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# An Analysis of Personal Adornment at Fort St. Joseph (20BE23), An Eighteenth-Century French Trading Post in Southwest Michigan

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AN ANALYSIS OF PERSONAL ADORNMENT AT FORT ST. JOSEPH (20BE23),  
AN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY FRENCH TRADING POST IN SOUTHWEST  
MICHIGAN

by

Ian B. Kerr

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Faculty of The Graduate College  
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Advisor: Michael S. Nassaney, Ph.D.

Western Michigan University  
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Ian B. Kerr, M.A.

Western Michigan University, 2012

Since 1998 Western Michigan University archaeologists have investigated Fort St. Joseph (20BE23), an 18<sup>th</sup> century mission, garrison and trading post located in present day Niles, Michigan. The project's research directive focuses on exploring notions of identity formation and its material expression in light of the prolonged and persistent cultural contact between Native Americans and Europeans at the site.

This thesis seeks to further this directive by exploring how personal adornment materiality both structures and broadcasts individuals' social identities. By employing an intra-site spatial analysis of the assemblage of adornment artifacts from recognized domestic contexts at Fort St. Joseph this thesis will examine how the fort's inhabitants were using material culture to create their own personal identities on the frontier of New France. For comparative purposes this thesis will employ the personal adornment items excavated from several different cultural areas at Fort Michilimackinac, an 18<sup>th</sup> century French outpost where Europeans and Native individuals resided.

From the body of evidence analyzed, this thesis argues that at Fort St. Joseph a strong Native presence greatly influenced the adornment choices of a mixture of voyageurs, small scale traders, and families that likely included Native American wives and the *métis* offspring of these unions who lived in a series of small domiciles in a residential area of the fort.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	ii
LIST OF TABLES.....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES.....	vii
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	6
Colonialism: The Archaeology of Interaction.....	6
Social Identity and Materiality.....	9
Personal and Bodily Adornment.....	10
Fort Michilimackinac.....	13
Fort St. Joseph.....	15
Summary.....	18
III. METHODOLOGY AND ADORNMENT CATEGORIES.....	20
Adornment Categories.....	21
Buttons.....	22
Cufflinks/Sleeves Buttons.....	24
Hasps/Garment Hooks.....	25
Buckles.....	27
Finger Rings.....	28
Tinkling Cones.....	30
Jewelry.....	32
Glass Jewels/Insets.....	34

Table of Contents- Continued

CHAPTER	
	Pigments..... 35
	Religious paraphernalia..... 36
	Wampum..... 38
IV. FORT MICHILIMACKINAC OCCUPATIONAL CONTEXTS.....	41
House D: The Bolons, British Soldiers, and the Mitchells .....	42
Summary of House D.....	49
House 1: Mr. Chevalier and British Soldiers .....	52
1730s-1760s: French Trader.....	54
1760s and 1770s: British Soldiers .....	55
Summary of House 1 .....	60
V. FORT ST. JOSEPH FEATURE CLUSTERS.....	63
Personal Adornment Objects in the Fort St. Joseph Feature Clusters .....	65
Personal Adornment Material Feature 14 .....	66
Personal Adornment Material Feature 2 .....	67
Personal Adornment Material Feature 6 .....	69
Personal Adornment Material Feature 5 .....	70
Personal Adornment Material Feature 10 .....	72
VI. ANALYSIS / INTERPRETATION .....	76
Fort St. Joseph Feature Clusters: An Intra-site Analysis .....	76
Gendering Adornment: Women in the Feature Clusters .....	82
Native Identity: Tinkling Cones, Wampum, and Face Paint .....	84
Investigating Occupations: Military and French Fur Traders.....	87
Fort St. Joseph: A Material Signature of Diversity .....	88
VII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.....	93



Table of Contents- Continued

CHAPTER

BIBLIOGRAPHY..... 98

## LIST OF TABLES

1. Density and Diversity of Material from House D .....	44
2. Adornment Material from French Fur Trader, House 1 .....	56
3. Adornment Material from British soldiers, House 1 .....	59
4. Coordinates of Units Associated with Fireplace Clusters .....	63
5. Personal Adornment Material from Feature 14 .....	67
6. Personal Adornment Material from Feature 2 .....	69
7. Personal Adornment Material from Feature 6 .....	69
8. Personal Adornment Material from Feature 5 .....	72
9. Personal Adornment Material from Feature 10 .....	74
10. Adornment Totals by Category per Cluster .....	77
11. Diversity Index Categories and Amounts of Materials .....	78
12. Adornment Materials by Count per Cluster .....	80

## LIST OF FIGURES

1. A Typical ‘French Marine’ Button.....	23
2. A Glass-inset Cufflink.....	25
3. Garment Hasp .....	26
4. Decorative Copper Alloy/Brass Buckles (A and C) from Fort St. Joseph .....	28
5. A Selection of Jesuit/Iconographic and Glass Inset Rings .....	30
6. Three Tinkling Cones Found at Fort St. ....	30
7. A Folded-over Silver Brooch with Attached Tongue (A) .....	33
8. An Ear Bob and Dangler Inspired by Native Designs.....	34
9. A Scalloped-shaped Inset for a Ring and a Pair of Cufflinks with Glass Insets .....	35
10. Two Crosses Flanking a Crucifix.....	38
11. Purple and White Wampum from Fort St. Joseph .....	39
12. Spatial Relationship of the Feature Clusters.....	64
13. Feature Clusters by Unit.....	65
14. A Religious Medallion Found in Unit N24 E2 .....	70
15. Absolute Adornment Counts Cluster-wide.....	81
16. Histogram of Ring Diameters at Fort St. Joseph.....	83

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years the study of material objects has contributed important insights into the process of colonialism, the interactions between Europeans and Native Americans, and the new identities that emerged as a result (Loren 2008, 2010; Nassaney 2004; Nassaney, Brandão, Cremin, and Giordano 2006; Dolin 2010; White 2005). Colonialism played an instrumental role in the formation of new societies in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries that blended together a multitude of different cultural beliefs, practices and lifeways. The early inhabitants of these nascent colonies had intense, direct contact with diverse groups of Native Americans (Nassaney, Brandão, Cremin, and Giordano 2006; Nassaney 2012). For the early French explorers and settlers in New France these cultural interactions led to close ties with Natives of the region (Nassaney 2008). These relations involved the exchange of material goods such as textiles, iron knives, and brass kettles for furs and canoes, as well as the transmission and adoption of new cultural ideals including bodily adornment practices (Nassaney 2008). Through these cultural interactions, diverse groups of people formulated new social identities, in part, expressed through the materials they used to adorn themselves (Loren 2008, 2010; White 2005).

Cultural interactions characterized colonialism and the fur trade throughout North America (White 1991). One such locale where the forces of colonialism ushered in a web of intense cultural interaction was Fort St. Joseph, an 18<sup>th</sup> century French garrison, mission, and trading post in southwest Michigan. The fort was home to a multi-ethnic community of Europeans and Natives for almost a century (Nassaney, Brandão, Cremin, and Giordano 2006: 34). Fort St. Joseph played a key role in the fur trade and is an ideal location to explore the exchange of ideas and transformative cultural lifeways representative of an 18<sup>th</sup> century multi-ethnic community in New France. The fur trade had profound material as well as social

implications for everyone involved. The Native American and French interactions at Fort St. Joseph extended well beyond a casual exchange of materials, directly influencing the formation of new cultural identities. New raw materials and European trade goods changed how people dressed; new hybridized cultural lifeways transformed how individuals began to see themselves, broadcasting that image to others through the use of materials that adorned their bodies (Nassaney 2004; Loren 2008; 2010; White 1991).

Social interaction which brought about identity formation is a central issue in colonial studies, as people came to define and express their social identities along multiple dimensions which have material implications that are archaeologically accessible (Nassaney 2008: 297). Studies have demonstrated that individuals expressed their identity through adornment, architecture, and subsistence (Becker 2004; Loren 2010; Mann 2007). Adornment is a particularly poignant material strategy because it implicates objects that would have been worn or used to decorate the body (White 2005: 9). Numerous items of adornment, such as buttons, buckles, earrings and rings, have been recovered from Fort St. Joseph. Analysis of these types of materials shows that bodily adornment was used to create and reproduce relations of status, gender, and ethnicity (Loren 2001, 2008; Nassaney 2004, 2008; Nassaney, Brandão, Cremin, and Girodano 2006; White 2005). With all adornment objects in this study, careful attention is given to how they express different genders, ages, ethnicities and occupations.

At Fort St. Joseph, the material and social outcomes of cultural exchange associated with colonialism in 18<sup>th</sup> century New France can be closely examined. The fort has been the subject of an archaeological program seeking to examine 18<sup>th</sup> century activities and who conducted them (Nassaney 2008: 297; Brandão and Nassaney 2009: 478). Recent archaeological work, based on a GIS analysis, has located a series of fireplaces (Benston 2010). Intra-site analyses suggest that these fireplaces may represent a residential district, including several domestic structures (Benston 2010; Carvalhaes 2011). The identities of the occupants of the structures that are

associated with these fireplaces clusters are not known. The goal of this thesis project is to identify who may have occupied these specific areas at Fort St. Joseph through the analysis of the personal adornment material found in each structure.

In order to identify these occupants, an examination of Fort Michilimackinac, a contemporaneous 18<sup>th</sup> century French fur trading fort, located in northern Michigan was conducted for comparative purposes. Archaeological investigations at Fort Michilimackinac, in conjunction with historic maps and other documentary sources, have recovered materials from houses occupied by people known by name, gender, ethnicity, and occupation. Uniform stratigraphy allows for Fort Michilimackinac archaeologists and myself to separate items by occupants and gain a clear understanding of who used and deposited certain objects including adornment materials. From Fort Michilimackinac I will examine the kinds of adornment material specifically excavated from two domicile areas occupied at different times by French-Canadian residential families, British soldiers, seasonal French fur traders, Native wives, and their mixed ancestry *métis* offspring (Evans 2001; Heldman 1977: 45; 1978: 76). By comparing the adornment profiles of different individuals and family groups living at Fort Michilimackinac to patterns found at Fort St. Joseph, I offer inferences regarding the identities of the individuals living in the dwellings represented by the fireplaces at Fort St. Joseph. Insights from Fort Michilimackinac provide archaeologists a clearer understanding of how the individuals living at Fort St. Joseph constructed their social identities along gender, ethnic, class and occupational lines on the 18<sup>th</sup> century frontier of New France.

From documentary sources (Beeson 1900; Cunningham 1961, de Charlevoix 1761; Hulse 1977: 13; Idle 2003:45-46) we know that a multi-ethnic community comprised of Natives, Europeans, and people of mixed ancestry lived at Fort St. Joseph (Nassaney 2008: 301). We can surmise that they used a range of materials including adornment objects, and engaged in daily practices that expressed their social identities. It is far less clear who occupied the buildings

associated with the fireplaces that have been identified in recent excavations. Although the full outlines of the buildings have not yet been determined I assume for the purposes of this thesis that objects located in proximity to the fireplaces reflect materials that were used by the occupants. It also follows that adornment materials associated with various people, from military personal to Native women, will vary as they served to express different forms of identity along the lines of age, social status, occupation and gender. From the plethora of objects recovered, archaeologists have inferred that these materials were a visible means by which people expressed different cultural preferences marking their place in society.

To examine the people who lived at Fort St. Joseph, I begin by summarizing the literature on colonialism, cultural interaction, social identity, and adornment materiality from the perspective of the western Great Lakes. In addition, I provide a historic context and background on the archaeology conducted at Fort St. Joseph and Fort Michilimackinac. An explanation of how this thesis can contribute to the understanding how of adornment materials inform cultural interaction, identity formation and colonialism concludes the literature review. In chapter three I discuss my methodology in addressing the research question and present the framework for organizing the various adornment artifact categories examined. In chapter four I explore two Fort Michilimackinac occupational contexts by describing the kinds of adornment materials that were recovered from those locales. In doing so, I create an adornment profile for a French fur trader, an enlisted British soldier, and other inhabitants living in the domiciles who varied along ethnic, gender, and social status lines. In order to compare adornment materials from Fort Michilimackinac to Fort St. Joseph I describe in chapter five the adornment objects found within each of the five feature clusters at Fort St. Joseph. Chapter six presents the analysis and interpretative section of the thesis. Here similarities and differences are noted and comparisons are made within the Fort St. Joseph features and Fort Michilimackinac domiciles. In doing so, the Fort St. Joseph feature clusters are interpreted and conclusions about who might have occupied

such structures delineated. In the concluding chapter (VII) I summarize my argument, discuss the significance of this thesis project, and explore the implications of the study and avenues for future research.



## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents an overview of colonialism in New France in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, cultural interaction between Natives and Europeans, anthropologically informed notions of social identity and materiality, and artifacts of personal adornment. These topics are explored through a discussion of colonialism with a focus on New France, especially Fort St. Joseph and Fort Michilimackinac.

#### Colonialism: The Archaeology of Interaction

Colonialism, in part, entailed the historic expansion of European ideals and peoples into North America and is one of the most momentous processes of the last five hundred years (Dolin 2010; Gilman 1982; Nassaney 2008, 2012; White 1991). Historically in the United States, colonialism was conceptualized as a Euro-American process with historians and archaeologists focused on charting the persuasive influence of Europeans on the Native Americans they encountered in places like colonial New France (Anderson 1994: 93, Nassaney 2008, 2012). The archaeology conducted using this framework focused unduly on the exploits and material evidence of Europeans and their forceful expansion and acquisition into Native territories. Thus this archaeology marginalized the contributions of Indigenous peoples (Anderson 1994: 94). These Native Americans, when examined at all, were described as minor characters and cast as passive participants (Innis 1970).

Within the past twenty years archaeologists have crafted a different narrative on colonialism, one that focuses on examining not only the Native perspective but excavated material culture to help demonstrate the strong impact Natives had on their European counterparts

(Anderson 1994: 93). Archaeology has revealed that Natives were not merely passive pawns but active participants in the fur trade; the glue that bound Natives to Europeans in the colonial relations. Although trade does not always mark colonialist relations the world over it became a hallmark of colonial French powers in New France starting in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Nassaney 2004, 2008, 2012; Ray 1980). In the Western great lakes a distinctive configuration surfaced in which cultural interaction and trade arose through a process of mutual cultural compromise in which Europeans accommodated Native values and lifeways at the same time as Natives accommodated aspects of European culture. The idea of a cultural partnership existing between Europeans and Natives in New France in the 18<sup>th</sup> century has become increasingly accepted (Nassaney 2008). One of the ways colonialism can be explored, and the way perhaps most pertinent to this thesis project is through an examination of material culture at sites where Europeans and Natives interacted, traded and lived together. When Natives and Europeans interacted, new forms of social and personal identity were often created and broadcasted whether on the frontier of New France or at local and regional trading centers and missions. One of the ways personal identities were created and broadcasted was through the utilization of materials including objects of personal adornment.

The interactions between Natives and Europeans and the colonial relationships they engendered played a vital role in the formation of the kinds of settlements that came to define colonial New France (Nassaney 2012). At these areas a *mélange* of Natives and French settlers and traders influenced each other's cultural lifeways in ways that had material ramifications (Anderson 1994: 116-118; Eccles 1983, Nassaney 2012). Colonialism in New France paved the way for the fur trade which many scholars have noted obliged Native and Europeans together in relations of mutual accommodation (Nassaney 2008; Rubertone 2001; White 1991). These cross-cultural ties were facilitated beginning in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in the St. Lawrence River Valley where French colonialists began to exchange textiles, iron knives, and brass kettles for furs and canoes

with Natives Americans (Cunningham 1961; Eccles 1968, Peyser 1992). Such relations existed additionally in southwest Michigan which helped solidify French relations with local Natives and to check the expansion and power of the Iroquois and their British allies (Juen and Nassaney 2012). These trading relations became part of the catalyst for the creation of strong and enduring French and Native relationships which extended well beyond the simple casual exchanges of goods and helped lead to new hybridized cultural structures wherein both parties were mutually influenced by one another (White 1991: 101). The emergence of these new cultural lifeways has been discussed in terms of a “middle ground,” as a syncretism resulting from the fusion of the two existing traditions into a new, third cultural reality (White 1991: 100-103). This ethnogenesis was highlighted by the adoption and manipulation of new forms and styles of adornment and bodily ornamentation. Both the Natives and Europeans liberally borrowed from one another’s cultural behaviors and customs regarding dress and adornment and the specific materials employed (Nassaney 2008; Loren 2010).

Colonialism, the fur trade, and cultural interactions led ultimately to the creation of established, permanent trading posts and missions where Jesuits and fur traders could live and exchange goods and ideas (Peyser 1992; White 1991). As the French presence grew, the importance of securing and controlling the strategic geographic landforms and waterways also increased as the threat of British encroachment impinged upon French expansion (White 1991). Regional establishments were made starting in the 1680s with many around Lake Michigan (Cunningham 1961; Eccles 1968; Idle 2003). Fort St. Joseph was one of these French settlements. The fort was a mission, trading post and garrison for fur traders, military personnel and families comprised of Native wives and their offspring which were known as *métis* (Idle 2003; Nassaney, Brandão, Cremin, and Girodano 2006; Nassaney 2008; Peyser 1992). Helping to facilitate trade and Native interaction, Fort St. Joseph was established near a strategic portage linking the St. Joseph River to the Great Lakes (Cunningham 1961; Idle 2003). Fort St. Joseph was a vital link

in New France's communication network and played a major role in the exchange of European commodities for furs obtained by Natives. Fort Michilimackinac a larger, regional distribution center and trading post was also established in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century to help facilitate trade with Natives and fortify the Mackinac straits connecting Lake Huron and Lake Michigan (Evans 2001). Here voyageurs, or traders, stocked up on supplies, canoes, and merchandise before setting out to destinations west, or east to Montreal (Juen and Nassaney 2012).

