence of the company had its roots and authority from within Indian villages.—*Andrew K. Frank, "Symposium Week 3: Response," in H-Florida [H-Florida@h-net.msu.edu], 26 October 2004.*

Comments on Sherry Johnson's "The St. Augustine Hurricane of 1811"

Having recently come through Hurricane Ivan, I feel somewhat qualified to comment on the psychological implications of a hurricane, if not the social, cultural and political. As my expertise is in West Florida, I will address Professor Johnson's excellent abstract on the 1811 hurricane from that perspective. Along these

lines, my first reaction was to question whether hurricanes facilitated communication between East and West Florida? Sherry Johnson discusses the sister colonies of Louisiana and Cuba in terms of the domino effects of a disaster. What of West Florida? Was Pensacola simply oriented toward Louisiana to the degree that Mobile came to its aid in the aftermath of a disaster?

My next reaction, however, was to appreciate the thought-provoking, creative and interdisciplinary questions that Johnson raises for this reason. West Florida had an equally stormy colonial history, but the enduring impacts of hurricanes on the political, social, cultural and economic development of this region is a question no historian of West Florida has asked. Some impacts are well known: in 1559 a hurricane destroyed Tristán de Luna's fledgling settlement on Pensacola Bay; in 1752 a storm destroyed the Santa Rosa Island settlement; and in 1780 a storm frustrated Bernardo de Galvez's attempt to capture Pensacola. There are some two dozen or so lesser-known storms documented in eighteenth-century West Florida. What impact did these storms have on historic processes along the northern Gulf coast?

To get at the heart of her argument, Johnson's adaptation of political science theory to gauge the impact of a natural disaster is just the kind of interdisciplinary inquiry in which historians should be engaged. Political science theory would suggest that the storm of 1811 gave East Florida residents the perfect opportunity to throw off the yoke of Spanish control. That they did just the opposite in fending off the "Patriots" suggests, perhaps, that the storm forged in residents a stronger connection to an empire in which they were firmly socially, culturally, and religiously situated. I was reminded of the contributions of a colleague in psychology who, in the aftermath of Ivan, explained that large natural disasters, such as hurricanes, often forge a stronger sense of community with fellow victims, an enhanced sense of a shared burden. Did the hurricane of 1811 forge a stronger sense of community, one that emboldened residents of East Florida to fend off the Patriots rather than to foment rebellion? Can the discipline of psychology, like political science, contribute to our understanding of how disasters impact historic processes?

In the end, Johnson left me with more questions than conclusions, but that is what an excellent, creative, essay should do.—*Jay Clune, University of West Florida, "Symposium Week 4: Comment," in H-Florida [H-Florida@h-net.msu.edu], 17 October 2004.*

Author's Response

I appreciate Jay Clune's perceptive remarks about my attempt to link the aftermath of hurricanes to political processes. First, I must apologize that I seemingly omitted West Florida in my analysis. No insult was intended. My desire to concentrate on the Hurricane of 1811 came because of the enigma of the residents' loyalty to Spain, even when the confusion of the crisis should have provoked them to rebellion if they were so inclined.

I also knew there was a sufficient archival base in the East Florida Papers in P.K. Yonge Library in Gainesville, and also that I would find material in the Fondo de las Floridas in Cuba. Although I did not include them in this article, Pensacola and Mobile were part and parcel of this evolving process from the 1750s onward. For example, the hurricane in 1766 off Mobile blew the *situado* ships off course and forced Antonio de Ulloa to compensate for the loss of revenue in Louisiana. In 1802, like what happened in St. Augustine in 1811, Havana shifted money to Pensacola to compensate residents' for their losses after a hurricane came ashore there. Both areas are addressed in my larger work, but for brevity, I chose to focus this research on one instance in East Florida.

Professor Clune's question about the psychological impact of hurricanes and other disasters is well taken. After hurricane Andrew, there were several studies undertaken in psychology and sociology to this end. Disaster in its many forms does have a "leveling" effect, and it heightens a "we-they" mentality. But following closely on the heels of the sociologists, the political scientists found that if victims are displeased with the way the government treated them, the "we-they" dichotomy shifted to a "we the victims" and "they the authorities" conflict. The classic example cited is the blatant theft of relief supplies after the Managua, Nicaragua, earthquake by the Somoza government in 1975. The other case, of course, was that South Florida's residents were also very displeased by the Bush administration's slow response to the crisis after Andrew. What my research sought to do was to take these ideas and apply them in historic context. It helped, of course, that at the same time I began my research, scientists and climatologists were finalizing their conclusions based on data that demonstrate that after 1750, the Caribbean suffered six decades of environmental stress because of the El Niño/La Niña sequence.

So I began to look for hurricanes and their consequences after 1750 throughout the Spanish Caribbean, from Puerto Rico to Tampico, and I found incontrovertible evidence for a change in approach by the Spanish crown. The process began as early as the 1750s and the 1760s, and gradually they “got it,” that is, they figured out that it was their responsibility to respond to hurricanes. The most pressing problem was food, and they relaxed the restrictions on importing provisions after every hurricane, finally leading to a complete reorganization of provisioning networks in 1773. They also looked around at other islands, even in the 1760s, and found that unhappy residents invariably rebelled against colonial rule. For example, they learned a valuable lesson from the Louisiana rebellion in 1768. The reign of Charles III in Spain (1759-1788) was responsible for this change in policy, and the three governors in my study—Zéspedes, Quesada, and Estrada—all came up through the ranks during this learning period. But after Charles III died in 1788, the administrators during the reign of his son, Charles IV (1788-1808)—Las Casas in Cuba and Carondelet in Louisiana—forgot their lessons and consequently had a very hard time trying to govern. In the case of Juan José de Estrada, his decades of service in the Spanish military and his experience in government meant that he understood what could happen in the volatile situation on the Florida frontier. His response forged a “we-they” response in St. Augustine’s residents, with General Matthews and his Georgians clearly identified as the outsiders. This was later reinforced by Sebastián de Kindelán when he refused to allow the non-Spanish residents to vote for electors under the Constitution of 1812.

Finally, I think my research dovetails nicely with Dr. Frank’s revisionist work. For nearly twenty years, I have been hoping to take the state, specifically the United States, out of Spanish Florida’s history. I cannot agree, however, that Florida in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was “stateless.” True, the form and execution of Florida’s government under Spanish rule was different, but it was not necessarily less effective than that of the United States, especially vis-à-vis the native peoples. The Seminoles, like the acknowledged Spanish residents, prospered under Spanish rule; witness the success of the Seminole “Old Fields” around Tallahassee. The Spanish form of governance incorporated the indigenous peoples rather than removed them, and in this respect, Spanish rule did not change during the Second

Spanish Period. Certainly, the Seminoles were aware of the fact; after all, it was they who turned the tide and defeated the Georgians in the countryside. For fifty or more years, historians have been erroneously characterizing Spanish East and West Florida as backward, a failure, tearing itself apart, and other pejorative descriptors. But our panel is a good start—we're finally "getting it."—*Sherry Johnson, "Symposium Week 4: Response," in H-Florida [H-Florida@h-net.msu.edu], 31 October 2004.*

Comments on Larry Youngs's 'The Sporting Set Winters in Florida'

Youngs's study offers opportunities for examining and exploring an important and understudied facet of Florida's social history. His focus on golf as a way to explore the "international network of sportsmen, spectators, and entrepreneurs" that visited and eventually did business in Florida has great potential for a fuller understanding of the social and economic development of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Florida. While golf and tennis (and polo) among elites in Palm Beach, Miami, and the greater Gold Coast area are obvious foci to explore, I would encourage Youngs to cast his net more widely to include other regions and other outdoor recreational activities. Surely not to be overlooked are coastal areas on the Gulf. Edison and Firestone's Fort Myers lured sportsman from all over the world eager to slay monster tarpon. Tampa Bay, St. Petersburg, and Clearwater developed resorts of their own where golf and tennis attracted participants and spectators. While they make modern eyes cringe, photographs of proud hunters and their "cracker" guides, posing in front of Florida panthers strung up on poles after long safari-like hunts in the Lower Peninsula, are but one example of the enthusiasm that elite visitors shared for exploring and exploiting one of America's last frontiers.

What of the interaction between visitors and natives (guides)? Did natives watch in awe or did they merely tolerate these fancy exotics as odd curiosities? These hunting and fishing expeditions led visitors from the North and abroad to a clear understanding of Florida's economic potential which led to the development of the state's coastal areas and interior sections. Phosphate strikes in Alachua, Hillsborough, and Polk Counties lured English entrepreneurs to Florida to exploit the important mineral. English remittance men were soon to follow. By the 1890s in Fort Meade, for

example, polo, horseracing, and cricket games enlivened the social scene and altered social and economic systems, bringing interior Florida into a world economy. The degree to which these cultural introductions altered our economic and social landscape are important for fuller understanding of Florida history.—*James M. Denham, Florida Southern College, "Symposium Week 2: Comment," in H-Florida [H-Florida@h-net.msu.edu], 15 October 2004.*

I'd like to echo Mike Denham's endorsement of Professor Youngs's fascinating and important topic. Sport played (and continues to play) an important role in Florida society in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and should accordingly have a prominent place in the historiography. I also agree that hunting would be a worthwhile addition to the project, not only in the lower peninsula but in the panhandle as well. The cypress and yellow pine industries attracted businessmen from Western Europe and the Northeast alike. In turn, travel writers from national outdoor magazines also visited the wild environs of northwest Florida, making striking observations of the people and landscape. (In some instances their parties wantonly shot scores of alligators from steamboats not unlike the slaying of buffalo from railroad cars in the West.) A comparison of the panhandle/lower peninsula hunting trips versus the East Coast country club experience may indeed be worthwhile.

I also find Youngs's statement that international visitors to sporting enclaves "interacted in formulating individual and group identities based on an amalgam to values, ideas, and activities" a convincing observation, but I wonder how this amalgam functioned specifically. The scope of the proposed study, 1870-1930, encompasses sweeping social changes: Gilded Age excess, progressive reform, and the tightening vise of Jim Crow, to name a few. How did this international enclave affect movements such as prohibition, for example? Or more specifically, as Florida's counties went dry in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, did their values, ideas, and activities comport with the wets or the dries? Did their mores shape the way that South Floridians thought of vigilantism?

I look forward to following the development of this project. It promises to yield valuable insights into Florida's society and culture.—*Lee L. Willis III, Florida State University, "Symposium Week 2: Comment," in H-Florida [H-Florida@h-net.msu.edu], 17 October 2004.*

It is exciting to see historians finally beginning to examine Florida tourism. Recently, for instance, Susan Braden looked at Flagler's resort architecture and Patsy West traced Seminole tourist traditions. Now, Youngs has proposed a unique perspective that moves beyond the Sunshine State's borders into a transnational world. By addressing the sporting culture of the early 1900s, Youngs attempts to move the discourse into heretofore unexplored areas of Florida's resort era.

In Florida and southern historiography, a recurring question is the "southern-ness" of Florida. Is Florida a part of the Old/New South? Or is it a separate culture that developed with the influx of Northern temporary and retired residents as well as migratory seasonal workforce? For instance, was the emerging sporting culture of the early 1900s transplanted intact by international visitors to Florida—or was there a Florida/Southern influence upon it? In turn, does the presence of this sporting set affect Florida's "native" culture in any significant way? For instance, did other non-Flagler resorts or communities begin courting this sporting culture? Another theme in twentieth-century Florida studies, especially in connection with tourism, is Florida's image. Often portrayed as an exotic locale and a paradise, Florida represented for many visitors an encounter with a safe "other" world. Several studies have addressed the development and use of this image. As for Youngs's study, did that tropical image attract the sporting communities? Or did that tropical environment create a unique, geographically-specific version of the more general international sporting culture? Or did the culture simply exist parallel to the rest of Florida's tourist scene? In other words, cultural trends flowing into Florida may have been as important as those coming out of Florida.

Youngs stated goal to trace the construction of a lifestyle and culture by transnational visitors to Florida follows a third long-time theme in Florida studies. From Hernando De Soto's Fountain of Youth to the antebellum planter's Old South cotton culture to Henry Flagler's and Florida Seminoles' winter playgrounds, Florida has been remade several times over by newcomers. By placing the early 1900s sporting set within that tradition of re-imagining and re-constructing Florida (by both the merchants and the consumers), Youngs's study will make a valuable contribution to the ongoing studies of Florida's malleable image.—*Dave Nelson, Florida State Archives, "Symposium Week 2: Comment," in H-Florida [H-Florida@h-net.msu.edu], 18 October 2004.*

Author's Response

I thank James Denham for his helpful and encouraging comments concerning sport's impact on the economic and social landscape of Florida history. Because my larger work analyzes the emergence and development of the winter resorts in Florida, Georgia, and the Carolinas, early on I limited (for practical reasons) my research to Florida's Atlantic coast. I have done some research on golf along the Gulf Coast, and I have read a good bit about hunting and fishing in Florida in contemporary travel guides and the popular press.

I would, however, like to take Denham's suggestion to heart and broaden my understanding of sport's impact throughout the state. I would be especially interested in sources that would help me answer Denham's question: "What of the interaction between visitors and natives?" The viewpoints of locals are always insightful although difficult to find, particularly those of African Americans who worked directly for the resorts or who lived in what I call the "shadows" of the resorts. Seasonal workers from the North or from the Caribbean are equally difficult to locate historically.