### Social Identity and Materiality

The close cultural interactions between Natives and the French in the context of colonialism have been viewed in terms of the formation of new hybridized social identities (Nassaney 2008). As historical archaeology delves into the intersections of race, gender, and ethnicity in the written and material record more weight is placed on discovering the social and material dimensions of identity formation (Nassaney 2008; Loren 2001, 2008; White 2005). The importance of exploring such a topic lies in the collective desire of archaeologists to not only explore who populated the past but to learn how individuals expressed their identities through the material culture available to them. Although social identity has been examined for some time the term 'social identity' has rarely been succinctly defined. For the purposes of this study I use Stacy Wise's (2001) definition of social identity. Wise (2001:16) defines social identity as "the social phenomenon that is individually and socially constructed and constituted upon ideas of domination and resistance through factors such as wealth, power, prestige, ethnicity, class, age, status and gender." Throughout my analysis I use this definition as I examine the adornment material at Fort Michilimackinac and Fort St. Joseph.

The idea that social identity is expressed through different types of material culture has been critically examined by archaeologists for some time and has become a well-developed view in recent years (Nassaney 2004, 2008; Loren 2008, 2010). Additionally archaeologists have

established that the study of social identity is complicated and must be examined contextually because identity is situational, flexible, and malleable (Loren 2008; Nassaney 2008). Studies on tinkling cones (Giordano 2005) and religious materiality (Beaupre 2011) have demonstrated that various forms of material items can be used to reveal how individuals constructed their social and personal identities along multiple lines. Race, ethnicity, age, gender and social status have all become salient entry points for historical archaeologists as they study material culture including objects of adornment. Bodily adornment materials have been shown to reveal insights into how individuals constructed and broadcasted their own identities along ethnic, gender, and occupational lines (Giordano 2005; Loren 2008, 2010; Malischke 2010; Nassaney 2008; White 2005). Such studies examining personal adornment are anthropologically important as they help situate and localize knowledge of how people crafted their own personal identities while contributing to a more complete understanding of how people lived in the past.

#### Personal and Bodily Adornment

Adornment materials have long been used as evidence of social markers and status, while conveying particular meaning to individuals within specific cultural parameters (Loren and Beaudry 2006, Loren 2008; Stone 1974). The idea that bodily ornamentation is highly symbolic has been duly noted (see the works of Loren 2001, 2008; White, 2005; Wise 2001).

Colonial New France was a place where people actively used the adornment materials available to them to forge their identities even as the materials themselves acquired new meanings through cultural interaction. Identity formation played out daily at Fort Michilimackinac and at Fort St. Joseph through the conscious manipulation of adornment materials available to the fort's varied inhabitants. By exploring certain domestic areas within the walls of Fort Michilimackinac and in proposed residential areas at Fort St. Joseph, archaeologists can infer how ethnicity,

occupation, gender and social statuses were written on the bodies through the selection and use of different adornment objects.

Artifacts of personal and bodily adornment constitute an artifact class that has until recently been largely overlooked in favor of other material culture types such as ceramics, smoking pipes, and frontier armaments (White 2005: 4). As Carolyn White (2005: 50) writes; “buttons are the most common type of personal adornment artifact recovered on historical-period archaeological sites; they are found in great numbers and in multitudinous designs, materials, forms, and sizes.” Yet these objects and others like them have yet to receive a substantial amount of academic attention. Older literature on personal and bodily ornamentation remains largely descriptive (Claasen 1994; Dubin 1999; Hume 1969) and lacks a narrative connecting the objects to the wearers. One of the few examples where adornment artifacts are viewed critically within the framework of ethnicity, age, gender, and status is a publication by Lyle Stone (1974), in which an artifact typology of materials from Fort Michilimackinac is created which explicitly discusses those salient dimensions. Several recent publications have also attempted to bridge the gap between our understanding of objects and how they were used by the wearer to broadcast different facets of social identities. Carolyn L. White (2005) provides a guide to artifacts of personal adornment, discussing their source, raw materials and social value. Robert Mazrim (2011) discusses an assemblage of 18<sup>th</sup> century French adornment artifacts recovered from several domestic sites in Illinois. He discusses the kinds of materials in terms of their physical makeup and decorative features while citing and furthering the typologies established by Stone (1974). He also examines how such objects were used differently by men and women and by individuals of differing occupations.

Other recent studies examining personal adornment objects have pushed the study of adornment materiality in different directions. Works by archaeologists such as Aubrey Cannon (1991), Diana Loren (2001, 2008, 2010), Carolyn White (2005) and Loren and Beaudry (2006)

have examined how dress and adornment convey information on social status, ethnicity, occupation and gender. These studies have demonstrated that adornment artifacts acquire new meanings through changing cultural contexts and serve as a powerful tool for identity negotiation and formation. Other studies have addressed how culture contact between Native Americans and Europeans in the 18<sup>th</sup> century changed individuals' identities and how personal adornment material expressed these changes (Miller and Hammel 1986; Nassaney and Cremin 2002a, 2002b, 2004; White 1991). Prolonged contact between Natives and Europeans throughout the fur trade in New France resulted in new cultural practices including different adornment conventions (Loren 2008, 2010, Nassaney and Cremin 2002a, 2002b, 2004; White 2005). Even still in New France, old adornment habits likely persisted such as painting parts of the body using organic pigments and wearing garments sown together without the use of metallic fasteners (Nassaney 2008). For others, adopting European shoes with buckles and wearing jackets complete with rows of buttons likely became common modes of dress (Mann 2007: 42-45).

Part of the reason adornment studies are so useful in exploring notions of identity is because people made active choices about self-expression and the objects themselves can be attributed to differences in class, gender and age. People had choices about the kinds of buttons or buckles they used, and this variation provides information that can be linked to expressions of identity. Since adornment items were manufactured with a certain set of ideals, the buttons, buckles, and rings found on the frontier symbolize particular ideals about their wearers (Wobst 1977: 321). Objects of adornment found at both Fort St. Joseph and Fort Michilimackinac include metal finger rings, earrings, pendants, copper alloy buttons and buckles as well as glass-inlaid cufflinks. Many of these items were worn and utilized by women, men, and children throughout the community as personal materials and as trade items. Beyond the use of European imported materials many Native adornment practices were adopted and observed by Europeans. Manufactured by Natives and Europeans, tinkling cones were attached in rows along the borders

of garments worn by Natives and the French (Giordano 2005: 34). Made from rolled European manufactured copper alloy, these objects were adopted by residents at Fort St. Joseph to replace older traditional cones made out of bone or other organic materials. Ear bobs, worn by Natives and Europeans, blended Native sensibilities and adornment practices with the use of European manufactured metals. Additionally, French inhabitants adopted Native footwear throughout New France (Moogk 2000: 219). Leather moccasins provided a practical alternative to European-style shoes at both Fort St. Joseph and Fort Michilimackinac. Archaeological evidence of hematite and vermillion suggest that individuals painted their faces and bodies using traditional materials, styles, and motifs (Evans 2001). Excavated finger rings and glass inlaid cufflinks demonstrate that objects associated with the upper class in France (Evans 2003: 37) were worn and utilized by a number of different people on the frontier at Fort St. Joseph (Mazrim 2011: 72).

All this information on clothing and adornment is important because it helps make the case that men dressed differently from women, that the French dressed differently from Natives and vice versa and that soldiers dressed differently from civilians. Furthermore, we can expect that people living at Fort St. Joseph utilized adornment material differently, as they came from varied ethnic, occupational, and social status backgrounds. This statement will be tested by the examination and analysis of the domiciles at Fort Michilimackinac where documentation has revealed where certain people lived and archaeology has identified the adornment materials they wore and utilized. Below, I describe the historical context of the two sites, the archaeology that has been conducted to date at these locales, and how excavations and documentary sources have informed our understanding of the cultural interactions that took place there.

### Fort Michilimackinac

Fort Michilimackinac, located at the extreme tip of the lower peninsula of Michigan in Mackinaw City, was one of the most important French posts during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The fort



dates to 1715 when French Captain Constant Le Marchant de Lignery constructed the initial stockade on the southern shore of the Straits of Mackinac, a five-mile-wide body of water connecting Lakes Huron and Michigan (Whitaker 1998:3). Initially established as a small trading post the fort continued to grow with a second palisade constructed sometime in the 1730s (Stone 1974). By 1749 Fort Michilimackinac contained seven row houses, divided into forty separate dwellings (Stone 1974: 3). Archaeological investigations of Fort Michilimackinac since 1959 have provided important data on the identities of the site occupants (Evans 2001: 3).

Documentary sources include several historic maps from the 18<sup>th</sup> century which describe not only the functions of buildings but the names of the occupants themselves. Archaeology conducted at the site has focused on areas where specific individuals are known to have resided. Such information can be combined and used in tandem with recovered materials to determine the ways in which material adornment differed among households whose occupants varied by ethnicity, gender and occupation. Numerous artifacts of adornment have been found at Fort Michilimackinac and have been noted in publications including a material culture guide which outlines the hundreds of buttons, buckles, tinkling cones, finger rings, and jewelry found on site (Stone 1974).

Excavations have revealed that many of the structures outlined on the maps include familial residences. Fort Michilimackinac was occupied by French military officers and foot soldiers, French, British, and *métis* traders, Native Americans from the Ottawa, Ojibway and other local nations, free and enslaved Africans, British military officers, and Jewish traders (Stone 1974: 352-355). A noted mapmaker named De Lotbinière drew a detailed map of the spatial layout of the fort in 1749, going as far as to label the houses' occupants while providing each house in the different row-houses a different designation. De Lotbinière put the number of families living at the fort at between twelve and fifteen; some of them mixed households of Native Americans and French. In 1761 British troops assumed control of the fort as a result of

France's defeat in the French and Indian War. With the scale of trade increasing in the 1760s and 1770s, the settlement around the fort grew and more Natives moved closer to the palisades (Halchin 1985: 125). Fort Michilimackinac would undergo a final, transformative change in 1779 when Patrick Sinclair took command of the fort and in 1781 moved the entire community to nearby Mackinac Island which he felt was more defensible (Halchin 1985: 28). Fort Michilimackinac accommodated a diverse community of French, British and Native inhabitants who assumed the occupational roles of fur trader, merchant, soldier and wife in the early to mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. Archaeological evidence to date suggests that similar occupations were observed at Fort St. Joseph. Fort Michilimackinac in this way is comparable to Fort St. Joseph such that data from the site may be useful for interpreting patterns at Fort St. Joseph. Additionally due to its temporal and spatial relativity to Fort St. Joseph, Fort Michilimackinac constitutes a useful comparative case to help ascertain what kinds of individuals occupied the hypothesized residential areas at Fort St. Joseph by comparing the personal adornment materiality found at both sites.

#### Fort St. Joseph

Fort St. Joseph was erected in 1691 by French colonists near a Jesuit mission that had been established in the earlier decade to serve the religious and commercial needs of local Natives in present day Niles, Michigan (Brandão and Nassaney 2006, 2008; Nassaney 2004, 2008; Nassaney et al. 2002-2004: 309). By 1730, the mission-garrison-trading post complex was home to a military commandant, eight to ten enlisted men, a blacksmith, a priest, an interpreter, and some fifteen mixed households of French and Natives. Beyond being home to a small but diverse community of inhabitants the fort served as an important hub of commercial, military and religious activity for the entire southwest Michigan region (Nassaney 2008: 297; Peyser 1992). Natives living within or in close proximity to the fort stimulated daily interactions with the

Europeans as evidenced by the excavation of stone projectile points, tinkling cones, locally made bone tools, burned maize, low-fired pottery, stone smoking pipes, and bone gaming pieces (Nassaney 2008: 23, 68). The fort also figured prominently in the interactions between Native peoples and the British colonial powers in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. French commanders at Fort St. Joseph were instrumental players in the Seven Years War in which France lost Canada to the British (Peyser 1992). As a result of this conflict, the British took over Fort St. Joseph in 1761. Soon after, Native supporters of a prominent Ottawa leader attacked the fort and expelled the British, thus encouraging the return of the French. Even with the successful removal of British forces, Fort St. Joseph was never officially re-garrisoned, and although much of the population did not return it remained an active trading post up until 1780 when the fort was nearly void of inhabitants (Nassaney 2008).

In a geographic setting far removed from the metropolitan influences of France, the residents of Fort St. Joseph underwent profound changes in their daily lives and redefined their identities as they participated in the fur trade and interacted at the fort with local Native Americans. Although years of documentary research have yet to yield a map clearly depicting the structural layout of the fort, several early descriptions provide accounts of where the fort was approximately located and provide clues about its physical layout. In 1753, it was reported that the post consisted of "fifteen huts which the owner's call houses" (François Forget Duverger quoted in Faribault-Beauregard 1982:176). From this account it is uncertain whether the settlement was located entirely within the enclosed palisade area or if some buildings were located outside the palisade. Given the size of the community, the settlement probably exhibited a dispersed settlement pattern with some of the buildings located outside the main palisade. Joseph Peyser (1978) postulated that at its peak in the 1720s the fort likely housed around 10 soldiers and 8 officers. Nearly all these men were French-Canadians who had migrated to southwest Michigan (Peyser 1992). Only the commandant though received any pay and the bulk of the enlisted French

Marines were expected to eke out a financial living by actively taking part in the fur trade (Malischke 2010: 3). In total, some 45 settlers, organized roughly into 12 to 14 family households called the fort home (Faribault-Beauregard 1982:181, 182-3; Malchelosse 1958:161, 169; Margry 1867:53; Peyser 1978). As for occupations, we know that an interpreter and a blacksmith lived at the fort (Malchelosse 1958: 169). It is also probable that many households farmed and raised some limited livestock and a few Native slaves may have lived within the community as evidenced by baptismal records and the number of excavated artifacts associated with Natives (Faribault-Beauregard 1982:186; Hutchins 1762; Idle 2003: 88; Paré and Quaife 1926-27).

In addition to the Natives living at the fort, many more lived along the banks of the St. Joseph River around Fort St. Joseph; from 500 in 1710 to as many as 1,200 Natives in 1760 hailing from tribes such as the Miami, Ottawa, Illinois and Potawatomi (Charlevoix 1761, 2: 94, 102; Hutchins 1762; Margry 1867:53). Over the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century these Natives increased their level of contact and cultural and material influence on the European populations in and around Fort St. Joseph. These interactions often resulted in Native and European marriages and mixed *métis* offspring. Extant marriage and baptismal records from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century demonstrate this fact (Beeson 1900: 179; Paré 1926: 214; Sleeper-Smith 2001:67). From these historic documents it is clear that it was common for French fur traders to marry Native women (Faribault-Beauregard 1982:176; Paré and Quaife 1926-27). Indeed, intermarriage was an official French policy and a strong way to fortify economic relations and partnerships between Natives and Europeans (Sleeper-Smith 2001: 71). The Jesuits also promoted these unions, seeing them as a respectable way to increase potential converts to Catholicism (Malischke 2010:3). Baptismal records attest to the fact that Native women often converted to Catholicism prior to marriage and the *métis* offspring of these unions were frequently noted in the baptismal registries (Faribault-Beauregard 1982:179, Pare 1926-1927: 214).

Beyond these documentary sources, archaeology conducted at Fort St. Joseph since 1998 has provided a wealth of information about the social identities of the fort's inhabitants through the recovery of objects they utilized (Nassaney, Cremin, Kurtzweil, and Brandão 2003: 5). Since 1998 a number of intact cultural features, including several fireplaces and hearths, middens, a stone wall, a large pit and cellar feature and evidence of intact vertical wooden posts, have been located (Nassaney 2008). The goals of the project since its inception have been to examine how colonialism and cultural contact between Natives and French at the site contributed to distinct patterns of identity formation on the frontier of New France. Recently the directives have also come to include examining identified structures to help determine their size, contents, and method of construction. Thus my research contributes to the fort's existing research goals, especially those goals focused on cultural interaction and identity.

The excavations have has yielded thousands of beads and sizable amounts of religious medallions, ear and nose bobs, finger rings, tinkling cones, buttons and buckles. Researchers have demonstrated that these objects of adornment can be used to ascertain how individuals constructed and broadcasted their own notions of ethnicity and social status (Malischke 2010, Nassaney 2008: 30). This thesis explores the interstices of individuality and personal adornment by way of exploring how adornment materials were used to broadcast facets of their wearer's social identities at Fort Michilimackinac and by comparison at Fort St. Joseph.

### Summary

In sum, much is already known about colonialism and the marked ways in which it engendered numerous social and cultural changes in New France at the boundaries of outpost and frontier at places like Fort Michilimackinac and Fort St. Joseph. At these locales a new hybridized and blended cultural dynamism that was neither wholly European nor Native thrived for the better part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Nassaney 2008; Halchin 1985; Heldman 1977; White

1991). The use of different forms of material culture changed the landscape of identity formation for occupants of these forts. The roles material culture played is only somewhat understood for materials associated with personal adornment (Becker 2004; Nassaney 2008:12). We know that artifacts of adornment were used in a variety of ways to express identities along gender, ethnic, occupation, and status lines but it is less clear how artifacts of adornment specifically fit within the domain of identity formation and how individuals went about using such materials to display aspects of their social identities in 18<sup>th</sup> century New France (Nassaney 2008; Loren 2001; 2010). In this thesis I will analyze discrete occupational units at Fort Michilimackinac where residents are known by name, ethnicity, age, gender and occupation, to augment our understanding of who was living in the proposed buildings at Fort St. Joseph by exploring what kinds of adornment materials were used and deposited by varying individuals. The following chapter outlines the methodology that will be utilized. In addition, chapter three also presents the adornment categories observed from Fort Michilimackinac and from the fireplace feature clusters at Fort St. Joseph. Lastly, this same chapter suggests the various ways I will analyze the presented data to interpret who inhabited the proposed residences at Fort St. Joseph.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY AND ADORNMENT CATEGORIES

To determine who was living in areas associated with identified fireplaces at Fort St. Joseph I will undertake a number of sequential procedures and conduct a multi-scalar analysis. The goal of this chapter is to explain how I will examine the ranges, densities, and overall distributional patterns of adornment objects at Fort Michilimackinac to compare with adornment objects found within the feature clusters at Fort St. Joseph. Data on the objects of adornment found at Fort Michilimackinac in discrete residential proveniences can be used to interpret patterns observed at Fort St. Joseph and help determine who was living in these areas. This chapter outlines the analytical methodology undertaken and describes the data from Fort Michilimackinac and Fort St. Joseph that will be analyzed in order to interpret the identities of these inhabitants. I begin by outlining the adornment categories relevant to this study and those that describe the range of adornment materials excavated at both sites. I then proceed to describe the historical and social contexts of two Fort Michilimackinac occupational domiciles. From descriptions of these domestic contexts, adornment profiles sensitive to gender, occupation, age, and ethnic affiliation are created. These profiles reflect the adornment signature of a French fur trader's household, and a British soldier's household, along with a number of cultural and ethnic individuals who lived in the homes ranging from Native wives to *métis* offspring. I follow the adornment profiles derived from Fort Michilimackinac by defining and describing the five feature clusters from Fort St. Joseph. I present the data by cluster, outlining the particular adornment materials found before presenting the analysis in chapter six.