I also thank Lee L. Willis III and David Nelson for their thoughtful comments and questions. First, I see Florida visitors' hunting and country club experiences as indicators of a cultural shift at work. Early on, northerners were especially attracted to Florida as one of this country's final frontiers. Upper-class males especially embraced "roughing it" as part of "camp life" and the wilderness experience. As increasing numbers of people traveled into Florida, however, popular perceptions of nature shifted. Female travel-guide authors, such as Harriet Beecher Stowe and Abbie Brooks, advised their readers to immerse themselves in Florida's bucolic setting without disturbing the environment. Both writers forcefully criticized what they saw as the wanton and unnecessary slaughter of animals like the alligator. Sidney Lanier, a Southerner writing for a Northern audience, suggested a more passive and contemplative encounter with Florida's natural beauty. By the 1890s, the introduction of golf into the United States and Flagler's development of Florida's Atlantic coast coincided to create a winter Mecca for the emerging country club set. Less interested in the challenges and discomforts of the wilderness, certain upper-class men and women gravitated to Florida each winter expecting (even demanding) to find familiar levels of comfort and

convenience, and a “natural” environment tamed by the hand of man. Like the “didactic landscapes” of early nineteenth-century cemeteries and urban parks, Florida’s sporting environment (especially golf courses) provided Northerners an “antidote” to the industrial city.

Second, concerning the scope of my research (1870-1930), it will require a book to adequately address the evolving individual and group identities that resorters constructed during this period. The historical actors involved in my original narrative included Southern whites (both directly and indirectly associated with the winter resorts), Southern blacks who created year-round communities in the shadows of the resorts, Northern white workers who migrated annually from summer resorts in the North to winter resorts in the South, Northern and Southern entrepreneurs who often played leading roles in the creation and development of the resort scene, and, always at the center of the story, the tourists and seasonal residents who made wintering in the south Atlantic states a permanent part of their lives. I am broadening my analysis by including workers, resorters, and entrepreneurs from outside the United States.

Third, in describing the effect that resorters had on local, state, and national politics, on social movements like prohibition, or “the tightening vice of Jim Crow,” historian T.J. Jackson Lears’s phrase “evasive banality” comes to mind. The resorters’ winter colonies were in the South, but they were not of the South. They consciously constructed their seasonal lifestyle to insulate themselves from the realities of the larger society.

Fourth, members of the sporting set found answers to questions of individual and group identity in the mutuality they constructed after (not before) their lifestyle enclaves were formed. Southern and Northern developers competed vigorously in attracting members of the sporting set. Also, certain Southern communities were more willing and successful in accommodating outside visitors. Together, Floridians and their visitors cooperated and competed in creating the winter sporting scene.

Fifth, images of Florida were in a constant state of flux throughout the period under study, often with multiple images simultaneously at play. Images of Florida as an exotic symbol of “the Old South,” as this country’s final untamed wildernesses, as a natural sanitarium, as a picturesque and bucolic paradise for sightseers, as a luxurious haven designed for conspicuous consumption,

as an opportunity ripe for ambitious entrepreneurs, and as an exclusive setting for an international sporting set each attracted distinctive groups of visitors at different times. Thus, Florida's image and the manner in which people re-imagined and re-constructed Florida serve as the primary threads that hold my narrative together.—Larry Youngs, "Symposium Week 2: Response," in *H-Florida* [*H-Florida@h-net.msu.edu*], 21 October 2004.

Comments on Melanie Shell-Weiss's "Coming North to the South"

I think Melanie Shell-Weiss is on to something very promising here. We should rethink the history of Miami by drawing on models from immigration history, and the history of Miami can, in turn, force us to reconceptualize those models in a very fruitful way. However, I do not find her current model for taking up this task entirely persuasive. She claims "Miami is not a new immigrant city"; but I disagree. I think she vastly overstates the significance of foreign immigration to the city's political economy and culture during the first half of the twentieth century. Notwithstanding the important presence of Bahamians, what makes the city interesting is the dramatic shift it underwent from an urban area defined by internal migration prior to World War II to its status as a city defined by foreign-born migrants in the second half of the twentieth century.

First, let's do the numbers. The population of Dade County in 1900 stood at 6,245. Of those, not even 600, or less than 10 percent, were foreign-born whites, and about 1,200 were "Negro." The census data shows 237 persons born in the West Indies, though we do need to ask if Bahamians fell into this category or that of "Negro." (Later census years count "white" West Indians; historian Marvin Dunn gave the 1900 figure of 212 Bahamians). It is worth noting that there were exactly four Cuban-born people residing in Dade County in 1900.

Two decades later, the population of the county had swelled to 42,663, an increase of nearly 700 percent. The vast majority of this increase was native-born white. In 1920, only 3,300 foreign-born whites appeared in the census. Blacks, however, now made up almost 30 percent of the county's overall population, as they did in many Southern cities at the time. Even if we reduce our unit of analysis to the city of Miami, we find a total population in 1920 of 29,571, of which 7,398 (25 percent) were foreign born. Prior to 1960, this figure would mark the apogee of immigrants in the city.

It appears, however, that about 5,000 of those counted by the 1920 census as "black" were in fact foreign born, probably from the Bahamas. Over half of them had arrived after 1914, in a Caribbean version of the Great Migration. What we badly need in terms of research is a close analysis of "non-white" immigration to Florida in the 1900-1920 period, since the census is often quite confusing in its approach to this category. It would also be nice to know more about the relationship between native-born blacks and West Indian newcomers in this era, especially in light of developments in the post-1980 period. But in any event, the 1920 figure of 5,000 foreign-born blacks only increased to 5,500 by 1930, and declined thereafter until the period of more recent immigration.

By 1930, Dade County's population had reached 142,955. Only 10,900 were foreign-born white, and of these, 1400 alone were born in England. Only 266 were born in Cuba. When added to the 5,512 foreign born blacks, the total number of immigrants was only 11.5 percent of the population.¹

Although an exceedingly diverse lot, it appears that many of these immigrants were "old stock" in the nineteenth-century meaning of the term. In other words, with the important exception of the Bahamian presence, Miami in 1930 looked a bit like Milwaukee in 1880. Of the 30,000 blacks in Dade County in 1930 (21 percent of the population), it appears that one-sixth were born in the West Indies; it seems likely that much of the enormous immigration of blacks to Miami in the first three decades of the century came from the rural South, and did not, in any case, keep up with white in-migration.

By 1940, the population had nearly doubled again to 267,000. Of these, nearly 200,000 were native-born whites, and nearly 50,000 were black. In 1950, of the 500,000 residents of Dade, only 10 percent were foreign born; however, the black population of 64,000 now made up a smaller percentage of the overall total, a significant trend.