## Adornment Categories

From an examination of the different adornment materials collected from Fort St. Joseph and Fort Michilimackinac eight different adornments categories have been created. These categories derive from existing ones created by Stone (1974) who described in great detail adornment materiality excavated from Fort Michilimackinac. The categories, based on form and function, are buckles, buttons, finger rings, religious paraphernalia, tinkling cones, wampum, jewelry and pigments. The jewelry category includes fragments of brooches, pendants, earrings, and decorative glass insets. Although glass beads have been recovered at both sites they are not explicitly discussed in this thesis and therefore are not counted among the categories. From the Fort St. Joseph five feature clusters explored, 96 percent of all personal adornment materials recovered were found to be glass beads. Across all these units a total of 2,751 total beads were collected with 137 beads found on average per unit. Of these 2,751 beads collected, some 98 percent were glass seed beads and just over 70 percent of these beads were white. To place this in perspective only 104 adornment objects outside of beads were collected from the feature clusters. Thus for the sake of convenience, because they add too many dimensions outside the scope of my thesis project, namely obvious sampling issues, glass beads are not analyzed and discussed further in this thesis. Furthermore a recent thesis (Malischke 2010) explicitly examined the collection of excavated beads from Fort St. Joseph. Finally, I focus my attention on analyzing other adornment materials because they have not received their due attention I argue and that I have more than enough data to work with from the other materials excavated. Wampum (shell beads) as items attributable to Native American women and men reveal insights into ethnicity and gender and thus constitute an adornment category utilized in this thesis.

The eight categories are designed to facilitate the comparison of materials as they reflect already established groups and classes of adornment material at Fort Michilimackinac (Stone 1974: 25-141). A few rare adornment items collected from Fort St. Joseph in small amounts are



not represented by these eight categories. I include these adornment materials by including them as addendums within the larger category they best relate to. For example, cufflinks as a button variant follow the general narrative on buttons. All of the adornment materials presented are described in terms of how the use of such materials varied across gender, ethnic, age and occupational lines. This is achieved through a discussion of the form and historical context of the objects. This provides the contextual basis for the discussion on what each Fort St. Joseph cluster and Fort Michilimackinac domicile yielded in terms of adornment material and grounds the interpretative and analytical insights into who may have occupied the areas around the fireplaces at Fort St. Joseph.

## Buttons

The archaeological literature is full of artifact typologies and classifications for buttons (South 1964; Stone 1974) that deal with describing general button construction methods and the raw materials used to create them. One of most common types of buttons found at Fort St. Joseph and Fort Michilimackinac are those colloquially called French Marine buttons (Stone 1974: 47). The French Marine moniker derives from their association as buttons commonly worn on military jackets by enlisted French Marines (Stone 1974: 47). These buttons are described by Stone (1974: 49) as having a plain convex crown with a flat edged lip, a concave back, and a U-shaped eye. Stone (1974: 49) writes that this kind of button was a “French uniform button” and would have adorned military coats. These buttons were unadorned save an embossed ring around the face of the button. Such objects were noted for having a sturdy eye or a shank that would not only have been easily sewn onto jackets and thick coats, but would have been able to latch and affix heavy garments together. These ‘French Marine’ buttons (Figure 1) are universally cast from brass or a highly similar copper alloy and look remarkably similar no matter where in France they were produced (Stone 1974: 48). French Marine buttons and other buttons found on 18<sup>th</sup> century sites

in New France likely all originated in France as French fashions and manufactured goods heavily influenced the British and Spanish clothing industries and dominated the global market (Deagan 2002; Mazrim 2011).



*Figure 1.* A Typical ‘French Marine’ Button  
Photo by Brock Giordano, courtesy of the Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project.

Mazrim (2011: 70-76) describes similar buttons as flat-disk brass buttons with brazed shanks. The shank is the soldered or brazed attachment on the back of the button where string or other materials can pass through. He further states that they are the most common form of buttons found at French Colonial sites in Illinois (Mazrim 2011: 72). He suggests that they were primarily worn on men’s vests or coats (Mazrim 2011: 73). Although these kinds of buttons are often described as ‘French Marine’ the term appears to be misleading in the sense that they were known as such not because they were worn solely by soldiers but because the buttons were highly standardized and mass-produced (Mazrim 2011; Deagan 2002). They were the kind of button that would have likely been worn on a variety of overcoats. Thus buttons associated with French Marines were nearly identical to buttons that would have been found on a number of other civilian garments and their evidence either at Fort Michilimackinac or at Fort St. Joseph cannot alone be equated with a military presence. Temporally, Stone (1974: 49) dates these ‘French Marine’ buttons from approximately 1730 to 1760 based on stratigraphy and associations.

Conversely, British military buttons can be attributed to a military presence (Dunnigan 1999: 25; Evans 2001).

Based on descriptions by Mazrim (2011) and typologies by White (2005:57) smaller buttons, those ranging from 15 to 20 mm in diameter, were likely used on smaller lighter garments such as vests and waistcoats. The majority of these smaller copper alloy buttons were worn on the sleeves of male coats, similar to how blazers and sport coats are adorned with buttons on the sleeves and cuffs. Even if these French Marine buttons were not always used by French military personal I continue to use such terminology when discussing such buttons for the sake of consistency. At Fort Michilimackinac we know from documentary source that buttons constituted an important part of the adornment profile of many individuals there and that French Marine buttons were also found at Fort Michilimackinac (Stone 1974: 51). In addition to French Marine buttons, pewter and brass British military buttons were found at Fort Michilimackinac (Evans 2003:18). In describing the clothing warrant of 1768, Evans (2003: 18) writes that British soldiers were instructed to wear buttons on their coats that bore the regimental number to which they belonged. Since we know when various regiments served and were stationed at Fort Michilimackinac, buttons serve as excellent time markers. Two regiments that served during the time period the domiciles examined were occupied are the 60<sup>th</sup> regiment, which served from 1766 to 1772, and the 10<sup>th</sup> from 1772 to 1774. Buttons belonging to officers were more elaborate than those of enlisted men. (Evans 2003: 18). As evidenced from the buttons on French Marine and British military garments, the majority of buttons found at Fort St. Joseph and Michilimackinac were designed and be worn on male garments.

#### Cufflinks/Sleeve Buttons

Known in the literature interchangeably as sleeve buttons, cufflinks are distinguished from other kinds of buttons due to their smaller size, articulation of shank, and level of

ornamentation (Hulse 1977:145). Remarkably similar to modern cufflinks, sleeve buttons as the name suggests had two small flat buttons attached to a hook or articulated shank (Hulse 1977; Stone 1974: 69). In archaeological contexts, sleeve buttons are often found in matching sets still joined by a metal link. Sleeve buttons (Figure 2) are often noted for having an oval or octagonal shape with the more elaborate varieties having mounted glass insets similar to trade rings or pendants (Stone 1974: 75-77). White (2005: 62) discusses the time frame of such objects by suggesting that a majority of oval sleeve buttons postdate 1760. Ornate sleeve buttons are indicative of wealth and signify access to elaborate European manufactured goods (Evans 2003: 37; Stone 1974: 76). Similar to today, cufflinks were items that would have been worn exclusively by males (Stone 1974: 69). Stone (1974: 76) also hints at the possibility that such items were more commonly worn by French traders as he states that very few examples were found in areas associated with British occupation or in areas not associated with trade.

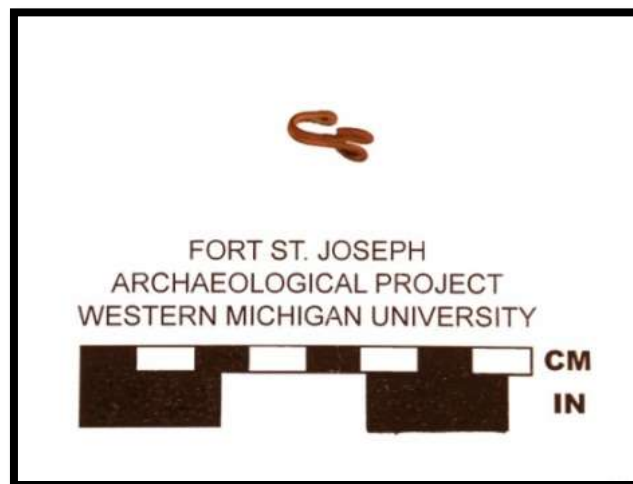


*Figure 2.* A Glass-inset Cufflink  
Photo by Tori Hawley, courtesy of the Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project.

#### Hasps/Garment Hooks

Garment hooks or hasps are items of clothing hardware associated with fastening female garments or as objects used to attach a collar (Deagan 2002:176; Stone 1974:81). As functional adornment materials they mimic buttons in that they affix clothing, usually garments worn about

the waist. As such they conclude the discussion on buttons. These hooks were designed to secure un-joined parts of clothing and were made from a single piece of brass or iron wire formed into a shaft terminating in two round loops with a hook-like shank on the opposite end (Stone 1974: 83). These objects would have been essential items used by women and men in lieu of or in conjunction with buttons and buckles to affix and fasten layers of clothing and are found throughout New France and New England (White 2005; Stone 1974: 82). As will be discussed in latter sections an unusual paucity of such objects was recovered from areas studied at Fort Michilimackinac and from the excavated feature clusters at Fort St. Joseph. For context and comparison, a 15 mm long hasp was described by Mazrim (2011:112) in his discussion of the Duckhouse site findings, an 18<sup>th</sup> century Illinois domestic site home to a mixture of French and Natives. Mazrim (2011: 114) noted that hasps were often little more than heavy gauge copper alloy wiring and homemade. The larger and thicker the gauge of the hasp the heavy an article of clothing, like a cloak or jacket, could be fastened (Mazrim 2011:143). Dunnigan (1999: 25) states that hasps used to secure collars were parts of the official uniform of British soldiers. Conversely, small hasps such as the one pictured below (Figure 3) were likely worn by women, possibly in their hair or to help cuff their sleeves (White 2005: 66).



*Figure 3. Garment Hasp*  
Photo courtesy of Cathrine Davis, courtesy of the Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project

## Buckles

Many types and kinds of buckles have been discussed in the archaeological literature (Hume 1969; Stone 1974; White 2005). A buckle's size and shape have become the two dominating characteristics used to dictate its intended function. Contextually, buckles, along with buttons, hooks, pins and eyes represented the options for clothing fasteners long before zippers and other modern accoutrements. Like buttons, buckles were often decorative as well as functional (Evans 2003: 29). The largest buckles were used for shoes (those over 50 mm in length), medium sized ones (30-40 mm) to secure stockings to knee-length pants or were from belts and the smallest buckles, those measuring 15-25 mm functioned as breeches, garters, or spur buckles (Evans 2003: 29). As one would expect a spur buckle was designed for individuals on horseback. The majority of buckles excavated from 18<sup>th</sup> century French and British sites are shoe buckles (White 2005: 33). Their preponderance may be attributed to their large size and proclivity for being robust and solidly constructed. There are archaeological samples of shoe buckles from New England fabricated with adult shoes that that are 80 mm long, far larger than the smaller breech and belt buckles (White 2005: 35). Shoe buckles are associated with wealth, as shoes themselves were something of luxury in New France (Stone 1974: 35). All three kinds of buckles are consistently recovered from sites dating before 1775 and alongside buttons constitute perhaps the two most common functional adornment items found (Mazrim 2011: 73). More ornate buckles, those with rounded and curved edges or inlaid with glass, are associated with both British and French male and female elites (Evans 2003: 29; Mazrim 2011; Stone 1974: 35).

Brass and copper alloy cast buckles comprise the majority of those recovered at most French colonial sites (Stone 1974: 74); while those cast from pewter or iron are the next most common type recovered (Deagan 2002: 184). Iron was heavier and less flexible making brass and copper alloy preferable materials for buckle construction. It is notoriously difficult to tell the difference between a French or British manufactured buckle as the styles overlapped and their

disbursement was equally wide and far-reaching (Mazrim 2011: 73). Distinguishing what gender used a specific object or what kind of occupational group might have worn or utilized a specific class of material allows one to see how these objects would have been perceived by others and is essential in understanding how people not only constructed their own social identities but what adornment materials they used to broadcast that identity. It is difficult to attribute the various types of buckles to a specific gender, especially those that are fragmentary. Larger buckles, those over 35mm, were likely worn by males as the breeches and belts these buckles were affixed to were male garments. Plain, copper-alloy buckles were designed for use on British military garments (Dunnigan 1999: 24). Although men's outfits relied far more heavily on buckles (White 2005; Stone 1974: 35), a few decorative buckles (Figure 4) may have been worn by women and when used imply the adoption and utilization of European styles of dress.



*Figure 4.* Decorative Copper Alloy/Brass Buckles (A and C) from Fort St. Joseph. Also pictured is a small pewter brooch (B) which would have been worn on a women's blouse and a buckle fragment (D)

Photo by John Lacko, courtesy of the Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project.

### Finger Rings

Finger rings constitute an important class of objects that have been the subject of intense examination by historical archaeologists for many years (Cleland 1973; Mason 1986, Stone 1974; Sylak 2010; White 2005). Following Stone's (1974: 123) seminal classifications, finger rings

(Figure 5) are commonly broken down into three categories: 'Jesuit' or iconographic plaque rings; ornamental glass set rings; and wedding or band rings. Iconographic rings have a rectangular or circular plaque complete with an inscription or image (Stone 1974: 125). These iconographic designs included a number of different symbols and designs of a religious and secular nature (Sylak 2010: 9). The plaques of these rings varied from circular specimens to others that were octagonal or heart-shaped (Sylak 2010: 9). These rings were worn by Natives who received them as trade goods although Frenchmen and women observing the rings' decorative elements may also have worn such rings (Sylak 2010: 13). Evans (2003: 33) suggests that over the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century brass iconographic rings lost whatever religious symbolism and significance they had and became cheap and inexpensive trade items. After 1761, these kinds of rings were predominately created explicitly for trade with Natives (Evans 2003: 33). Glass-set rings as their name implies are noted for their decorative, faceted glass insets. These kinds of rings were widely traded (Stone 1974: 131; Sylak 2010). Finger rings, of both the glass inset and plaque varieties, were often very small in size, suggesting that they were worn predominately by women. It has been argued that due to their ornate nature they were not as readily accessible as the more mass produced, cheaper iconographic rings and as a result were worn as personal objects and less often used as trade goods (Stone 1974: 132; Sylak 2010: 11). The last ring type is described by Stone (1974:123) as band rings, which are plain unadorned rings worn by males. He also notes that at times they are interchangeably known also as wedding rings.





*Figure 5.* A Selection of Jesuit/Iconographic and Glass Inset Rings  
Photo by John Lacko, courtesy of the Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project.

### Tinkling Cones

Tinkling cones are copper alloy cone-shaped objects that were locally manufactured from trapezoidal sheet-brass blanks or from recycled kettle scraps (Giordano 2005: 34). These cones (Figure 6) would be attached in rows along the borders of shirts, skirts, and other garments using a knotted string or strip of leather threaded through the small opening in the top of the cone (Stone 1974:131). The cones would create a tinkling sound, thus the name, as the metal cones clinked together when moved about.



*Figure 6.* Three Tinkling Cones Found at Fort St. Joseph  
Photo by John Lacko, courtesy of the Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project.

Most authors who discuss these objects describe their completeness (fragmentary or complete), general size (small and large) and any other outstanding characteristics (Giordano 2005: Stone 1974: 131-134). As these objects were made by individuals not trained in a particular craft nor made in European workshops they often display considerable variation (Stone 1974: 134). More important than their form however is the tinkling cones' function. Tinkling cones constitute an important material example of the cultural interaction between French colonists and Native populations as they testify to a European material, copper alloy, re-imagined using an original Native clothing tradition (Nassaney 2008). Tinkling cones are common finds on French colonial sites, especially sites with Native components (Giordano 2005: 67). Sown to garments in clusters, tinkling cones are prime examples of the fusion of European materials with Native sentiments. These artifacts, although long attributed to Native manufacture and usage, were likely also made and worn as clothing adornment by male and female Europeans as the two cultures borrowed different behaviors and dressing customs from one another (Stone 1974: 134). Interestingly Stone (1974: 134) downplays their use as trade items as he states that most of the cones were found in specific clusters not identified as areas of production or distribution. He continues to say that as a result it would be erroneous to associate such items primarily as trade goods and that the quantity of tinkling cones found at Fort Michilimackinac instead strongly suggests that they were personally owned and worn by Natives and Europeans as the large amount of cones cannot be entirely attributed to the small Native population living around the fort (Stone 1974: 134). At Fort Michilimackinac most of the tinkling cones were found in row house refuse deposits or in basement features and seldom found in houses exclusively associated with the British military (Stone 1974: 134). Two of the basements in these row houses where the most tinkling cones came from were associated with French civilian merchants living at Michilimackinac in the 1730s and 40s, although it is not entirely clear if they were used as personal goods or trade materials.

## Jewelry

Although a broad grouping of materials, jewelry constitutes a fairly small sample of the Fort Michilimackinac and Fort St. Joseph adornment assemblages. Included in this category are ear bobs or danglers as they are often called, glass insets that would have been used in rings or cufflinks, pendants, brooches, bracelets and fragments of these objects. Decorative jewelry, often cast from silver or silver alloy, is frequently described in terms of its association with Natives and the fur trade (Mazrim 2011; Stone 1974: 135). Much of this implication stems from the form of the objects themselves. The ear and nose bob for example seem to be narrowly linked to Native American usage because they represented a traditional adornment practice using a new imported European metal (Hulse 1977: 167; Mazrim 2011). Mazrim (2011:73) notes that silver ornaments appear very seldom at French domestic sites in Illinois but that they appear with much greater frequency at sites with a large Native presence.

Several silver ornaments (Figure 7) are described by Stone (1974), Hulse (1977) and others (e.g., Marzim 2011). Brooches, often made from silver-plated brass, had either a stationary or movable cross bar which allowed the piece to open and close in order to affix to garments worn by women (Stone 1974: 135). According to Stone (1974:134) brass specimens consisted of an attached, yet movable tongue whereas those made from pewter were comprised of a cast body with a stationary cross bar. Both types were predominately worn by women as hair fasteners or hair ornaments and were commonly dispersed as trade items for Natives and as materials in trading convoys (Anderson 1994; Stone 1974:134). Several paintings by the noted 19<sup>th</sup> century American artist George Winter depict Native Americans in full regalia replete with numerous metallic pendants, brooches, and ear and nose danglers (Mann 2007: 42-45). Winter's images in particular depict Native women adorned in various silver ornaments hanging from their neck and belts made out of wampum draped over their torsos. Such imagery matches the description of Edmunds (1993: 28) who in recounting women's dress in Great Lakes trade society describes the

wearing of “ shawls and leggings invariably decorated with trade silver...and trade silver earbobs in bunches.” As for the men, Winter depicts a Native male wearing ear bobs, with leather moccasins and a fine frock coat.



*Figure 7.* A Folded-over Silver Brooch with Attached Tongue (A). A Buckle Fragment (B) is Also Shown Alongside a Folded Copper Alloy Wire (C).  
Photo by John Lacko, courtesy of the Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project.

Also included in the jewelry category are ear or nose bobs. A modification to the Native American tradition of wearing danglers and other objects through pierced ears and noses, silver earrings and nose bobs highlight the creative consequences of the introduction of European metals to Native populations (Evans 2003: 32). Stone (1974: 133) depicts a set of two silver triangular objects on copper alloy wires which are likely earrings and a compound conical ear or nose bob. Mazrim (2011: 144) describes a similar piece as a trapezoidal, flat dangler pierced with two holes likely used as a set of earrings. Evans (2003: 32) depicts silver ornaments as becoming increasingly common trade goods throughout the British era (post-1761) at Fort Michilimackinac (Quimby [1978] made this same observation when he defined his chronology for the region.). She illustrates a common ball and cone design while describing its form as a very popular and common 18<sup>th</sup> century type (Evans 2003: 32). A nearly identical ball and cone dangler was excavated from Fort St. Joseph (Figure 8).

Stone (1974:135) illustrates a total of 13 earrings: five silver specimens with a single suspended bob and seven, 2-part brass specimens with glass sets. Stone (1974:135) dates these items to 1730-1760 and writes that they are found in predominately French contexts. This supposition does not rule out Native usage but merely states that the majority of such imported objects were found in areas associated with French occupation. Evans (2003: 36) refers to them as “fancy objects.” Along with other materials like ornate glass inset cufflinks these objects would have been seen as valued possessions by those keen on signifying a desire to be fashionably dressed (Evans 2003: 36). In fact, the owning and wearing of earrings, cufflinks and fine pendants all imply a conscious decision by merchants, opportunistic traders and women to dress fashionably even in light of the harsh living conditions on the frontier (Evans 2003: 37).



*Figure 8.* An Ear Bob and Dangler Inspired by Native Designs.  
Photo by John Lacko, courtesy of the Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project.

#### Glass Jewels/Insets

Glass inset jewels, also called glass-paste sets or bezels are another category of jewelry adornment found at Fort St. Joseph and at Fort Michilimackinac. Stone (1974) and Hulse (1977)

describe glass insets, depending on their size, as components of sleeve buttons or parts of finger rings. These jewels were often faceted and cut in ways that were designed to reflect light. Clear faceted diamond-shaped insets were often found in ring faces as decorative insets (Sylak 2010: 23). Examples of scalloped-shaped insets (Figure 9) have been recovered at Fort St. Joseph and are good illustrations of the craftsmanship and ornate nature of such objects. As the name entails, these glass jewels were colored, often rounded ornaments that were designed to be set into the face of a ring or set of cufflinks (Stone 1974: 131). One can tell the intended use of the glass jewels by its size as insets weighing more than 2 grams would have been part of cufflinks and smaller ones designed for rings (Sylak 2010: 24). As parts of cufflinks these glass facets would have been worn by elite men or those with the means to acquire such fine European manufactured imports. Glass inset rings on the other hand are generally seen as items predominantly worn by women (Sylak 2010: 34; Stone 1974: 131).



*Figure 9.* A Scalloped-shaped Inset for a Ring and a Pair of Cufflinks with Glass Insets  
Photo by John Lacko, courtesy of the Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project.

## Pigments

Ochre, hematite, and vermilion are organic minerals that were used as a face or body paint and constitute an important part of the Native American body ornamentation tradition

(Evans 2001: 24-25). Trace amounts of ochre and other pigments have been found at Fort St. Joseph and Fort Michilimackinac. Used by men and women primarily for decorating the face or body, these materials were used as components of the entire body of bodily ornamentation rituals and practices that took place at areas like Fort Michilimackinac and Fort St. Joseph where a mixture of Natives and Europeans interacted and resided (Evans 2001: 24-25).

### Religious Paraphernalia

Several different artifacts worn on the body carried religious and ornamental implications. These include rosary beads, crucifixes, crosses, and medallions. Religious materials and items of devotion, although not always seen as items of adornment, have a long documented history of being materials of bodily ornamentation (Beaupre 2011; Rinehart 1990; Malischke 2009, 2010). This is in contrast to the notion that religious items should be seen as simply trade items or simply religious items, and not as objects that were used by individuals to adorn and decorate the body. In actuality crosses, rosaries, and crucifixes were worn as secular pieces of jewelry by some, for others who wore them, intensely personal expressions of devotion, and at other times used as trade items.

Stone (1974: 114-120) outlines a typology for many objects of religious materiality. The entirety of the rosary beads collected from Fort Michilimackinac were ivory although other comparative examples of rosary beads made from wood and bone (Stone 1974:114). Rosary beads are described by Stone (1974) and others (Evans 2003: 35, Hulse 1977) as convex items with a single, centered longitudinal drilled hole. Additional types of rosary beads had two circumferential grooves equally spaced out between their ends (Hulse 1977; Stone 1974: 114). Whatever the particularities of the beads' design, they were consistent both in size and simplicity of their physical appearance. Stone (1974: 114) defines a rosary as a series of circular beads strung as a necklace and used for counting prayers by Roman Catholics. Rosaries from Fort

Michilimackinac consisted of plain, round beads joined by metal links. An adjoining crucifix, linked by a metal link completed the rosary (Evans 2003: 35). Full Catholic rosaries consisted of, “153 beads, 15 large beads and a linking element often referred to as a pendant” (Stone 1974: 115). For comparable French colonial historical sites with evidence of rosary beads, Stone (1974:117) notes the 18<sup>th</sup> century French Lasanen site in St. Ignace, Michigan. Here such items were used both as trade items and as items of religious apparel (Stone 1974:118; Cleland 1973).

Crosses were often suspended from rosaries (Figure 10). Several examples of crosses have been found at Fort Michilimackinac and at Fort St. Joseph. Crosses are defined by Stone (1974: 115) as ornamental brass objects that exhibit the lower-case ‘t’ symbol normally associated with the crucifixion of Christ prominent in Roman Catholicism iconography. Crosses differ from crucifixes in that they do not include the actual body of Christ but instead symbolically allude to the body. Many of the crosses depicted by Stone (1974:116) retain a small circular link that would have connected it to the rosary. Crucifixes, similar to crosses in form and function, would have been attached to rosaries or to necklaces worn around the neck (Figure 10). Many had inscriptions such as INRI, from the Latin for “Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews” (Evans 2003: 34). Stone (1974:118-121) illustrates over twenty different crucifixes with the most common type being a cast single piece brass crucifix complete with raised graphic of Christ (Stone 1974: 120). The corpus itself was often the subject of intense, very meticulous detailing and would have contributed to the entire decorative character of the object. Figure 10 illustrates an ornate crucifix depicting the image of Jesus found at Fort St. Joseph.





*Figure 10. Two Crosses Flanking a Crucifix (Center)*  
Photo by John Lacko, courtesy of the Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project.

Brass religious medallions have also been recovered at Fort St. Joseph and at Fort Michilimackinac. Unlike finger rings, which were sometimes trade items, these objects were very much personal items (Beaupre 2011; Rinehart 1990: 334). Many medallions were carefully and elaborately cast and depicted saints or the image of the Virgin Mary or Christ (Evans 2003: 34). Stone (1974: 118-121) and Rinehart (1990: 339-442) illustrate many of these circular brass medallions with images of Mary and Jesus on them. Rinehart (1990: 389) writes that medallions were utilized solely as religious objects by either Jesuit missionaries or specifically French Catholic inhabitants.

#### Wampum

Wampum is commonly defined as a cylindrical or tubular bead drilled out of shells from the Atlantic seaboard between New Jersey and the Long Island Sound (Synderman 1954: 470). Wampum was either fashioned from the inner spiral of the channeled whelk shell or from a quahog, a hard shelled clam which produced a dark purple variety (Dubin 1999: 350). After being drilled these fragments were usually ground, perforated, and strung (Dubin 1999: 350). A highly sacred and complex item, wampum served several different functions. The first was economic. Synderman (1954) discusses this function when he describes Fort Pontchartrain, a colonial

French fort established in 1701 in present day Detroit. According to Synderman, who may slightly overstate the importance of wampum, the fort's entire, "economic structure was dependent on wampum" (1954: 471). The second use of wampum (Figure 11) was political wherein belts of wampum, often containing hundreds of individual pieces, were used as signs of allegiance during meetings between Natives and French where formal and symbolic trade agreements were made (Peyser 1992: 145).

Wampum was also an important object of personal adornment. According to Armour (1977: 18-19), wampum was a visual form of wealth and many Native women wore wampum on fashionable occasions. Both men and women wore wampum interchangeably, and it was not an item solely associated with one gender, although women used the materials to decorate their hair whereas men typically wore wampum in their ears and noses (Malischke 2010: 3). Charlevoix (1966: 318-319) remarked, "that wampum was hung on their necks, as being the most precious things they [Native Americans] had." Natives of the Great Lakes region also used wampum as hair and body ornaments (Armour 1977). Considering that Natives of various tribes lived with the walls of Fort St. Joseph it is very likely that Native Potawatomi and Miami women living in or near the fort were adorning themselves in this manner along with French women who were taking Native cues on adornment practices.



*Figure 11.* Purple and White Wampum from Fort St. Joseph  
Photo by John Lacko, courtesy of the Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project.

In sum, every effort has been made to relate the various adornment materials in terms of their associated cultural contexts, how the materials' usage differed along ethnic, gender and social status lines and more broadly how these objects relate to our understanding of how social identity might have been expressed by different groups of people at places like Fort Michilimackinac and Fort St. Joseph through the inclusion of particular adornment materials. Artifacts of adornment often carry connotations, lingering and enduring reminders of their intended or not so intended function. Objects had meaning to their makers, wearers, and viewers. Jesuit finger rings and to a degree tinkling cones carry implications relating to Native and French interactions, as instrumental objects of exchange in the fur trade whereas certain types of religious objects, wampum, and vermillion were likely utilized as personal objects. Buttons and buckles operated as both functional adornments for European garments and to a lesser degree as objects that at times would have been seen as out of place on the frontier of New France especially in light of the kinds of garments utilized by Natives and general difficulty and infrequency of acquiring such materials. Buckles and buttons are generally seen as male items whereas smaller glass inset rings and garment hasps were used by women. Wampum and tinkling cones although used by French men and women these individuals likely took their cues on how to craft and utilize such material from their Native American counterparts. The relationships between these assorted materials and identity is further explored as I move into a discussion on the Fort Michilimackinac occupational contexts and the bodily adornment materials found in various cultural and ethnic contexts.

## CHAPTER IV

### FORT MICHILIMACKINAC OCCUPATIONAL CONTEXTS

A major component of this study involves the use of published works on the archaeology of Fort Michilimackinac (Evans 2001; Halchin 1985; Heldman 1977). Since 1959 many of the structures occupied by the fort's inhabitants have been excavated. Recovered materials not only confirmed the accuracy of historical maps but confirmed the cultural affiliations of the structures' inhabitants. I have selected two different occupational areas on site where such investigation has been completed and results published in archaeological reports. These areas will provide the basis for adornment profiles that will be compared and contrasted to patterns from the feature clusters at Fort St. Joseph. The two houses examined are House D and House 1. House D was initially occupied by a French-Canadian voyageur and his family, followed by a successful British military surgeon and his family including his *métis* wife. House 1 was home to a seasonal French trader, his wife of mixed descent and later a contingent of British foot soldiers. The artifacts recovered from these houses can be attributed specifically to the different cultural and ethnic inhabitants living in the homes due to the tight stratigraphic control the site exhibits.

The adornment material found within these two houses is discussed in terms of the creation of a profile denoting as specifically as the data permitted the adornment signature of the different individuals listed above who differed widely along gender, ethnic and occupational lines. In doing so I assume that the materials found in the domiciles are associated with the occupants of the homes and reflect materials used as items of personal adornment and as objects of trade. Compiling the counts, densities, ranges of personal adornment material and in what cultural and ethnic context they were found provides a template for making sense of the excavated personal adornment material at Fort St. Joseph.

## House D: The Bolons, British Soldiers, and the Mitchells

House D was selected because it reveals evidence of how adornment materials were used to broadcast the social identities of a French voyageur, his *métis* wife, and later a wealthy British merchant along with his *métis* wife (Evans 2001:6). Evans (2001), the lead archaeologist who excavated the house, wrote that it was initially the home of Gabriel Bolon who arrived at Fort Michilimackinac as an enlisted French soldier (Evans 2001: 6). Soon after his marriage to Suzanne Menard, who was part Native American and member of a prominent *métis* trading family, Bolon worked predominately as a fur trader the rest of his life, using the Menard familial connections to bolster his trading efficacy (Evans 2001: 9). Bolon lived in House D until sometime in the 1740s (Evans 2001: 6). He was likely of modest financial means as his wife's cultural network would have provided a list of trading partners and connections but no records noting any particular wealth are mentioned. Also, trade with Natives and other merchants increased dramatically over time at Michilimackinac, peaking in the 1760s with the arrival of the British, and as such it is unlikely that Mr. Bolon would have been able to trade a large volume of material in the 1730s (Dunnigan 1999: 31; Heldman 1978: 12).

The only specific reference to House D from the British period at Fort Michilimackinac is from the Magra map of 1765 when the house was reserved for use by British foot soldiers (Evans 2001:7). Dunnigan (1999: 7) describes a similar situation of renting homes to British soldiers when he writes that “until 1769 British soldiers from Fort Michilimackinac were often housed in small groups in rented private houses,” a behavior that stopped abruptly with the completion of a barracks in 1770 (Dunnigan 1999: 7). House D contained artifacts indicative of the British military such as buttons from a number of different regiments (60<sup>th</sup>, Kings 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>) and buckles associated with military garments. After the military barracks was built and the British soldiers had vacated the premise, House D served as the residence of David and Elizabeth Mitchell (Evans 2001: 9). The far majority of objects found in British levels are attributed to Mr.

Mitchell was born in Scotland and was a surgeon's mate for the Kings 8<sup>th</sup> regiment which was the final company to serve at Michilimackinac arriving in 1774 (Evans 2003: 17). Beyond being a large military outfit the Kings 8<sup>th</sup> regiment is notable for their buttons which had a large 'Ks8' imprinted on their crowns (Evans 2003: 17). Enlisted soldiers' buttons from this regiment were pewter and had a rope border with officer's buttons having brass crowns that could be quite decorative and elaborate (Evans 2003: 17). Mr. Mitchell's wife Elizabeth was *métis*. Besides being a doctor, David and his wife were heavily involved in the fur trade, using Elizabeth's family connections to establish trading partners (Evans 2001: 8 ). Such connections made the Mitchells quite wealthy, and David ultimately resigned his military position to accept the position of Deputy Commissioner of the King's Storehouse. In doing so he became a highly successful fulltime merchant (Sleeper-Smith 2005: 428). By the time the Mitchells left the fort to move to Mackinac Island they had amassed enough money, likely from funds from the fur trade, to build the "island's most impressive residence" (Sleeper-Smith 2005: 428). Mr. Mitchell's wife Elizabeth was one of three women described in an article written by Susan Sleeper-Smith (2005: 417-443) which focused on exploring women who held positions of authority and autonomy because of their access to furs through indigenous kin networks and to trade goods through their fur trading husbands. Sleeper-Smith (2005: 19) writes that it was *métis* women, like Elizabeth who brokered the exchanges of furs for European trade goods and that these exchanges were a social process which sought to strengthen alliances between the French and Natives. These three different cohorts of ethnically and occupationally diverse inhabitants lived in House D and the adornment artifacts found in the house provide clues to how ethnicity, occupations and social status were reflected in the ways they chose to adorn their bodies.

There is much we can learn about what kinds of personal adornment French and British traders and enlisted soldiers used and deposited while occupying House D as comparisons can be drawn between the contents of the earlier and later households. Similar to other excavations at

Fort Michilimackinac very detailed stratigraphic patterns allow for materials to be directly attributable to certain inhabitants based on the years they occupied the structure. Listing outright the adornment material found within House D by occupant would make it difficult to make direct comparisons with Fort St. Joseph. Instead, I placed the materials found within House D in a quantified, aggregate table with specific emphasis placed on the number of materials found and their cultural association (Table 1). The cultural associations are as follows: French, meaning materials dating to the Bolon family, and British, denoting materials associated with the Mitchell's and the foot soldiers. It is important to note that two additional levels were excavated by Evans (2001), the 1781 demolition layer and 1933 reconstruction layer. These two strata however constitute disturbed contexts and are not attributable to either the Bolons, Mitchells or the British foot soldiers.