Then, if we jump to 1960, the total population was 935,000. Now, 112,000 were of foreign birth, and 265,000 of "foreign stock."

1. In descending order, the origins of these immigrants were: the Bahamas 5512; Canada 1788; England 1400; Germany 1220; Soviet Union 778; Scotland 491; Sweden 459; Italy 411; Irish Free State 333; Cuba 266; Austria 248; Poland 230; Norway 192; Rumania 167; Palestine 157; France 154; N. Ireland 133; and Czechoslovakia 97.

Strikingly, only 137,000, or less than 15 percent, were black. And a mere 28 percent of the county's native-born population was born in Dade county.

Twenty years later, in 1980, 35 percent of Miami's population was foreign born, the highest of any urban area in the nation. Currently, that percentage is well over 50 percent. Although the sources of this new "new immigration" were profoundly different, at the end of the twentieth century, Miami had taken on the characteristics of Chicago or New York or Cleveland of 1900.

We can draw a few interesting conclusions from this rough statistical sketch. First, by no stretch of the imagination could Miami be described as a city significantly shaped by foreign immigration prior to 1960. Between 1900 and 1950, the percentage of foreign-born residents in Dade County never exceeded 20 percent (or 25 percent if we measure Miami city alone), and we know far too little about that spike, which occurred in 1920. Moreover, no single group of immigrants ever exceeded 5,500 people until the Cuban exodus of the 1960s. At the same time, the city did experience incredibly rapid growth due to in-migration. The characteristics of that in-migration need to be closely examined, but my guess is that prior to 1940 a large proportion of it was rural and Southern, both black and white; after the war, many more urban Northerners relocated to Miami. The other notable feature is the rapid decline of the proportion of the black population, native and foreign-born, from 30 to 15 percent, in the very decades that legal and cultural changes made an assault on Jim Crow possible. Thus, when the "new immigration" of post-1960 remade the face of the city, native-born blacks (and second-generation West Indians) found themselves in a relatively weak position to shore up their own position in the urban geography, labor market, and struggle for political power that ensued. At the same time, between 1980 and 2000, the city did become "blacker"—but from the influx of Afro-Cubans, Haitians, Jamaicans, and other West Indians and/or South Americans of African descent.

Thus, I would suggest, an agenda for researching a new "grand narrative" of urban, ethnic, and labor history with Miami as a case study might consider some of the following dynamics. First, what happens when a city that grows on a "Southern" pattern overnight, with an influx of native-born whites and blacks from the rural South, experiences new forms of in-migration, both Northern and foreign-born? Secondly, we should investigate the turmoil at the

bottom of the city's labor market during the 1960s. This was a moment in which Miami's African Americans had gained the legal and political tools to advance themselves beyond the very bottom of the labor market, only to be confronted with a whole new population competing for those positions: Cuban immigrants. The same question goes for the political reconfigurations of the city in the decades following the Cuban exodus; the matter of ethnic-based machine-building and political patronage would seem key here. Third, as Shell-Weiss notes, Miami offers a unique laboratory for examining the meaning of "race" in American immigration history. On the one hand, the first wave of Cuban immigrants understood themselves as "white", but the arrival of the Marielitos in 1980 considerably complicated the racial definition and identity of Cuban immigration and created a bi-racial immigrant community. At the same time, African-descent immigration has raised profound questions about Pan-African American identity. This was an issue confronted, in a minor way, in the city's early history in the relationship between Bahamians and African Americans, but writ large over the past two decades. This is especially true because language now separates the new African-descent immigrants from the native-born black population (including descendants of the Bahamian community).

In short, I think Shell-Weiss needs to distinguish sharply between the pre- and post-1960 eras, and explore how patterns set in the first period created a context that affected the dynamics of the past of forty years, as Miami has indeed been transformed into an immigrant city. Finally, I take exception to her assumption that Miami is not exceptional. In some important ways—the very early in-migration of African-descent immigrants; the sudden influx of a large group of immigrants from one place, linked directly to U.S. foreign policy in the 1960s; the huge number of black immigrants; the initial Southern pattern; the sharply declining demographic significance of African Americans—the city's history may be exceptional, though possibly a harbinger of things to come elsewhere. At the very least, the unique and typical factors of these patterns need to be investigated and compared with other places. And Miami is exceptional, Shell-Weiss suggests, in the balance it has maintained between foreign-born men and women, a striking pattern that can cast light on gender roles, the gendering of labor markets, and family economic strategies, as she points out.

Shell Weiss's abstract has raised a host of provocative issues and reminded me just how little we still know about some basic features of Miami's urban and ethnic history. This should serve as an excellent prod to further research.—*Alex Lichtenstein, Rice University, "Symposium Week 1: Comments," in H-Florida [H-Florida@h-net.msu.edu], 4 October 2004.*

Author's Response

A hearty thanks to Alex Lichtenstein for his detailed and insightful response, which also provides me the opportunity to clarify a few of my main arguments. First, I agree wholeheartedly with Lichtenstein that it is the contrast between the pre- and post-World War II eras (or pre- and post-1960 eras) in Miami that prove most insightful. This is how I have framed the organization of my current manuscript project. And, as the numbers that Lichtenstein provides makes clear, Miami's transformation from a city with some foreign-born persons to a city with more foreign-born than native-born residents is, indeed, what makes it such an exciting model for thinking about twentieth- and twenty-first-century patterns of urbanization, industrialization, and migration. Thus, I think his question, "[W]hat happens when a city that grows on a 'Southern' pattern overnight, with an influx of native-born whites and blacks from the rural South, experiences new forms of in-migration, both Northern and foreign born?" is particularly apt. He and I also share an active interest in the labor turmoil of the 1960s which underpins my work on the city's garment and domestic service industries of this period.

We differ, however, in the importance we attribute to these "first wave" migrants of the early twentieth century. Yes, it is abundantly clear that regional migration dominates the first four decades of Dade County's growth. The number and percentage of trans-Atlantic migrants is small compared to that of Chicago or New York over the same period. But because Miami's and Dade County's regional migrants include both those who are traveling southward from the Southern United States as well as those who come northward from the Caribbean, it provides an important case study in just what is meant when we speak about "regional" migrations. The benefit of such a perspective is that it helps us to overcome the balkanization of studies of immigration and migration as well.