Table 1

*Density and Diversity of Material from House D*

Personal Adornment	French (Bolon)	British (Mitchells and Soldiers)
Buttons		
• Civilian	7	0
• Military buttons	1	12
Buckles	1	2
Tinkling cones	4	14
Hooks/Eyes	0	4
Jesuit Rings	1	5
Glass inset rings	0	0
Vermillion (Body pigments)	39	151
Cufflinks	1	0
Rosary beads	0	7
Medallion	0	1
Crucifix	0	1
Wire/ Links (brass)	0	1
Sequins	0	3
Brooch	0	0
Glass insets	0	1
Totals	54	202

The tinkling cones found in House D would have been locally made on site (Morand 1994: 26-27). Similar to those found at Fort St. Joseph, these were probably made and worn by both Europeans and Natives (Giordano 2005: 18-21). Tinkling cones were surely used as both personal ornamental objects and as trade items but they are more associated with objects used as personal items and to a lesser degree as trade items (Stone 1974: 131). The 14 cones found in British contexts however attest likely to a strong emphasis on trading as these objects would have been exchanged and not stored for personal use as it is unlikely that individuals associated with the British military were wearing such objects as their clothing standards were heavily dictated (Dunnigan 1999: 25; Stone 1974: 134). This observation is further corroborated by the discussion on British military personnel living in House 1 and the clothing warrant of 1768 that made it mandatory for enlisted British men to wear only standard-issued garments, thus leaving little room for soldiers to wear tinkling cones or other kinds of decorative jewelry. As only four tinkling cones were found in French contexts they likely constitute personal items, perhaps linked to Bolon's wife. This may also be verified by tinkling cones' strong affiliation with both French usage and the fact that they were artifacts more commonly associated with personal use, especially French usage, rather than as trade goods (Stone 1974 133).

During excavation of House D, six Jesuit or iconographic trade rings were found. These rings were octagonal or circular and contained a series of religious and floral motifs. A religious motif is a pattern or image with religious significance. For these rings that religious significance came in the form of Catholic iconography. A brass ring with a religious motif might bear an 'M,' a symbol for the Latin 'Mater Misericordia' meaning Mother of Mercy or the letters 'INRI' meaning "Jesus the Nazarene, King of the Jews" (Evans 2003: 33; Rinehart 1990: 336). Two of the rings from House D, both from British contexts, had discernable motifs including a circular ring with a heart, and another a heart-shaped ring engraved with the letter "P" (Evans 2001:24). Evans (2001: 24 citing Hauser 1982) states that such brass rings with religious iconography were



more commonly used as trade goods rather than as personal religious tokens. The five rings found in the British contexts then were likely part of the Mitchells trading inventory. Their large scale trading enterprise would have included a large amount of rings as they were one of the most popular items traded to Natives (Rinehart 1990: 331). A large amount of vermilion flecks were collected from House D (n=190). The discrepancy in numbers between flecks found in French contexts (n=39) and those in British contexts is partially explained as Evans (2001:24) writes that pigments appears more commonly as a British rather than a French adornment trade item. Since there is no evidence that British soldiers at Michilimackinac were using such pigments on themselves and decorating their bodies these objects seem to attest to the ongoing trade between soldiers and Natives at Michilimackinac (Dunnigan 1999: 13-20). The Mitchells were large-scale traders and used Elizabeth's connections to trade regularly with local Native groups. As much as these flecks are probably part of their trading materials as both Mr. Bolon and Mr. Mitchell married Native women some of these materials may be attributable to their own personal use. The sheer amount of material though reveals that likely much of the vermilion was likely part of trading packages and it was used secondarily as an object of adornment.

The assemblage of jewelry from the Bolons consists of only a single cufflink. According to Halchin (1985: 23) trade increased greatly after the British took over control of the fort in 1761 and the volume of trading activity quickly surpassed that of the entire French period by the mid-1760s and peaked by 1770. Thus this paucity of jewelry remains in stark contrast to the far more jewelry found in British contexts. This fact coincides chronologically with the Mitchell's occupation of House D. Furthermore, it will be demonstrated in the second domicile explored that British foot soldiers living in House 1 in the 1760s exhibited similarly strong evidence of trading as evidenced in the numerous adornment items found in levels attributed to their occupation.

The jewelry components found in British contexts were a brass wire chain and a ring band fragment along with a green glass set, two metal sequins and a brass set cufflink set. Evans

(2001:31) makes it clear with her definition of jewelry taken from Halchin (1985: 115) that items in this category are “somewhat better made than typical trade jewelry and therefore are assumed to have been for the personal use of Europeans.” As such the sequins, ring band and cufflink found in British levels are analogous to many of the objects like the fifteen glass ring sets ranging from green to red to blue in color, fourteen brooch parts, C-shaped bracelet, and seven gilded sequins found in non-culturally specific 1781 demolition level. As such these materials likely derive from the wealthier Mitchells adornment assemblage. Helping validate this hypothesis is the fact that the fourteen sequins found in the demolition level, several with extant eye attachments were identified as being parts of British military uniform trim (Evans 2001:33). Mr. Mitchell was part of the British military and thusly would have owned and worn on different occasions military uniforms; the discovery of these sequins further corroborates the notion that the jewelry in these disturbed contexts belonged to him.

Per Stone’s (1974) discussion on rosary beads, the rosary beads found in House D are all made out of ivory. Of the seven found in occupational contexts all were found in British rather than French contexts. This is unusual because we know that the French, *métis* and many Native Americans practiced Catholicism whereas the majority of British were Anglican (Evans 2001: 33). Rosary beads were not generally traded materials and as such were probably personally owned by members of the household. The evidence of these beads may help support the interpretation that House D was the home of David and Elizabeth Mitchell because as a *métis* women Elizabeth may have practiced Catholicism and in doing so used numerous rosary beads (Evans 2001: 34). Likely these beads symbolize some of the adornment material that Mrs. Mitchell herself used. An analysis of the role of crosses and crucifixes at Fort Michilimackinac and other sites in New France concluded that while medallions maintained their religious meaning over time, crosses and crucifixes were mostly used as trading items starting in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century (Rinehart 1990). Although the small sample size of crucifixes (n=1) from House D

makes it difficult to test this hypothesis as it does provide a context for the eventual comparisons between House D and fireplace features at Fort St. Joseph. The one crucifix found in British contexts, displaying the body of Christ and cast from two separate elements was probably a trade item because unlike medallions, crosses and crucifixes had already become synonymous with trade goods by the beginning of the 1760s and the British era (Rinehart 1990).

Moving away from religious materials, Evans (2001:37) separates military buttons from civilian buttons in her discussion of military objects. For the sake of not creating a table with a single artifact type I included military buttons in Table 1. More than twenty military buttons were recovered from House D, although not all were from occupational contexts. Of the identifiable buttons from occupational contexts not surprisingly the majority of the buttons (n=12) were military buttons found in British levels. From the distinct 'Ks8' we know that those buttons were issued to the King's 8<sup>th</sup> regiment. These buttons with their distinctive design are very different from the plain, non-descript French Marine buttons found at Fort St. Joseph and thus reveal that evidence that British soldiers lived in certain areas can be identifiable by different kinds of decorative buttons. Of these 9 buttons from the King's 8<sup>th</sup> regiment, eight are pewter and one brass. Mitchell himself for a time was part of the King's 8<sup>th</sup> and therefore it is likely the buttons partially reflect his duration as an officer. Four pewter British military buttons known to predate 1767 were also recovered in British contexts (Stone 1974: 52-55). Soldiers of the 60<sup>th</sup> regiment were stationed at Michilimackinac from 1761 to 1763 and from 1766 to 1772. From the Magra Map of 1766 we know that soldiers from this unit were living in House D (Evans 2001: 38). As House 1 will help demonstrate, soldiers owned a great many buttons and buckles. Although it is possible that non-military personnel might have used buttons from the King's Eighth to replace broken ones, no documentation from Fort Michilimackinac suggests this possibility. In addition, documentation on Fort Michilimackinac explicitly outlines the regulations for button usage and the inaccessibility of military grade items to civilians. A total of seven, plain unadorned brass

buttons associated with civilian usage were collected from levels associated with the Bolons. These few buttons were likely personally used by Mr. Bolon and were items that arrived with him at Michilimackinac. Ready-made clothes were scarce in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and most garments that individuals like Mr. Bolon would have worn were made to order, including choice of trim and buttons (Evans 2003:29). As a modest trader Mr. Bolon would have had only a few garments, likely an overcoat, breeches and a few shirts. Unlike the French and British military that were regularly provisioned, Mr. Bolon and his family would have resided with a limited selection of clothing options. As numbers of adornment objects can be used to assess a relative quantity of clothing present based on how few (n=9) buckles and buttons were found in the house and the fact that several people lived in the house with Mr. Bolon including his wife and children it seems that they owned relatively few adornment items or at least garments that would have utilized such objects and that they focused on trade rather than any personal accumulation of adornment materials. Thus the adornment signature of a French fur trader as seen in House D is characterized by a relatively small, modest assemblage of some functional adornment materials like buttons and buckles and a very small assemblage of jewelry pieces and ornate, imported materials.

#### Summary of House D

The materials from House D provide information on what kinds of adornment items were used and traded by varying Fort Michilimackinac inhabitants. House D revealed an assemblage from a French fur trader dominated by a modest amount of fur trade artifacts and a small number of functional personal adornment items like buttons, buckles, and garment hasps. Materials associated with the British period comprise a more numerous and diverse assemblage of not only personally used adornment materials but adornment materials associated with trade (Evans 2001:5). A great deal more functional adornment materials such as the British issued military

buckles and buttons and numerous additional tinkling cones and trade rings were found in contexts associated with British soldiers and traders (n=36) than in the French assemblage (n=13). This could be partially due to the fact that British soldiers wore and utilized far more adornment materials whereas French traders relied on far fewer adornment items, likely adorned themselves in garments that utilized less European materials and took cues from Native dressing styles, and focused on trading and bartering any surplus adornment materials. Further helping make sense of the numerical disparity between the British and French assemblages is the economic milieu in which both groups of men existed. Halchin (1985: 17) in her description of an additional Michilimackinac domicile (House C) calls the climate of fur trading activity in the 1740s “sluggish.” This is stark contrast to the 1760s era of British control at Michilimackinac where outside trade according to the same author “flourished” and was “tenfold as productive” as trade in the 1730s and 40s (Halchin 1985: 17). As explained by Dunnigan (1999) and Heldman (1977, 1978) the British soldiers of the 1760s and 1770s had far more access to adornment materials than early traders and conducted their business at a time when the fort was at its economic peak (Dunnigan 1999: 6-9). French fur traders like Mr. Bolon were confronted with a very different economic environment and as a result were forced to operate on a smaller scale than traders and soldiers of the British era (1761). This partially explains why the adornment signatures between these two families are quite divergent and contain highly different densities of material.

The two families, the Bolon’s and Mitchell’s, exemplify many themes that relate to expressions of personal identity along ethnic, status and occupational lines. As Michilimackinac was a strongly militarized fur trading post it is not surprising that the Mitchells had strong ties to both the military aspects of adornment in the regimental buttons and buckles found but also to the many artifacts of adornment which help reveal their role as traders. The Mitchell’s were prosperous traders (Evans 2001:52). The expansive list of items found within House D, far more

than Mr. Mitchell and his wife could have personally utilized, surely corroborates the fact that some of the tinkling cones, vermillion and brass rings were intended for trade. Although evidence of British foot soldiers exists in the documentary sources the assemblage of materials found in the British contexts appears to overwhelmingly show evidence of trade goods over military adornment items such as buttons and buckles. Hence House D exemplifies the material evidence of a successful British fur trader and his trading enterprise living at Michilimackinac in the prosperous 1770s. This trend of numerous adornment items in British military contexts will be tested by the examination of House 1.

The presence of Native Americans is not only evidenced in documentary records that reference House D (Evans 2001; Sleeper-Smith 2005) but is borne out by the large quantity of vermillion that would have been used not only for trade by Mr. Mitchell but also for bodily ornamentation perhaps by his wife among others. Evans (2001: 23) states that a stone smoking pipe found in the British deposit is engraved with the letters "IHS." Religious iconography would be expected to be associated with the French, therefore this object could support the presence of Elizabeth Mitchell, a potentially converted Roman Catholic who as discussed earlier may have utilized the rosary beads and the brass crucifix found in levels associated with their occupation of the house. Alternately this pipe, the vermillion, and the tinkling cones could signify British soldiers collecting Indian "souvenirs" (Evans 2001: 23). Rinehart (1990: 331-8) discusses the enduring legacy of religious medallions throughout New France as tools of devotion for religious adherents, so perhaps the medallions uncovered in British contexts speaks to their usage by Mrs. Mitchell who herself may have converted to the Roman Catholic faith.

Beyond the artifacts themselves and their utility as trade or as military issued objects, the excavated materials can be interpreted on a personal level based on who might have been wearing them. In both the Bolon and Mitchell families an individual born across the Atlantic Ocean married a woman of mixed ancestry. The children of Gabriel Bolon, a Frenchman, and Suzanne

Menard Bolon, were *métis* children. The blended cultural nature of the Mitchells was evidenced by the presence of fashionable European goods in the form of cuff links, pendants and bracelets which hailed from France and Britain, religious items demonstrating a Catholic devotion, and items strongly associated with a Native cultural background like vermillion, tinkling cones, and dangler earrings (Evans 2001:53). House D provides an ideal template of what a French fur trader's house looked like in terms of material culture utilized. A modest array of trade good and a few personal items encapsulate this French assemblage. The post 1761 British period at Michilimackinac seems to reveal a period of intense trading and a burgeoning population of soldiers contributing to a more robust adornment assemblage in the British contexts. The Mitchell's had a great deal of ornate personal adornment goods as evidenced by the earrings, pendants, and other European jewelry. Likely they utilized some of those materials themselves while trading away sizable amounts of vermillion, trade rings, pendants, and tinkling cones to Natives and other opportunist Europeans. Below, I explore the second Michilimackinac domicile which also housed a mixture of French and British families. Special attention will be given to noting if the trends and patterns observed with French fur traders and British soldiers in House D will carry over into this domicile as well.

#### House 1: Mr. Chevalier and British Soldiers

This house was selected for examination because it was occupied by both a regiment of British soldiers and a French fur trader. Different from House D, no British traders occupied the house and the home had a far more substantial military function as for several years members of the British 10<sup>th</sup> regiment lived within its walls. House 1 was initially inhabited by a French trader, Chevalier (only his surname is known) who lived in the house from 1730 to 1761 when British forces took control of the fort (Heldman 1978: 4). When the British assumed control of the fort and moved into several of the fort's prominent structures, the house accommodated a contingent

of British foot soldiers (Heldman 1978: 1). Evidence for this comes from the Magra map of 1765 which designates the house as one inhabited by British soldiers (Heldman 1978:12).

Several financial records indicate that Mr. Chevalier had little in the way of capital (Heldman 1978:12). The home's close proximity to the powder magazine confirms this as the constant risk of explosion rendered the area highly undesirable and inexpensive housing (Heldman 1978:13). Little more of Chevalier is known besides the fact that he was a French trader at least in the spring and summer months (Heldman 1987: 12). Heldman (1978) does not directly comment on Chevalier's family if indeed he had one living with him at Fort Michilimackinac. Evidence of the second occupant of the house is also verified by the twenty-five 10<sup>th</sup> Regimental British military buttons collected from the house (Heldman 1978: 13). The 10<sup>th</sup> regiment was stationed at Michilimackinac from 1772 to 1774 (Dunnigan 1999: 23). These dates and the recovery of the buttons suggest that soldiers of the 10<sup>th</sup> regiment lived in House 1 between 1772 and 1774 (Heldman 1978:13). By 1775 House 1 was abandoned (Heldman 1978: 13).

All architectural and cultural features were completely excavated during the field seasons of 1976 and 1977 under the direction of Donald Heldman. As with other row houses at Michilimackinac, House 1's stratigraphic sequence was firmly established and is sensitive to the different cultural groups who occupied the structure. Similar to House D, French and British materials from this house can be segregated (Heldman 1978: 120). The stratigraphy of House 1 was further aided by the presence of diagnostic artifacts such as British creamware ceramics dating to the 1770s collected alongside British military buttons from specific regiments like the 10<sup>th</sup> (Heldman 1978: 19). Heldman (1978: 65-66) organized the excavated adornment material from House 1 into categories already created by other archaeologists familiar with Fort Michilimackinac. For all adornment artifacts Heldman (1978:70-76) cites Stone's (1974) seminal work on artifact typologies and places excavated artifacts from House 1 within Stone's



established categories. Therefore all descriptions of adornment artifacts used in this section originate from work completed by Stone (1974: 25-140).

#### 1730s-1760s: French Trader

The excavated adornment materials relating to the 1730s and the Frenchman Mr. Chevalier is modest in number yet it provide clues on linking adornment artifacts to particular expressions of social identity (Table 2). The artifacts found in levels attributed to Mr. Chevalier who lived in the residence until right around the British took over the fort include: one glass cufflink set, three tinkling cones, twenty-three necklace and seed beads, a buckle, two buttons (one complete and another a button shank), and two rosary beads. The complete button is described by Heldman (1978: 147) as a plain, unadorned pewter button. Heldman uses Stone's (1974:54) typological designation CII, SE, T3, VA for the object, which designates the button as a civilian button dating from 1750 to 1780. The button is further described as an unadorned pewter French Marine variant (Stone 1974: 54). The button fragment is designated as a brass wire button shank. Likely this was a shank designed to repair or fix a broken French civilian button. The iron buckle fragment described by Heldman (1978:147) was probably part of a shoe buckle based on its size. The two ivory rosary beads collected were part of a rosary conceivably used by Chevalier for personal devotion as rosaries were seldom traded to Natives. More common trade items than rosaries were brass iconographic rings and crosses (Rinehart 1990: 339). The two tinkling cones make up the surprisingly small amount of adornment goods that could be seen as trade items (Stone 1974: 131). From documentary source (Heldman 1978: 18) we know that Mr. Chevalier was a small time French fur trader. It is possible that his trading materials are not contained within this house and that these two cones represent personal items used by himself. If they constitute adornment trade goods they attest to his role as a small-time trader, as someone without the means to acquire the kind of adornment material stockpile seen by Mr. Mitchell in

House D. The existence of one pair of cufflinks demonstrates that Mr. Chevalier was not completely without some ornate and high-end imported European materials. The paucity of ornate goods, having only found a single example, suggests that he likely did not adorn himself with many expensive and ornate materials. In his report on the house Heldman (1978:81) ultimately concludes that the evidence of trade goods in French levels, albeit small in number, held in conjunction with the paucity of high-status objects, helps confirm that Mr. Chevalier was likely a small-time *voyageur* in the fur trade. I further conclude that this observed pattern of few functional and ornate adornment items coupled with a limited array of trade goods typifies the material expectations of French fur traders in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century.

#### 1760s and 1770s: British Soldiers

Far more material was found in levels associated with the British occupation of House 1 than in the French period (Table 3). Beyond a far greater diversity of adornment objects there are numerically far more clothing and trade-related adornment artifacts in these levels (Heldman 1978: 89). Narrowing in and focusing on the functional adornment artifacts is especially informative. A total of 21 brass and pewter shoe and military-issued trouser buckles were collected alongside 26, predominately pewter British military buttons. We know that British military breeches utilized buttons of varying sizes and a drawstring and it is likely many of these buttons were used in this manner (Evans: Personal Communication). In fact only one of these buttons was not a British pewter military button (type CII, SA, TI, Va). This button is an unadorned brass civilian button dated between 1761 and 1768 (Stone 1974: 53). More than half (14) of the 26 buttons found in British levels had a distinctive “10” on the obverse (Type CI SD, TI, VD) indicative of the 10<sup>th</sup> British regiment (Stone 1974: 51).

This large assemblage of clothing-related artifacts such as buttons and buckles is consistent with the numbers of military personnel who bunked in the house (Dunnigan 1999: 25).

Table 2

*Adornment Material from French Fur Trader, House 1*

1730s French Trader	Numbers	Description (provided by Heldman)
Cufflink	1	Set of brass and glass linked
Tinkling cones	3	Medium to large, complete
Buckle	1	Iron shoe buckle
Buttons	2	One 'French Marine' with undecorated pewter crown. Suggestive of a civilian use between 1760-1780 (Stone 1974:54). One shank of brass wire.
Rosary beads	2	Ivory

These buckles and buttons from British soldiers' uniforms and the existence of the 10<sup>th</sup> regiment symbolize the presence of significantly more than a single trader living in or around the household at any given time. In addition the buckles and buttons are items not strongly associated with the fur trade as other items, such as brass kettles, tinkling cones and sewing materials were far more sought after and given to Natives. Thus, the exclusion of these materials in the British levels speaks less to the likelihood of these soldiers having the need for adornment materials associated with the fur trade as their military issued garments would have provided them with all their necessary clothing they would have needed. The adornment signature of British soldiers is highlighted by numerous amounts of adornment material in the form of buttons and buckles. Different from the seasonal traders like Mr. Chevalier who lived in House 1 at different times of the year a larger amount of adornment items could have been stored and packed away for intermittent use as personal or trade goods by the British military personal that were stationed there as they did not rely on trade as their primary means of subsistence.

Further evidence of the British presence in House 1 is several fabric fragments that were collected from British contexts. A total of five fragments described by Heldman (1978:73) as

“British military braid” were found in British occupational levels. Preserved due to a metallic wrapping around the material, these fragments were likely part of the gilded trim of overcoats and jackets worn by British soldiers. Additionally, two garment hooks were found in British contexts, while none were collected in French contexts. These hooks were likely used to secure parts of British military garments. The lack of functional clothing adornment objects in French contexts in House 1 and to a degree in House D may signify an adoption of Native-styled garments that did not rely on metallic clothing fasteners or access to numerous imported buttons, buckles and other European adornment materials.

Somewhat more inexplicable are the numerous materials that seem intended for trade and not for personal use found in British contexts. These items include tinkling cones, pendants, rosary beads and trade rings. The number of tinkling cones (28) and ivory rosary beads (8) from House 1 is far larger than the amount of tinkling cones and rosary beads found in the French contexts in both House D and House 1 combined. A quick comparison between the adornment objects associated with the two French occupiers, Mr. Chevalier (n=9) and the Bolon (n=54, 39 being vermilion) family, reveal a strikingly smaller adornment assemblage from the two different British contexts (n=107 for British foot soldiers in House 1 and n=187 for the Mitchells). This comparison reveals that based on the size of the assemblage from the foot soldiers of House 1 many of the excavated adornment materials were probably used by the soldiers as objects of trade in the context of exchange with Natives rather than as all personally used adornment goods. Some words by Benjamin Roberts, who worked at Fort Michilimackinac, support this premise. In a letter to his superior Roberts wrote, “Every soldier in the Fort is a trader indeed... regimental orders forbid it, yet it is not effective” (Johnson Papers 1927: 712). In this light it is not surprising then that so many objects secondary to what a British soldier would be outfitted with were found in House 1. Likely many of these goods were items intended for trade with Natives. The brooch, rosary beads, pendant and trade rings as goods associated with women were likely either trade

goods destined to reach the hands of Natives or somehow linked to female usage. It is important to note that British soldiers would have had little time or opportunity to socialize with women and their wives as they did not live with them in House 1 or in the barracks. Conversely the brooch, rosary beads, pendant and rings if found in French contexts might be seen as more logically objects owned and utilized by female occupants.

The large amount of British clothing artifacts can be further explored by examining what we know about what a typical enlisted British soldier wore in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The quantity and style of clothing provided to British soldiers became dictated by a series of royal warrants starting in 1768 (Dunnigan 1999: 23). These descriptive lists provide a context for the discussion of the buttons, buckles and other clothing accoutrements found in House 1.

According to the warrant of July 27, 1768 (Dunnigan 1999: 23-24) each soldier of a regiment was to be provided with:

- A good coat, well lined.
- A waistcoat.
- A pair of good cloth breeches.
- A pair of good strong stockings.
- A pair of good strong shoes.
- A good shirt and a good neckcloth.
- A good strong hat, bound with white tape

In addition, these garments were replaced with new in kind garments brought from England by regimental agents (Dunnigan 1999: 24). As extensive as this list is the garments listed above fall far short of the entire clothing set needed for each soldier (Dunnigan 1999: 24). This means that British soldiers likely would have owned more garments utilizing even more adornment materials (Dunnigan 1999: 24). As evidence of this, Dunnigan (1999: 24) cites a far longer list such materials penned in 1775 by a Mr. Thomas Simes which includes garter-buckles, shoe buckles, a pair of brass clasps (i.e., garment hooks), three shirts, two pairs of shoes and a number of other goods. These “necessities” were similar to those that were supplied to the British

Table 3

*Adornment Material from British Soldiers, House 1*

1760s British soldiers	Numbers	Description
Buttons	26	15 brass (military), 1 brass (10 <sup>th</sup> regiment) 9 pewter (military), 1 bone
Buckles	21	9 brass, 2 pewter, 10 iron
Tinkling cones	28	Copper alloy
Brooch	2	1 pewter, 1 iron, both intended for women
Hook/eyes	2	Brass
Cufflink sets	6	All brass with glass insets
Pendant	2	Described as a rosary pendant
Rosary beads	8	1 iron bead, 7 ivory
Rosary chains	4	Brass
Wampum	1	Purple
Trade rings	2	Two brass iconographic
Fabric	5	All British military braid

soldiers occupying House D and House 1. In retrospect it is hard to envision a French fur trader necessarily owning many of these items since he his materials would not be officially subsisted by the crown. Indeed the higher numbers of clothing materials in British contexts in House 1 testify to the adornment signature divergence of British soldiers and French fur traders. Uniform clothing for British soldiers was particularly regulated from the garments to the buttons that adorned them. The 1768 royal warrant recited the need for British soldiers to wear buttons that identified their regiment (Dunnigan 1999: 25). In the case of House 1 and House D that regiment would have been the 60<sup>th</sup> regiment. As exact and regulated as their appearances were British

soldiers it appears did possess the occasional bit of civilian apparel but would have had little time or occasion to use them as strict dressing customs predicated British soldier's every move (Dunnigan 1999: 26).

### Summary of House 1

House 1 was occupied by Frenchman Mr. Chevalier from the home's construction in the 1730s until the British arrival and subsequent takeover in 1761 (Heldman 1978:80). Although a relatively high proportion of artifacts from the French contexts are trade goods (a third of all the adornment items), absent were the ornate, imported and expensive goods like jewelry and pendants along with functional adornment items like buttons and buckles that symbolized the presence of a high status occupant like Mr. Mitchell, or in the case of the British soldiers represented their access and penchant for acquiring a variety of adornment related trade goods and in wearing garments that utilized a large amount of adornment materials (Heldman 1978:82). Similar to Mr. Bolon of House D, Mr. Chevalier was ostensibly a small time trader of limited financial means who occupied House 1 without acquiring nor personally wearing a great deal of metallic, European adornment materials. Similarly small amounts of adornment material numbering around a dozen objects were found in the House 1 French deposits and in the House D French levels. This suggests that both Mr. Chevalier and Mr. Bolon owned and utilized less adornment materials than their rival British traders and the plethora of soldiers that arrived after their exodus. By comparing the two relatively modest amounts of adornment material collected from French contexts one can conclude that House 1 shows an adornment signature consistent with a small time French trader who had likely reflective of his economic means lived in an area of low economic value due to its proximity to the powder magazine and held few personal adornment items.

For the British material, Lieutenant Perkins Magra map of 1765 and buttons from the 10<sup>th</sup> regiment stationed at the fort between 1772 and 1774, confirm that soldiers were residents of House 1 during part or all of the British period (Halchin 1985: 60) and had at their disposal numerous adornment items. Far different from the limited French assemblage, large numbers of these adornment materials were collected from House 1 in British occupational contexts (Heldman 1978: 81). Perhaps not surprisingly the majority of adornment artifacts found were parts of military uniforms such as the 26 buttons and 21 buckles. The 10<sup>th</sup> regiment buttons, fabric, the two hooks and a large number of pewter shoe and trouser buckles were also likely parts of British soldiers' personal uniforms. As stated above, little opportunity would have arisen for soldiers to wear tinkling cones and to associate with women who potentially would have worn the numerous pendants, brooches and earrings recovered in British contexts. Likely, these represent adornment materials that were reserved for trade. The 10<sup>th</sup> regiment buttons, of which six were found in a single level, and the adornment artifacts that far exceed the amounts and kinds of materials they would have personally worn, testify to a group of British foot soldiers stationed at the fort who conducted themselves, quite well it seems, in the lucrative fur trade (Heldman 1978: 88). These soldiers, well supplied with adornment goods, collected a great deal of adornment materials, far more than the French traders, for the purpose of trading and bartering with Natives and visitors to Michilimackinac. This pattern certainly seems to reflect the adornment signature of British soldiers; high amounts of adornment functional goods and a surplus adornment trade goods intended for exchange with Native Americans.

Both Mr. Chevalier and Mr. Bolon may have had little need to store adornment goods in their domiciles but rather focused on trading and perhaps exhausting their supply of adornment materials in order to maximize profits from their seasonal trading. Indeed, both French fur trading families left little archaeologically in the way of adornment items and it may be for just that reason. If the large amounts of buttons and buckles associated with soldiers at House 1 are



evidence of British soldiers occupying domestic structures, then a similar pattern might be expected at other places, Fort St. Joseph included. Likewise a more modest assemblage, comprised of few adornment goods, seems to be evidence of seasonal French fur traders. These two Fort Michilimackinac occupational contexts provided profiles for the general patterns of adornment density and diversity in domiciles occupied by inhabitants of varying ethnicities, occupations, and social statuses from British soldiers, French traders, British traders, and *métis* wives. Inferences from these cultural groups afford comparative data sets that can help interpret who was occupying the Fort St. Joseph feature clusters from the adornment artifacts left behind and deposited. In the following chapter we will see what I discuss the adornment materials that have been found in the feature clusters at Fort St. Joseph. Such an examination will reveal if inhabitants there made due with a more limited supply of adornment materials than their Fort Michilimackinac counterparts and instead came to rely on Native-styled garments and adornment styles that were not dependent nor contingent on European produced buttons, buckles and conventions of dress. The examination will also reveal if the adornment signature from the fireplace clusters echoes patterns of adornment seen from French traders, British soldiers, or perhaps even British traders at Fort Michilimackinac.

## CHAPTER V

### FORT ST. JOSEPH FEATURE CLUSTERS

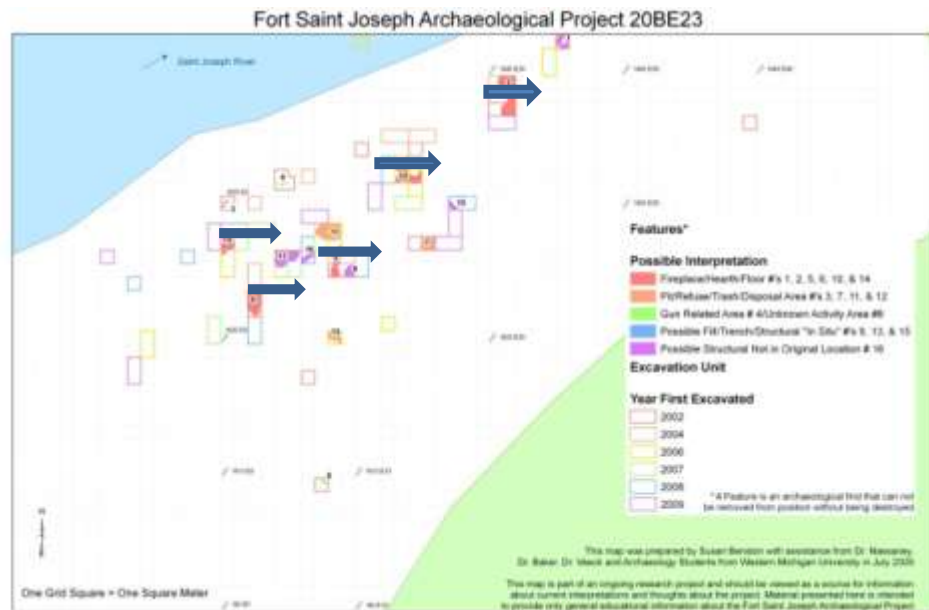
The Fort St. Joseph feature clusters are derived from work by Susan Benston (2010) who produced a series of maps, which delineated five projected residential sections of the fort based on the locations of hearths and fireplaces. From documentary sources and archaeological studies we know that domestic structures are central loci for various productive and domestic activities that expressed participants' social identities along the lines of status, gender, and ethnicity (Deetz 1977; Nassaney 2008). As such these clusters are logical and analytical units well suited for examination. Physically, these five fireplace clusters were sampled with anywhere between three and six 1x2 meter units excavated from 2002 to 2010. Within those five fireplace features, designated as 2, 5, 6, 10, and 14, 24- 1x2 meter units have been identified that either encompass part of the fireplaces or lie directly adjacent. Through excavation all of these units have revealed various amounts of adornment objects that were worn or discarded within the features (Table 4).

Table 4

*Coordinates of Units Associated with Fireplace Clusters*

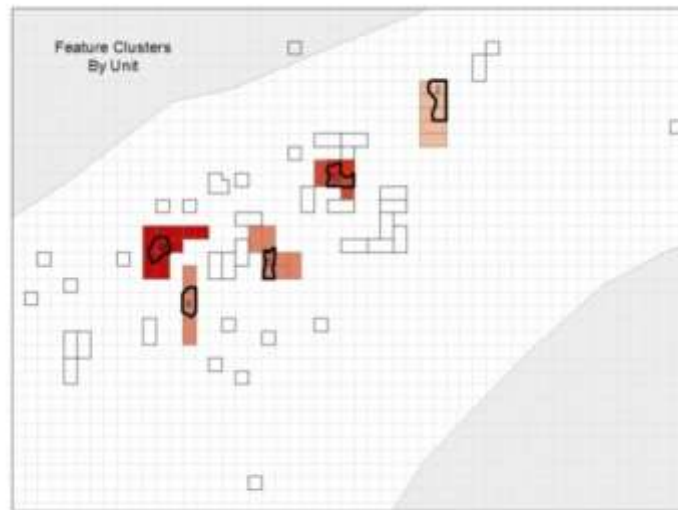
Feature 2	Feature 5	Feature 6	Feature 10	Feature 14
N39 E20	N25 E8	N20 E2	N32 E12	N25 E0
N38 E20	N26 E8	N22 E2	N32 E13	N27 E0
N37 E20	N27 E8	N24 E2	N31 E14	N28 E0
N36 E20	N25 E10		N30 E13	N27 W1
N35 E20	N27 E7		N34 E14	N28 E2
				N25 W1

Spatially, Figure 12 shows the five feature clusters in reference to the entire excavated area of the site. The red areas represent fireplaces. By treating each cluster as a separate analytical unit I can draw out their similarities and differences and from those patterns make inferences about the occupants.



*Figure 12.* Spatial Relationship of the Feature Clusters  
Figure created and reproduced with permission by Susan Benston.

Another graphic representation of the feature clusters which shows the full outlines of the clusters is found below (Figure 13).



*Figure 13.* Feature Clusters by Unit  
 Figure created and reproduced with permission by Susan Benston.