Lichtenstein writes that “with the important exception of the Bahamian presence, Miami in 1930 looked a bit like Milwaukee in 1880.” But it is precisely this exception that I believe makes all the difference. Miami’s international black community *is* what makes it so different from Milwaukee in 1880 or in 1930. The particular living and working conditions experienced by these communities also were very different than that experienced by migrant black workers in New York, Chicago, and Detroit. But their history is no less important. Rather, my argument is that because Miami experienced such significant waves of black migrants, both national and international, it provides us with an important opportunity to revisit how we write and think about the history of American immigration and to revitalize this critical field of historical study. This means recognizing the importance of voluntary black migrations and the international character of African American history in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries as we do other ethnic groups. To borrow a phrase from Chicana historian Antonia Castañeda, “In the battle over history, which is fundamentally about who gets to define the stories being narrated, will the defining come from the realities of lived experiences . . . or will it come from the abstract principles that have ordered and organized U.S. history to date?” Rather than a separate issue, the experience of black migrants in Miami, foreign- and native-born, is, I believe, central to the city’s transformation from “an urban area defined by internal migration prior to World War II to its status as a city defined by foreign-born migrants in the second half of the twentieth century.”

Unlike these other cities, early twentieth-century Miami did not do very well when it came to recruiting European laborers, although the Board of Trade and several of the area’s big industrialists (including Henry Flagler) tried. In 1906, the *Miami Evening Record* boasted that “a good clear Irish brogue” was becoming “the language of Miami streets.” But as Lichtenstein notes, the number of Irish (or Greek, Italian, Polish or Austrian) residents in Miami remained rather paltry well into the 1930s. Despite these recruitment attempts, the percentage of Europeans in Dade County fell from 8 percent to 6 percent between 1900 and 1910.

By contrast, Bahamian migrants arrived in large numbers. Black Bahamian men formed the core of skilled construction laborers within the city. Black Bahamian women were considered among the most desirable employees for domestic service jobs.

Local observers compared the huge influx of Bahamians through the late 1900s to waves crashing upon the shore. Others noted that Miami had become to “the Bahamians seeking a livelihood, what Mecca is to the religious Moslem [sic] world.” In 1911, 3,200 Bahamians—more than in any other single year—arrived in the city. Increasingly, these new arrivals were men, where prior to 1910, men and women had moved in relatively equal numbers. This movement was important for Miami, but it also was important for the Bahamas. British officials worried through the early 1920s that the “islands would soon be denuded of young men.” The “Dudes from Dade” became a flashy symbol of wealth gleaned abroad across the islands and served to further entice more prospective migrants to follow in their footsteps. As the numbers of Bahamian residents grew, however, within certain circles of Miami’s community their migration became increasingly contested. In 1914, Miami’s Board of Trade began to debate whether there were “too many Nassau Negroes in Miami.”

Meanwhile, the increasingly racial violence and deteriorating living conditions faced by Miami’s black citizens grew worse. As one Bahamian migrant described to sociologist Ira Reid: “Colored Miami was certainly not the Miami of which I heard. It was a filthy backyard to the Magic City.” Perceptions of Bahamians by native-born white Americans also changed. Where in 1908, Bahamian workers were described as “joyful and always singing,” to quote one native-born white employer, by 1920 Bahamians were viewed with increasing fear and suspicion. Bahamian men, as in the well-publicized case of Herbert Brooks, were charged with raping white, native-born women and lynched. Because few relinquished their British citizenship, Bahamians who were the victims of police brutality appealed to their vice counsel, an option not available to black United States citizens. Such interventions, however, held little sway in Miami.

Instead, by 1920, fewer and fewer Bahamians began coming to Miami. In part, their movement was restricted by the implementation of federal literacy tests, implemented in 1917 and strengthened through the early 1920s. But others either chose alternate destinations such as Cuba or New York or remained in the Bahamas. Fewer native-born African Americans also chose to move to the city. And others who were living in Miami left. The result was both a lower percentage of foreign-born persons, and a lower percentage of black residents in 1930 than Miami had expe-

rienced in the years since its incorporation. (In 1910, 35.1 percent of Miami's residents were black, including both foreign- and native-born persons. By 1920, only 29.7 percent of its residents were black. Native-born white residents also formed the majority of residents for the first time in 1920.)

My intention here is not to quibble over numbers but to emphasize the importance of these larger patterns. By any measure, the percentage of foreign-born in early-twentieth-century Miami is far below that found in many nineteenth-century industrial cities. But I don't think numbers are what make this early-twentieth-century history so important. Miami itself is, after all, little more than a struggling "frontier" town through the first decade of the twentieth century. Even now, its population falls far behind that of New York, Los Angeles, or even Indianapolis. What makes Miami important is that it is the central gateway for black Caribbean migrants. The racial character of its early twentieth-century immigration debates, and how these early-twentieth-century debates and patterns shaped the post-1960 migrations, is what necessitates that we take its history seriously in the context of state, national, and regional histories alike.

This is not unlike arguments made by scholars of Angel Island's history who have noted that while the numbers of foreign-born who passed through Angel Island may pale in comparison to that of Ellis Island, its comparatively brief history is critically important to understanding the experience of early-twentieth-century Asian migrants. So, too, Miami offers unique insights into the history of Caribbean, and especially its black migrants, both before and after 1960.

There is no doubt that Miami is a special and unique urban place. But its role as a harbinger of future trends and issues, as well as the window it provides onto historical events is no less important. Nor did these transformations that reshaped Miami over the pre- and post-1960 periods occur in a vacuum. The problem with "exceptionalism" is that it also marginalizes the questions raised by Miami's history and the central place of its black workers, immigrant and native-born. Although they may be relatively few in number compared to their European counterparts, they play a central role in "making" Miami and shaping the debates over labor, international movement, and patterns of residential settlement throughout the first three decades of the city's formation. And, like Angel Island, Miami offers critical insights into early-

twentieth-century immigration debates as well.—*Melanie Shell-Weiss, “Symposium Week 1: Response,” in H-Florida [H-Florida@h-net.msu.edu], 5 October 2004.*

Further Comments

I would like to thank Melanie Shell-Weiss for her spirited and clarifying response to my initial comment. I think she does a great deal to show what sort of new questions in labor, immigration, and urban history we can ask when we focus on “the international character of African American history in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries,” an effort that I applaud.

I also agree completely that we should quickly move beyond a quibble about mere numbers and begin to consider what sort of cultural, geographic, and political impact Bahamian migrants might have had on the city. To put it another way: given that the arrival and presence of a substantial group of Bahamian-born migrants encompassed a mere decade of Miami’s history, what kind of imprint did their presence leave on the city? Did Bahamian cultural influences, living patterns, social institutions, and ethnic networks take root, or were these migrants just passing through the Miami “gateway”?

This, not sheer numbers, becomes the essential question. To answer it, we need to look for Bahamian distinctive neighborhoods, occupational enclaves, social and political organizations, newspapers, foods, architecture, styles, music, religious practices, and so on, and examine the durability of these institutions and practices. For any visitor to Miami today, it does not take long to see the Cuban imprint on the city, or the Haitian one, for that matter. One has to look only a little deeper to find the telltale signs of Peruvian, Colombian, and Brazilian communities. Much of the impact of these migrations, of course, depends on successive waves of migrants—something relatively absent in the Bahamian case. My guess is that, in the Miami of 1930, the visible imprint of the Bahamian contribution was limited, but I would be happy to be proved wrong.

In cautioning against an over-emphasis of the impact of this early wave of migrants, I do not intend to be dismissive of its significance. I think the questions posed by Shell-Weiss are just the sort we need to ask. But we also might ask precisely why this early wave of immigration left such a faint imprint on the city compared to the postwar migrations. Here we can fruitfully return to

“debates over labor, international movement and patterns of residential settlement throughout the first three decades of the city’s formation.” We need to ask why so many Bahamians chose not to stay, and why they stopped coming when they did, relegating Miami to the status of “gateway” for another three decades.—*Alex Lichtenstein*, “Symposium Week 1: Comments on Response,” in *H-Florida* [*H-Florida@h-net.msu.edu*], 6 October 2004.

I appreciate Shell-Weiss’s vision of connecting Miami history with the larger narratives of U.S. history. What we find, I believe, is the potential for new ways to think of those larger narratives—reminding us, of course, of the tight bonds between microhistory and macrohistory. Having said that, I agree with Lichtenstein’s comments, but I do not think that diminishes the possibility of an immigrant-centered narrative of the entire 20th century, at least in a few senses. Given the large numbers of migrants to the city, careful analysis of their identities need evaluation, as for example how many were second-generation immigrants. While this may be outside the immigrant study paradigm to some extent, the model to think of here is the process of becoming and being American in the context of a city connected to a larger Caribbean. Key questions to ask include: What were conceptions of whiteness or Americanness in a city selling itself as a playground for leisure and fun in the context of the Caribbean? Or put another way, how are we to understand identity in a city linked so closely to the Caribbean and Latin America, and that clearly had all kinds of ties to these places? I am thinking of not only the actual people who moved to Miami but also the number of tourists from these regions and from the other parts of the United States who visited the city and created demands regarding expectations and performance. Since at least the 1920s, newspaper advertisements and announcements appeared of daily trips by ship (and later by plane) to Havana. So one may even add, what was newspaper coverage of these different regions like? How and why did it change? In summation, what exactly were the social and cultural connections between Miami and the Caribbean and Latin America before the watershed of 1960?

The cultural links are important to evaluate but not because it adds spice to the city’s history. Rather, locating whiteness and nationality in particular places and times helps define differences in experience. This will help get at the root of how Miami is different—from other parts of the South, from the Caribbean and

Latin America, and from other parts of the United States in general. I am arguing that we make careful evaluation of the construction of space and identity. The case of Miami may add to our understanding of the grand narratives of modern American history. To get there we need an exploration of how Miami as place was imagined and how it was experienced.

Studying work and play in the city will, I believe, unpack these larger questions of identity as linked to space. If I am correct, Shell-Weiss is interested in the question of identity. However, I would suggest that we broaden our understanding of identity to include a narrative that goes beyond race or ethnicity and starts with political economy. I envision a Herbert Gutman and E.P. Thompson community study kind of approach for the 20th century, something similar to what Becky Nicolaides has done for Los Angeles in *My Blue Heaven* (2003) where she traces the development of one working-class suburb between 1920 and 1965. The difference between Los Angeles and Miami, it seems, is the central place that tourism played in the latter city. It's my guess that the nature of hierarchy of class and its connections to service work and leisure and recreation took on a particular form in Miami. What form is the key question, and one that goes far in defining how exceptional or unexceptional Miami is.

Such analysis will also aid in situating Miami as part of a larger conception of the Sunbelt. Several characteristics define the Sunbelt: it entails the post-1945 period; tourism; location (South and West); favorable climate; links to federal largess; rapid increase of economic growth in the twentieth century; the key role of extractive industries, new technologies, and service occupations to the area's economic profile; large population growth, including urban and suburban sprawl; high degrees of segregation; and growing ethnic and racial diversity. I believe we can locate the forming of a different South before 1945, one that challenges the periodization of the Sunbelt. Miami's history will demonstrate how it was different, and this entails defining Miami's brand of Southernness.—*Thomas Castillo, University of Maryland, "Symposium Week 1: Comments," in H-Florida [H-Florida@h-net.msu.edu], 6 October 2004.*

Author's Response

Many thanks to both Tom Castillo and Alex Lichtenstein for their detailed and thought-provoking comments. There is no

doubt in my mind that this work will be stronger for their input. Their perspectives have certainly encouraged me to explore many of the issues they raise more fully. Their questions also help point the way to what I hope will inspire more scholars to turn their attention to Miami's history and that of its immigrant communities. Both expressed an interest in learning more about the "visible imprint" of Miami's early-twentieth-century immigrants on the city. Castillo's reminder of the importance of "locating whiteness and nationality in particular places and times" is also especially valuable. I am equally grateful for his insightful and thought-provoking question about class and Miami's political economy, and agree fully that class hierarchies do indeed play as central a role in the Americanization process as that of race or of ethnicity. His thoughts on the differences between Los Angeles and Miami are important as well.

While post-1960 Miami has attracted the attention of a wide variety of scholars, the literature on pre-1960 Miami remains much more scant. This is another sense in which Miami and Los Angeles are different. And it is my hope that by highlighting the questions that make Miami's history both intriguing and important in local, state, international, national, and regional contexts alike that more scholars might turn their attentions to the city and its communities as well.—*Melanie Shell-Weiss, "Symposium Week 1: Final Thoughts," in H-Florida [H-Florida@h-net.msu.edu], 14 October 2004.*

Comments on the SHA Panel

These four essays are of particular interest to me because I come to them as a historian who has written on race, the environment, sport, and Florida, and who offers courses in these areas and has taught others on ethnic history and Native American history. Florida's history, of course, lends itself uniquely to looking beyond a given place's shores and borders—geographic and political—to flesh out and sort out its rich past. Mostly, however, and there are some fine exceptions, historians have confined their inquiries to conventional models, exploring Florida as they might Massachusetts or Mississippi or Idaho. The developers of the panel should certainly be congratulated, as they have been repeatedly, for taking a fresh organizing theme—the global perspective of Florida history—and identifying scholars of different research interests to offer a colloquium dealing broadly with methodolo-

gies, heuristic questions, and interpretive insights. The result is a collection of illuminating ideas and initiatives that has been enlarged by insightful responses from H-Florida members.

Let me follow the order in which the essays were presented online and start with Miami. It is interesting that while a community like Natchez, Mississippi, where the population has never peaked above 25,000, has been the subject of ten scholarly books, and yet only four academic books, by my count (and two of them biographies), have focused on Miami. We therefore look forward to Dr. Shell-Weiss's book adding to the scholarly understanding of one of the most dynamic cities of the 20th century.