#### Personal Adornment Objects in the Fort St. Joseph Feature Clusters

Through 2010, 243 objects of personal adornment have been recovered from excavations at Fort St. Joseph, 104 of which are associated with the features 2, 5, 6, 10, and 14. The unit coordinates, associated fireplace and general provenience in which they were uncovered was tabulated for all of these adornment artifacts (Table 10). For the purposes of this study I assume that these objects of adornment were deposited by the occupants of the buildings as this allows for an analysis on who occupied such structures to be conducted. I also demonstrate that the 24 units are representative of the domestic and occupational activities conducted near the features and that the adornment assemblage is a representative sample of the kinds of adornment items that would be found in non-feature units. Below, I present and describe the adornment artifacts found within the feature clusters.

#### Personal Adornment Material Feature 14

The largest assemblage of adornment materials found in the clusters was those found in feature 14. Comprised of six units this feature along with feature 10 was the largest cluster by excavated area. The recovered materials (Table 5) included three buttons, one of which was a copper-alloy plain French Marine button and another a concave brass civilian button with extant evidence of a wooden back. In addition a copper alloy belt or breech buckle and six tinkling cones were found. The six cones represent the largest amount found from any of the five feature clusters and suggest that their role here may be more than adornment goods but rather an accumulation of possible trading material. From domicile areas at Fort Michilimackinac analogous quantities of tinkling cones were recovered in French fur trading contexts. A crucifix was also recovered along with a relatively large amount of ornamental objects including a pair of cufflinks, an ear or nose bob, a brooch tongue, a garment hasp, a piece of silver jewelry, an iconographic plaque ring with an 'N' engraved on its face, evidence of body painting pigment recovered in the form of hematite, and a small copper alloy scrap that appears to be a tinkling cone preform. Lastly, thirty-one of the forty-one pieces of wampum were found. The amount of material related to Native Americans found in this cluster is quite high (n=39 of the total 50 items) ranging from the six tinkling cones, fleck of pigment, single ear bob, to the wampum. Compared to other clusters this material from feature 14 represents a high percentage, some 62%, or 39 of the 63 materials (wampum, bodily pigments and tinkling cones) found in the entirety of clusters that can be associated with Native American dressing customs and consumption.

Beyond materials associated with Native Americans feature 14 generated the highest frequency of jewelry and ornamental materials. The cufflink, ear bob, brooch fragment, copper alloy scrap, and garment hasp exemplify materials that are not represented anywhere else amongst the other four clusters. Their uniqueness potentially signifies that the owners of these materials were displaying a high social status not seen anywhere else within the other structures.

Individuals living within this feature presumably included those of some wealth with the means and wherewithal to acquire and ostensibly wear fine imported European goods like the cufflink, brooch and silver band. At Michilimackinac materials such as the brooch, cufflink, and garment hasp were found in areas associated with a well-to-do trading family which included a British trader and his *métis* wife. This suggests that perhaps a fur trader of some wealth or a Native American with the means and wherewithal to acquire a large amount of fine, imported goods was living in this house.

Table 5

*Personal Adornment Material from Feature 14*

Buckle	1
Button	3
Tinkling cones	6
Jewelry	
• Cufflink	1
• Brooch	1
• Ear bob	1
• Hasp	1
• Silver band	1
• Copper alloy	1
Crucifix	1
Finger Ring (Jesuit)	1
Pigment	1
Wampum	31

Personal Adornment Material Feature 2

Fourteen items of adornment were recovered from feature 2 (Table 6). These objects include two buckles, two buttons, a single plain band ring, four tinkling cones, and two crucifixes. Also found was a pair of cufflinks and two pieces of wampum. Perhaps the most notable finds from this cluster are the religious artifacts including the two crucifixes, one with a detailed depiction of Jesus Christ and the copper-alloy cilice. These three objects constitute nearly half (43%) of the seven total religious adornment materials found in the clusters. The crucifix may

have been worn on the body as a secular object or used as an object of personal religious devotion (Rinehart 1990: 312). As such a high percentage of the religious objects found were from feature 2 the inhabitant(s) of this cluster certainly prized religious items which due to their rarity made them quite valuable. The juxtaposition of religious items with a few tinkling cones and a small number of buckles (2) and buttons (2) seem similar in number and in variability to the other feature clusters where analogous materials were found in equally small quantities. The religious materials may be evidence of a French inhabitant as they were commonly Catholic. It is notable however that several objects found in this cluster are ornamental materials that originated from Europe, likely from France such as the cufflinks and crucifixes. The use of such objects reflects perhaps an individual holding onto a European adornment sensibility by wearing such items in spite of being thousands of miles from France. Examples of such materials include a small ornate buckle fragment with embedded jeweled glass insets and a button with a stitched embossed pattern meant to evoke textiles or a rope motif. The buckle was probably worn by a woman whereas since a button with a similar rope motif was found in British contexts at Fort Michilimackinac in House D and identified as belonging to the 8<sup>th</sup> regiment this particular button from Fort St. Joseph was likely a male civilian button mimicking a known design. The 8<sup>th</sup> or King's regiment was the last regiment to serve at Michilimackinac arriving in 1774. The buttons of these enlisted men had a rope motif or a leafy border (Evans 2003: 17). Thus buttons with a similar motif as the one found in this cluster were limited in circulation to British soldiers within the 8<sup>th</sup> regiment. It would not be hard to imagine a design such as the rope motif being used by other similar buttons which were meant to mimic or emulate the design on the British military buttons. Given the amount of religious material and lack of adornment materials that would have been used by British soldiers this feature might have housed an individual or individuals expressing a Roman Catholic identity and possibly a French family with access to few imported, ornate adornment goods.

Table 6

*Personal Adornment Material from Feature 2*

Buckle	2
Button	2
Tinkling cones	4
Religious • Crucifixes	2
Finger Ring (band)	1
Cufflink	1
Wampum	2

Personal Adornment Material Feature 6

Feature 6 yielded very few adornment materials because not much of it was excavated. A total of seven objects were recovered in the three units excavated within the feature (Table 7). As the average unit in this study yielded close to three artifacts (2.8) the seven objects found, although constituting a small assemblage, are representative of the density of adornment materials found in features with more units excavated. Feature 6 yielded two ornate finger rings with glass insets, a religious medallion, and two white and two purple wampum. The religious medallion (Figure 14) is the only such medallion, fragmentary or otherwise, excavated to date at Fort St. Joseph. It is possible that this medallion may have been intentionally deposited near this hearth as an offering of some kind as its usage as a trade item is highly unlikely based on documentary evidence of other medallions (Rinehart 1990).

Table 7

*Personal Adornment Material from Feature 6*

Finger Ring • Glass inset	2
Medallion	1
Wampum	4





*Figure 14.* A Replica of a Religious Medallion Found in Unit N24 E2  
Photo by John Lacko, courtesy of the Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project.

Although a small sample, the wampum, medallion and the two glass inset rings from Feature 6 reflect materials that were probably personally owned and worn; likely by someone influenced by a blend of Roman Catholicism, Native influences, and a modicum of European sensibilities as evidenced by the glass inset rings.

#### Personal Adornment Material Feature 5

Units associated with Feature 5 yielded eleven adornment artifacts (Table 8). They include two buttons (one a French Marine and the other a pewter fragment), five tinkling cones, traces of body painting pigment, two iconographic finger rings, and a glass inset. As in several of the other clusters, materials associated with Native Americans were present in the form of tinkling cones and pigment used to decorate the body. The items from the assemblage commonly associated with European usage, the pewter button and glass inset, are incomplete and fragmentary. The glass inset may have been part of a finger ring while the pewter button seems to have been broken or modified as it's missing the entire shank. These two materials may be evidence of a refurbishment process with the objects ultimately used in different ways than they

were initially intended for. We know that at times ring plaques were tied to garments or worn around a necklace and that buttons and other materials were sometimes used as decorative pieces by Natives who in doing so consciously changed the function of these items from their original intent (Sylak 2010). Since glass beads were used by Native Americans in a multitude of fashion accessories from moccasins, to belts, to hair pieces (Malischke 2010: 46-9), it is highly probable that the faceted glass insets, highly prized as personal items, adorned Natives' bodies in a variety of ways meant to highlight the insets' color and reflective abilities. This speaks to the fact that a Native may have lived and used adornment materials in this cluster.

A French Marine button and a heart-shaped iconographic ring found in the cluster provide additional clues on the identities of the occupants. The plain, copper-alloy button was certainly worn by a male, likely a Frenchman as no British military buttons or buckles were collected in the cluster. As for the ring, documentary sources reveal that Jesuit rings were predominately used as trade items and frequently exchanged with Natives (Hulse 1977; Sylak 2010). These rings then are probably evidence of trade items but could also reflect a material that might have been worn by possible Native occupants.

The fact that so many of the objects found in Feature 5 are fragments of adornment artifacts reveals insights into not only how these objects were used but by whom. Although it is difficult to determine whether these objects are fragmentary because they simply broke and were discarded or consciously taken apart and altered, the notion of adornment items being reused and recycled, with some undergoing significant modifications speaks to the various ways such objects were used by different groups of people (Evans 2003: 38). The ring plaque and inset, representing parts of two rings as glass insets were not typically part of iconographic rings, may have been items used by Natives. If they were indeed materials utilized by Natives in their broken form, then these ring fragments represent active choices to use the materials in ways that they were not initially intended. This assemblage of broken and likely revamped adornment materials presents

compelling evidence pointing to a *métis* or Native occupant as items of indigenous origin such as the body pigments and tinkling cones seem to mix freely with European items, the rings and buttons namely, likely refurbished in ways foreign to their original purpose (Miller and Hammel 1986; Giordano 2005: 19). Although these items could have simply been broken and discarded, a pattern of Native inspired materials reimagined using European metals exists site-wide, in a variety of different contexts and units. The physical evidence of Native adornment materials in the clusters coupled with documentary sources affirming their presence in the fort provides an additional level of credence to the hypothesis that a number of Natives and *métis* lived in these domiciles.

Table 8

*Personal Adornment Material from Feature 5*

Button	2
Tinkling cones	5
Pigment	1
Finger Ring	3
• Jesuit	2
• Glass inset	1

Personal Adornment Material Feature 10

A total of twenty-one adornment items were found in feature 10. The assemblage is made up of five buttons, three buckles, two tinkling cones, a plaque finger ring, a rosary bead, a fragment of a religious pendant or crucifix, ochre and vermilion pigments, a silver scrap, a brooch fragment and four pieces of wampum (Table 9). Of the total buckles and buttons found in all clusters, 8 out of the 18 collected or 44% were found in the six units associated with feature 10. Additionally, of the six buckles found in all five feature clusters, three (or 50%) were located in this feature. These percentages point to the notion that the amount of buckles and buttons in this cluster reflect more closely than any other cluster the density of excavated buttons and

buckles found in British military cultural contexts at Fort Michilimackinac. Even with these modest numbers of buttons and buckles in feature 10 they still pale in comparison to the far larger assemblages at Fort Michilimackinac. Although all three buckles found in the cluster are frame fragments they were most likely knee buckle fragments based on their extrapolated size. These buckles would have been worn on the folded over portion of male leg breeches and held the pants tightly below or above the knee (White 2005: 43). As footwear at Fort St. Joseph likely consisted of a combination of moccasins, wooden clogs and for a small minority, European shoes which utilized iron and copper alloy buckles, it is unlikely that the buckles were shoe buckles. It is hard to image a Native American adopting a European system of shoe wearing as it would have been far more comfortable, easier, and logical to wear moccasins or go barefoot most of the time at Fort St. Joseph. In addition, a description of life at Michilimackinac from a 2003 publication recounts a couple dressed for a celebration wearing buckled shoes along with “numerous buttons and fancy trim” (Evans 2003: 29). This depiction gives some credence to the idea that owning buckled shoes was a luxury and that these material should be seen in much the same way ornate cufflinks or earrings are, as objects associated with elites and individuals who desired to keep up with the latest fashions from London and Paris (Evans 2003: 37).

The two buttons found in this cluster, a French Marine and a copper alloy flat variant with an attached hook are typical of the style of buttons found at Fort St. Joseph in unornamented design. Buttons such as the standardized French Marine variant were used by civilians and military and prized for their uniformity and sturdy construction (Mazrim 2011; 65; Stone 1974: 67). Doubtless, some of the French Marine buttons found at Fort St. Joseph were used by male civilians even if they were initially provided for military use. Indeed these standardized French Marine buttons are gender attributable as they were not designed to be used in the thinner, more delicate garments designed for women. Women’s garments relied on the utilization of hasps and garment hooks to latch and affix layers of cloth (White 2005: 57). These garments would not

have needed nor been designed for the large and thick Marine-style buttons. The religious items found in this cluster, the corpus and rosary bead, could have been worn on a necklace, possibly by either a converted Native or someone outwardly exclaiming their faith or fashion sensibilities like a French trader. The excavated tinkling cones and pigments give credence to the possibility of a Native occupying the structure, blending their own adornment style with the implementation of European materials and dressing customs.

Table 9

*Personal Adornment Material from Feature 10*

Button	5
Tinkling cones	2
Finger Ring	
• Jesuit	1
Buckle	3
Religious	2
• Rosary bead	(1)
• Corpus	(1)
Pigments	2
Jewelry	2
• Silver strip	(1)
• Brooch	(1)
Wampum	4

This discussion on the five features clusters has hypothesized through an inspection of the adornment material found within those areas that different individuals from French traders, Natives and *métis* lived at Fort St. Joseph within the cluster areas. An intra-site comparison, focused on comparing and contrasting the clusters to one another is essential in furthering the hypotheses on who was occupying the areas around the fireplaces. This endeavor takes up the bulk of the chapter VII. This analysis is completed by using data from the descriptions of the adornment material from Fort St. Joseph. Patterns between clusters, their differences and similarities will all comprise essential elements of this venture. The analysis will also focus on comparing frequencies of different objects to establish similarities and/or differences among the

Fort St. Joseph feature clusters, individually and collectively in order assess if people were exhibiting similar identities within the feature clusters. A diversity index and other statistical measurements will help identify these similarities or differences. By combining inferences gained from an examination of the feature clusters at Fort St. Joseph and information on how particular kinds of individuals adorned themselves at Fort Michilimackinac I offer conclusions on who was living in the feature clusters at Fort St. Joseph.

## CHAPTER VI

### ANALYSIS / INTERPRETATION

This chapter analyses the adornment material found in the Fort St. Joseph feature clusters by searching for patterns within and between the feature clusters. In particular, I survey how identity was expressed through particular expressions of adornment materiality along the lines of gender, ethnicity, age, social status and occupation. I then extrapolate the meaning of such inferences by exploring how the adornment patterns from Fort Michilimackinac illuminate the feature clusters at Fort St. Joseph.

#### Fort St. Joseph Feature Clusters: An Intra-site Analysis

To begin the analysis I examined the distribution and density of materials found in the five clusters. Table 10 presents the artifacts in specific clusters arranged by adornment categories. In order to see how the specific feature clusters differed from one another I employed a diversity index. A diversity index provides a definitive algorithm for statistically measuring the richness or diversity of materials within a given cluster. An index was run on the materials found within the five clusters (see Table 11). Diversity indices provide a numerical value between 0 and 1. The closer to one an index is the more diverse the assemblage or sample is. An index with a value of zero has no richness or diversity. Feature 10 had the highest index of the clusters at .884 (Table 11). As a number close to 1 this represents a diverse assemblage. Feature 10 exhibited findings of artifacts for all eight of the categories included in the index which were buttons, buckles, tinkling cones, finger rings, jewelry, wampum, pigment, and religious materials. Table 11 shows the calculations of the diversity indices of the clusters and the categories utilized in the calculations.

Table 10

*Adornment Totals by Category per Cluster*

<u>Personal Adornment</u>	Feature cluster	14	2	5	6	10	Totals	Non-feature cluster areas site wide
<b>Buttons</b>		3	2	2	0	5	<b>12</b>	7
• French Marine		1	0	1	0	3	5	
<b>Buckles</b>		1	2	0	0	3	<b>6</b>	7
• Shoe		0	1	0	0	1	2	
• Frame (fragment)		1	1	0	0	2	4	
<b>Finger Rings</b>		1	1	3	2	1	<b>8</b>	10
• Jesuit		1	0	2	0	1	4	5
• Glass inset		0	0	1	2	0	3	2
• Band		0	1	0	0	0	1	3
<b>Tinkling Cones</b>		6	4	5	0	2	<b>18</b>	21
<b>Religious</b>		1	3	0	1	2	<b>6</b>	6
• Crucifix		0	1	0	0	0	1	2
• Cross		1	1	0	0	0	2	1
• Rosary bead		0	0	0	0	1	1	
• Medallion		0	0	0	1	0	1	
• Corpus		0	0	0	0	1	1	
<b>Jewelry</b>		0	0	0	0	0	<b>9</b>	
• Brooch		1	0	0	0	1	2	8
• Cufflink		1	1	0	0	0	2	2
• Garment Hasp		1	0	0	0	0	1	5
• Ear Bob		1	0	0	0	0	1	2
• Silver scrap		1	0	0	0	1	2	
• Copper scrap		1	0	0	0	0	1	
<b>Pigments</b>		1	0	1	0	2	<b>4</b>	
<b>Wampum</b>		31	3	0	3	4	<b>41</b>	71
<b>Totals</b>		51	16	12	6	21	104	139

Feature 14 which also yield materials from all eight categories produced an index of only .594, lowest among the clusters. In part this was due to the fact that 31 out of the 50 objects found in this cluster were wampum. Thus it was not a very rich index as the majority of its findings came from a single category. The other three indices were .883 from feature 2, .746 for feature 5 and .734 for feature 6. The richness of these three features is quite close to one another,



displaying the general homogeneity of the clusters. This uniformity of adornment material may be explained by similar depositional processes, that individuals had equal access to materials, and

Table 11

*Diversity Index Categories and Amounts of Materials*

<u>Personal Adornment</u>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>Totals, clusters</b>
Buttons	3	2	2	0	5	<b>12</b>
Buckles	1	2	0	0	3	<b>6</b>
Finger Rings	1	1	3	2	1	<b>8</b>
Tinkling Cones	6	4	5	0	2	<b>17</b>
Religious	1	3	0	1	2	<b>7</b>
Jewelry	6	1	0	0	1	<b>7</b>
Pigment	1	0	1	0	2	<b>4</b>
Wampum	31	3	0	3	4	<b>41</b>
Diversity indices	.594	.883	.746	.734	.884	
Categories expressed	8/8 1	7/8 .87	4/8 .5	3/8 .375	8/8 1	
<b>Totals</b>	51	16	12	6	21	<b>105</b>

perhaps even that many individuals shared facets of their social identities. These explanations also suggest that the fireplaces may have been used and lived in by people expressing similar cultural, ethnic and statuses characteristics. At the very least it suggests that adornment materials were not hoarded and confined to certain areas.