The issue that dominated the discussion of Shell-Weiss's abstract was generated by Alex Lichtenstein and centered upon whether Miami could properly be called a new-immigrant city. By my reckoning, I'm not sure that we help ourselves by trying to fit a place into an arbitrary category. Not only do we find ourselves arguing over whether the city fits into that category, we must agree on a definition of that category. I've always thought of new immigrants as those who came from Eastern Europe, Asia, and Lebanon in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Lichtenstein wants to add Bahamians and Cubans to that list, with the low immigration of the former demonstrating that Miami did not meet his new-immigrant-city status until that latter group arrived en masse after 1959. But in terms of origins and culture, those two groups represented African and British and aboriginal in the first instance, and Spanish and African and aboriginal in the second. I see no new immigrant in the mix. That said, if we're trying to determine whether the city was "significantly shaped by foreign immigration," I think that we have to understand census records for what they are—unreliable and biased. As historian Ray Mohl reminds us in his work on black Bahamians, for example, a sizeable number of Bahamians who worked, played music, sang, engaged in sporting activities, cooked food, and worshipped were seasonal migrants who the census would not have counted. Furthermore, one has to wonder how many permanent residents of Bahamian origins might have eluded census takers, intentionally and otherwise. Another group who was not counted with the Miami population, but certainly asserted itself in the local economy and culture, as historians Harry Kersey and Patsy West have shown, was Indians of the Everglades, still known collectively in the early 20th century as Seminoles.

The development of a local or regional society and culture is a dialectical process, as anthropologist Clifford Geertz told us long ago, between indigenous and foreign forces, and so instead of just working our way forward from numbers, perhaps we should also be dialectical in our approach and simultaneously start with what the community is and work our way back to its demographic and cultural foundations.

Shell-Weiss is turning her focus to origins south of Miami, to the Caribbean and Latin America, to explore Miami's global context, and Lichtenstein suggests she conceptualize international influences as they impinged upon a city that grew on what he calls a "southern' pattern." Shell-Weiss has embraced this suggestion. But again, we have a problem with labels. What is a "southern pattern"? Do we simply assume that Miami was initially a southern city? Yes, Miami remained rigidly segregated by race well into the 1960s. But who was running Miami, and who was condoning the racial status quo? Yankee transplants. Furthermore, studies conducted in the 1940s demonstrated that Northern cities were very nearly as segregated, by de facto conditions, as Southern ones.

Our historical image of Miami is clearly informed by a contemporary idea of Miami as a city of immigrants, or exiles as Castro-era Cubans prefer to call themselves. Perhaps we need to recognize that presentist bias. While we have rushed to explore Miami's immigration experience, and we ask for more studies on the subject, we have yet to see a good study on the subject of internal migration: how white northerners and white southerners shaped that city, how regional identities were forged and re-forged, how indeed the idea of regionalism played into the development of Miami, how regional white attitudes on race meshed or clashed in a regionally-mixed community. Before we can fully measure the impact of immigration on Miami, we first must know what Miami was. Moreover, before we can highlight its distinctiveness by comparing it with other Southern cities, which Lichtenstein and Shell-Weiss agree is useful, we must recognize the cultural diversity of those other cities. Historians don't normally regard the South as a land of immigrants, but tell that to the Italians, Sicilians, Greeks, Irish, Lebanese, and Chinese, and the German, Alsatian, Polish, and Russian Jews who settled the rural and urban South beginning in the nineteenth century . . . and some of them before then. All of these groups in their own way shaped Southern cities, and all negotiated the definition of white-

ness. They did not, if I may add a brief clarification to Thomas Castillo's comments, simply try to fit into a pre-existing identity of whiteness.

Larry Youngs is interested in the transnational formation of identities among Florida's leisure set in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Sport history is an under-rated field, even though sporting traditions have always been central to American life. With the rise of the middle class and corporate and urban America, and with American democracy redefined by mass consumption, sport acquired an integral place in the American economy, education, social relations, and in race and class, if not political, identities. And in late-19th century, Florida sport represented a meeting ground between foreign and domestic cultures through members of a common social class. In commenting on Youngs's work, I would like to focus on nature, which was touched on a bit in the online discussion.

Nature, or what I call the living aesthetic, was Florida's original tourist attraction: not the beaches, but the reasonable climate, which some northern physicians described and prescribed as medicinal. In addition to climate was Florida's wildlife, its exotic flora and its abundant and extroverted fauna. As Ann Rowe points out in her book *The Idea of Florida in the American Literary Imagination* and Eliot Mackle in his unpublished dissertation "The Eden of the South," national magazines, travel books, and well-known authors of the day were fascinated by wild and beautiful Florida. Was there publicity of this sort circulating around Britain and Europe that might have attracted the international traveler? I wonder what else Florida's visitors were reading, especially the leisure set who had access to liberal or classical educations and any books they wanted, and who had the time for leisurely reading. In Florida, were they encountering, as did Henry James, the bucolic nature they found in Virgil, Edmund Burke, Byron, Cooper, Whitman? Had they, like Buckingham Smith, a Harvard-educated lawyer living in St. Augustine, read William Bartram?

Were the steamboat excursions up the St. Johns and the Ocklawaha rivers to Silver Spring equivalent to the African safari? Were the leisure activities and choices for people like Charles B. Cory, for example, influenced by European traditions? At the same time, what were the connections of the men of Florida's leisure class, who liked roughing it in the backcountry, to

Theodore Roosevelt's strenuous life concept and to the calls of Horace Greeley, Thomas Hart Benton, John Louis O'Sullivan, and others who encouraged America's men to go west rather than abroad to affirm and reaffirm their manhood? Were European men, coming from countries whose male leaders many Americans regarded as effete, responding to similar motivations? Was there an empire experience for European men and women equivalent to the wilderness experience of American men and women that Florida satisfied? Was there a specific gender component in nature that attracted American and European women to Florida?

Related to that idea, I would be careful not to read Harriet Beecher Stowe's opposition to the pot shots taken against wildlife from the decks of river boats as evidence of a shifting attitude toward nature. Stowe was no conservationist or environmentalist. She was not opposed to proper sport hunting or commercial hunting. The growing number of people coming to Florida may have brought in a broader spectrum of attitudes, but benign attitudes toward nature were pre-existing. If they had not been, the mass advertising of Florida's bucolic nature would not have been successful, and ultimately promoters were creating an image that conformed to the American wilderness ideal.

Americans had begun developing an aesthetic attachment to natural places in the early 19th century. What they preferred above all, even Henry David Thoreau, was the pastoral, nature that was not so threatening and that had been tamed somewhat by humans, which raises the question of whether European tourists and Americans defined the pastoral setting differently. Moreover, at the very moment that the leisure set was indulging itself at Henry Flagler's and Henry Plant's palaces, commercial hunters were gorging themselves on Florida wildlife to feed a lucrative trade in novelties of natures, which were on display for sale to tourists in storefronts in Jacksonville and elsewhere. The women of the leisure set, who set the latest trends in fashion by wearing feather-adorned hats, fed the destruction of Florida's plume birds, a destruction driven by profit and vanity that was equivalent to that of the bison on the western plains. Despite the organization of Florida Audubon in 1900 and the passage of protective legislation, those who sought to stop the slaughter of plume birds failed. A change in fashion and changing market demands ultimately saved the birds, but the alligator, not a sympathetic creature, was not saved from a similar slaughter. In short, nature was still subdivid-

ed into categories of good and bad, beautiful and ugly, defined in part by the leisure set and destroyed for profit, power, and vanity.

A stranger to vanity, Andrew Frank has much to contribute to the study of colonial, Native American, and Florida history, and his book promises to be a wonderful addition to the literature. He is certainly correct to argue that, in studying early Florida, scholars should take the state out of Florida. But I disagree with his argument that "Too many scholars have assumed a powerful and centralized Spanish, Creek, British, or Seminole presence." I think he may be trying to make hay from straw here, if that's the expression, by overemphasizing an interpretative flaw. I know of no serious Florida scholar who doesn't understand that centralized control over Florida was often unstable and ephemeral, that power was constantly shifting from one group to another and from one place to another, that political boundaries were perpetually ambiguous and virtually meaningless, although perhaps more important to runaway slaves than anyone. To paraphrase historian Richard White, white conquest of natives and the geography was not inevitable.

That said, Frank is definitely on solid ground when he argues that traditional focus on the European and American cities, towns, and outposts, and the tradition of tracking down the most accessible sources thanks to Europhiles like Buckingham Smith, has denied historians a fully objective perspective of colonial and territorial Florida. This is what makes Frank's study so exciting. By going to the villages rather than the cities, he promises to bring to the chaos greater order . . . or perhaps greater chaos. I'm curious to know how Spanish-Indian relations in Florida compared with those in the Southwest. I would also like to know more about the role and direction of assimilation as natives and whites searched for common ground. And to whom was common ground more important, and when and how was it defined, and what purposes did it serve? Additionally, I think scholars should give more attention to the role that Indians asserted in foreign relations between two or more countries, and perhaps at times played countries against one another. Perhaps, Florida was not so much a refuge of Spanish making for Indians and runaway enslaved blacks, but one of Indian making.

And while examining cultural exchanges, we should not forget our lessons from historian William Cronon. If colonial and terri-

torial Florida were to a large extent controlled by natives, and the Seminole Wars represented the struggle between whites and natives for control, then we need to understand Indian ecological relationships which were constantly in flux. Whoever controlled the land controlled the province, and perhaps that is one way Frank might measure the power of each group—by measuring the stability of ecological relationships. Seminoles were no native ecologists in the 18th and 19th centuries, although their relationship with the environment was certainly different than that of Euro-Americans. But I suspect that the impingement of Euro-American culture, in many various forms, altered their relationship with the land and thus their ability to sustain themselves and changed their social relationship with whites.

But back to social history. I know that Frank probably plans to tell us, but I should raise these questions anyway: Where do women fit in this new borderless Florida history? Did they, for example, serve as cultural intermediaries in Florida as they did elsewhere on the Southern frontier? Finally, in arguing his point to take the state out of the state, Frank might at the same time emphasize how Americans were uncomfortable with the amorphous state. To feel secure and to understand their world and how to function in an international context, they needed the familiar, well-defined structure of the traditional state. That Seminoles, black and native, created the urgency Americans felt to take preemptive measures in fact put the state into the state.

Johnson's work is indicative of the creative, fresh approaches to Florida history that the papers on this panel as a whole represent. She was fascinated by hurricanes long before our most recent stormy season, and the work she has done with climatic events and history is model scholarship. Hurricanes, if you will, are conveyors of global history. They have long been a part of Florida history, but they are not simply a Florida phenomenon. They come from somewhere distant, do their damage, and then move on to some other place. And yet, while they blow things away, they also bring things with them. Many of Florida's tropical plants and some of its fauna came from somewhere else, swept on winds or seas to the peninsula from across the Caribbean. European diseases likely touched land before the Spanish did. The hills of Tallahassee were chosen as the territorial capital in 1823 in part because hazardous weather impeded travel by members of the ter-

ritorial council when the capital alternated between St. Augustine and Pensacola. Indeed, one council member drowned at sea while traveling.

Johnson draws on political science theory to help address a historical problem. I'm all for borrowing from other disciplines, but in our own backyard, environmental historians have been making a case, often to deaf ears, for the historical agency of nature since the 1970s and not just in the context of disasters. Consider the counterfactual: If Florida had been mountainous instead of flat, dry instead of humid, landlocked instead of sea-locked, and cold instead of warm, its history would have followed a vastly different course. Historian Fernand Braudel showed us more than fifty years ago in his book *Mediterranean* how to bring together social, economic, political, cultural, and environmental forces into a causal substructure to historical events. But, interestingly, social historians who have claimed to feel his influence, crediting him and Annales scholars with revolutionizing the study of history, typically ignore environmental factors. Braudel also warned of the intellectual hazards of drawing analytical boundaries at political borders, which were forever changing. The great sea, he said, was not an autonomous place, neither geographically nor culturally.

Returning to the subject of hurricanes, I have a few questions. Did Euro-Floridians see hurricanes as acts of God, as did many Americans of the time and later? If so, when responding to a hurricane, did Spanish officials deploy religious meaning, language, or rhetoric that may have elevated their image in the public eye? Johnson has pointed out that the organized response to hurricanes, evolving through trial and error, was a creation of the New World experience. Were there other environmental conditions in Florida or other parts of the New World that in a similar way forced them to make adjustments in provincial affairs that perhaps anticipated their aggressiveness in hurricane relief? Had they learned anything from the way they dealt with disasters in the Old World? Or had lessons simply not been heeded? Finally, in keeping the historical record of the Floridas, did the Spanish themselves, by chance, recognize the casual power of hurricanes?

I would like to close with a couple observations about the global perspective of Florida history. First, I think that the forthcoming works by these authors demonstrate that historical scholarship of no other state is as diverse, drawn from so many disciplines, cre-

ative, refreshing, and sophisticated as that of Florida. And, second, while we are viewing Florida's past from a global perspective, we might also ask where Florida fits in global history. What contributions did it make—socially, culturally, economically, ecologically—in the historical developments of the larger western world. We all know how the traditional narrative of the American experience ignores the Florida variable. Well then, perhaps as the fields of world history and Atlantic world history expand, we can elevate the importance of Florida history. And then, perhaps, we can slip Florida through the back door and into the national narrative.—*Jack E. Davis, University of Florida, presented at annual meeting of the Southern Historical Association, Memphis, Tenn., 2004.*