Beyond the diversity index we can also test the general richness of the clusters by looking at what categories of materials were found and their densities in the varying clusters. From the eight categories of adornment material used for the diversity index we can enumerate on how many categories are represented in each cluster. Features 14 and 10 had all eight of the categories represented whereas feature 6 had only three categories and feature 5, four. Table 11, above, illustrates this by including the amount of categories expressed by each cluster. Seven out of the

eight categories were found in Feature 2. Looking at Feature 6 and Feature 5, as clusters where less adornment materials were found, far fewer categories of materials were present. This kind of pattern, derived from the objects found within the clusters, may mean that individuals in these two clusters were using adornment material to express different identities. These identities as will be more conclusively demonstrated via direct comparisons with Fort Michilimackinac in the latter sections of this chapter likely based on the evidence garnered from both the investigation of the clusters individuality and collectively.

Further exploring the notion of the uniformity or non-uniformity of the clusters are the relative amounts of materials collected in each cluster. If we disregard wampum temporally as it conflates simple statistical measures and focus on the relative amounts of other adornment materials found in each cluster the numbers collected across the board are remarkably constant. Table 12 illustrates these numbers as percentages of the total assemblage of adornment objects. These numbers equate to feature clusters with total percentages of adornment materials close to one another save Feature 6 which yielded so very few materials. Based on the findings from the diversity index this is perhaps not very surprising as the index demonstrated that similar categories of material were found in relatively comparable numbers in four of the five clusters. Looking at the anomalous findings between Feature 14 and Feature 6- Feature 14 has 51% of all the artifacts and feature 6 only 6% - this divergence can be partially explained by the fact that 31 out of the 41 (or 76%) of the collected wampum came from Feature 14. Thus the high number of artifacts collected from Feature 14 does not reflect a diversity of materials but instead a specific accumulation of wampum. As the same amount of wet-screening was done in units associated with Feature 14 it unlikely that the recovery methods utilized have any bearing on the large amounts of wampum recovered. The appearance of wampum here strongly points to a Native occupant as the source of wampum is strongly linked to Native Americans and was used as an

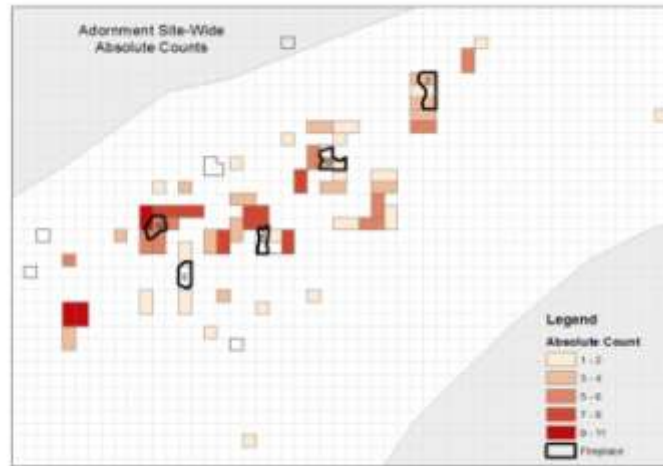
object of personal adornment and according to some as a form of currency (Malischke 2009, 2010; Stone 1974).

Table 12

*Adornment Materials by Count per Cluster*

Feature	Number of adornment items (no wampum)	Percentage of total adornment materials (no wampum)	Number of adornment items (with wampum)	Percentage of all adornment materials
14	20	31	51	48
10	17	26	21	20
2	13	20	16	15
5	12	18	12	11
6	3	5	6	7

This notion of uniformity is further explored through the use of an additional visual. Figure 15 illustrates the total counts of adornment materials per cluster. As one can see there are only a few areas that are dark red. These darker spaces represent areas which have yielded more artifacts than lighter red areas. The darker the red the more artifacts found in that area. Overall a gradient of light to moderate light red covers the majority of the clusters. This highlights the fact that the clusters exhibit a similar numerical distribution of adornment artifacts. As stated previously this distribution of total materials also includes a uniform distribution of the materials themselves. If this kind of uniformity was not the case it might indicate that people who were signaling divergent identities used different types and frequencies of artifacts.



*Figure 15. Absolute Adornment Counts Cluster-wide.*  
Figure created and reproduced with permission by Susan Benston.

The intent of this intra-site analysis was to assess the similarity among adornment objects within the Fort St. Joseph feature clusters. Although more objects were found in certain clusters, Feature 14 did have 45 more objects of adornment than in Feature 6, the densities of items overall exhibited a fairly even distribution and three out of the five clusters yielded finds from nearly all the eight categories of adornment elicited. All the buttons or buckles for example were not found confined to one cluster or even two but spread out amongst several features. As for the anomalous Feature 14, if we remove wampum, the cluster yielded 20 items which matches closely the numbers of objects found in clusters 10 and 2, 21 and 16 respectively. At Fort St. Joseph I argue that a fairly uniform distribution of materials indicates that individuals likely expressing similar identities across gender, status and occupational lines lived in the areas surrounding the feature clusters. It is not enough however to simply reveal this uniformity; and I spend the remaining portion of this chapter and the next interpreting these patterns explicitly by teasing out what I believe these identities were by focusing on the occupants' genders, ethnic identity and occupation.

Explaining the variations that we do see between feature clusters is no easy task as identity is highly situational, fluid and constantly evolving (Loren 2001, 2008). As no two clusters were identical, differences in how the inhabitants dressed likely did differ, and as no cluster yielded duplicate items people had at their disposal differing materials. Even as the relative uniformity of adornment objects was noted it remains challenging to tease out differences between the proposed households that could demonstrate and reveal the idiosyncrasies of different groups of people living within the feature clusters. If indeed someone who expressed drastically different identities along ethnic, gender and occupational lines lived in a specific feature cluster it is not explicitly clear from the adornment materials excavated. By once again explicitly comparing the observed patterns from Fort St. Joseph to Fort Michilimackinac I explore how the adornment items found at Fort St. Joseph can be seen as gender, ethnic, and occupational markers from the data from House and House 1.

#### Gendering Adornment: Women in the Feature Clusters

Women are clearly represented by the adornment objects found in the feature clusters. Objects found that can be associated with women include pendants, brooches, the small decorative buckle fragments, the garment hasp and all of the glass inset rings (Nassaney 2011). In fact, the only objects that can be attributed to male usage based on their physical characteristics and evidence gleaned from the historical record are the large French Marine buttons and the larger, robust buckle fragments that likely festooned male breeches. Other items found including the tinkling cones, wampum, and the religious materials are difficult to attribute to one particular gender based on the lack of specific clues in historical documents, lack of notable physical characteristics, and their ubiquity in contexts where both women and men co-existed.

Thus the objects that can be attributed to female usage reveal important insights into who was occupying the clusters especially if one considers that the high frequency of female-related

objects (n=16). Objects, like finger rings, provide clues on how the female occupants of Fort St. Joseph dressed and how they used selective adornment material to broadcast facets of their social identities. The sizes of the six rings from the Fort St. Joseph feature clusters however provide insights into who might have been using these rings. The circumference of these rings range from 35 mm to 70 mm (Figure 16). If we take into account that a modern day ring size of 5, which equates to an average sized ring for women is 58 mm we can see that the distribution of rings, save the one measuring 70 mm, were those that would have been meant for individuals with fairly small, petite hands.

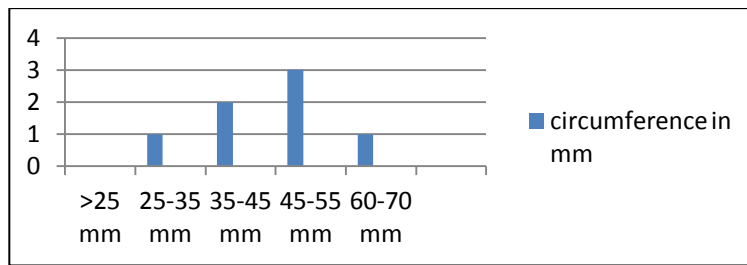


Figure 16. Histogram of Ring Diameters at Fort St. Joseph

As such many of these rings would have been worn on the finger by those with a very small finger size, presumably women or children. Although the rings could have been worn on a chain around the neck the relative small sizes of the rings remains noteworthy if we consider that many rings were certainly worn on fingers. Thus the petite nature of the rings suggests that these rings were likely worn by women. Backing up this assertion, Sylak (2010: 38-39) states that iconographic rings were predominately given to women and to a lesser degree Natives based on the fact that so many were found in female and Native burial contexts. If indeed size and the general robustness of objects is a qualitative factor in *gendering* adornment materials then the presence of rings in the feature clusters suggests women were present in these domestic areas. This hypothesis is based on the relatively small physical size of many of the objects (buckles,

rings, and brooches) and their decorative embellishments and that women's objects (n=16) comprise a sizable 20% of the entire adornment assemblage. The presence of small finger rings and these other objects attributed to women strongly suggests that either women occupied the Fort St. Joseph clusters or the materials were intended to be traded, presumably to Native females. Of the five clusters women likely occupied clusters 5 and 6 as they contained examples of glass inset rings and Feature 14 which yielded six out of the nine pieces of jewelry recovered.

At Fort Michilimackinac, assemblages from male contexts attributed to British soldiers bolster the correlation between jewelry and a female presence as those contexts yielded very few objects attributed to female usage (Evans 2001:6). In the Bolon household the only artifact that could be considered jewelry at all was a single recovered hasp. Likewise, the ostensibly male British assemblage from House 1 attributed to British soldiers yielded only two brooches and two pendants, representing only 1% of the assemblage. Lastly, we should not lose sight of the fact that since very few individuals had more than a few items of clothing, ornate jewelry pieces were highly valuable as personal items as well as objects that displayed a preference to fine European dressing sensibilities (Evans 2003: 23). Besides a female presence, evidence also supports the notion of an active Native presence within the clusters and correspondingly, a lack of evidence supporting a British military occupation. Those two interpretations are explored next.

#### Native Identity: Tinkling Cones, Wampum, and Face Paint

In the literature review and in the discussion of the adornment objects found in the feature clusters, the idea that both male and female Natives were living alongside French men and women at Fort St. Joseph was purported (Nassaney, Cremin, and Malischke 2012). From documentary sources on Michilimackinac (Evans 2001; Halchin 1985; Heldman 1977) we know that an enduring reciprocal trading system relied on material exchanges with Natives and that these exchanges included adornment materials. At Fort Michilimackinac we also know that

Native women lived with Frenchmen in domestic contexts alongside their *métis* offspring (Evans 2001; Halchin 1985) and that Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Bolon of House D both married *métis* women with strong Native American ancestry. Evidence for Natives within these two domiciles came in the form of numerous flecks of vermillion and tinkling cones. From the adornment materials collected from feature clusters at Fort St. Joseph a strong argument can be constructed which suggests that Natives were living in domiciles as strong complementary parallels exist between Fort Michilimackinac and the feature clusters backing this assertion.

The presence of Natives at Fort St. Joseph is strongly supported by the plethora of Native-style artifacts recovered like tinkling cones, Micmac pipes made in Montreal and evidence of Native food-ways reflected in the quantities of deer bone and other wild species (Becker 2004; Nassaney 2008). Native adornment artifacts in the form of tinkling cones and other Native inspired ornamental materials such as wampum, ear bobs, and body pigments have all been found in varying amounts in the five feature clusters. Perhaps the most compelling evidence for a Native occupant is the 41 pieces of wampum collected. Wampum is a material associated with Native American usage and customs (Armour 1977: 20; Dubin 1999:171). Taken as a single adornment category, wampum represents 39% percent of all the excavated adornment materials at Fort St. Joseph and certainly can be viewed as evidence of a Native presence in the clusters. This presence is strongly indicated in Feature 14 where 62% of all the adornment objects associated with or inspired by Native designs and custom were recovered. At Fort St. Joseph archaeologists have long attributed the excavation of wampum to the enduring cultural legacy of Natives living and intermingling with French inhabitants (Malischke 2009; 2010: 3; Nassaney 2008).

Additionally, the 18 tinkling cones found within the clusters constitute 28 percent of the total, non-wampum, adornment materials collected. From the documentary record and archaeological investigations (Branstner 1992; Giordano 2005: 18; Miller and Hammel 1986: 315) we know that a large portion of the individuals crafting and adorning their bodies with



tinkling cones were Natives. The two domiciles explored at Fort Michilimackinac yielded strong evidence of the Native American practice of face and body painting. One-hundred and fifty one fragments of vermilion were found in levels associated with the Mitchells in House D. Mr. Mitchell was a British military surgeon who married a Native American woman and the vermilion might reflect materials she used in bodily adornment practices. The Bolon family also lived in House D and also included a Native American spouse. House D yielded 39 fragments of vermilion. Conversely, contexts that lack a Native American presence (i.e., British contexts) lacked vermilion or other organic materials used to make pigments (Heldman 1977). At Fort St. Joseph four examples of pigments found in three different clusters provide additional evidence of Native individuals using such materials as items of adornment.

Although there is not a one-to-one correspondence between Natives and tinkling cones, pigments, and wampum, objects like these highlight the fact that Native style adornment practices were at least understood if not observed in domicile areas and that at Fort Michilimackinac and Fort St. Joseph evidence of tinkling cones, wampum, vermilion, and ochre pigments constitute physical examples of the impact Natives had on the adornment assemblages in domiciles in which they likely lived. Parallels between the density and type of adornment artifacts associated with Natives from Fort Michilimackinac and Fort St. Joseph strengthens the hypothesis that Natives were living in the areas surrounding the fireplace clusters at Fort St. Joseph. Although a majority of the adornment materials associated with Natives appeared in Feature 14, all of the other four clusters yielded some evidence of Natives in the excavated adornment items. Combined with the strong material evidence of women and lack of British or French military adornment materials, the existence of adornment materials associated with Natives supports the idea of a multi-ethnic community comprised of Natives, fur traders and their families of mixed descent living at Fort St. Joseph.

## Investigating Occupations: Military and French Fur Traders

Thus far I have demonstrated the strong likelihood of women and Native Americans living in the feature clusters. I turn now to exploring how the adornment materials from both locales may imply the occupations of the Fort St. Joseph inhabitants. Specifically, adornment materials associated with military and trade are investigated by comparing the assemblages from British military levels and those attributed to French fur traders at Fort Michilimackinac with the densities and types of adornment materials found in the feature clusters.

The adornment materials found within strata associated with the British military in House 1 contain far more adornment material than all the combined levels associated with the French fur traders in House 1 and in House D. The differences in numbers are considerable. More buttons, buckles and tinkling cones ( $n=67$ ) were found in British contexts than the rest of the collected materials, save pigments, from the two different French fur trader contexts combined. More importantly the range, diversity and density of materials found within the British military levels is far greater than in the French levels. What is important to note is that many of these items were adornment items worn on military garments or materials designed for trade. Thus the contexts of these materials is far different and a tinkling cone found in French contexts can and should be interpreted very differently from a tinkling cone in a British military level. The British contexts at Fort Michilimackinac are dominated by adornment materials related to clothing that utilized adornment materials. A total of twenty-six buttons, sixteen of those military buttons, and twenty-one buckles were found in House 1 levels associated with British foot soldiers. The standardized, uniform-related buttons and buckles that seemingly are the hallmarks of military occupation are absent in the feature clusters at Fort St. Joseph. Even Feature 5 which yielded the most buttons and buckles out of the five fireplaces with a total of five buttons and three buckles is only a fraction of the size of the British assemblages of similar materials. As so few buttons, 7 civilian and 5 French Marine, were found in the feature clusters ( $n=12$ ) it is unlikely that they would have

been enough to outfit and dress even a few British soldiers. The limited assemblage of buttons and buckles also does not provide any indication that the kinds of adornment rich garments that would have been worn by British soldiers were worn or discarded within the Fort. Joseph domiciles. The absence of large numbers of functional adornment objects suggests that the military personal did not live in the structures around the fireplaces.

Differences with Fort Michilimackinac British contexts make it clear that the Fort St. Joseph materials do not represent a British military occupation. However, French fur trader assemblages, such as those from the Chevaliers and Bolons are quantitatively and qualitatively comparable with the feature clusters at Fort St. Joseph. The adornment profile of the typical French fur trader, evidenced by few functional adornment items like buckles or buttons, a larger, sizable amount of Native American inspired objects and generally few high-end, ornate pieces of jewelry is more akin to the emblematic signature from the Fort St. Joseph clusters.

The last three sections of this chapter examined specifically the gender, ethnicity, and occupations of the inhabitants of the Fort St. Joseph clusters through direct comparisons with Fort Michilimackinac. This last section provides a broad summation of the conclusions drawn from those levels of examination and offers a final assessment of who likely occupied the identified buildings at Fort St. Joseph.

#### Fort St. Joseph: A Material Signature of Diversity

Communities such as Fort St. Joseph represent a gradient of social identities conveyed by different groups of people who expressed themselves along multiple dimensions using material objects, particularly adornment items in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Attempts however to assign specific adornment materials to particular individualized expressions of social identity will ultimately end in failure as identity is situational, fluid, and personally created by individuals (Loren 2010; White 2005). Consumer choices though remain visible in the aggregate and much can be said in

terms of the general practices and group choices about dress and adornment at Fort St. Joseph. These adornment choices were structured by a complex web of trade-good inventories, domestic goods and supplies, the practices of local merchants and seasonal voyagers, and the traditions of the Natives living in and around the fort.

At Fort St. Joseph, Natives and Europeans lived in close proximity to one another for nearly a century and sanctioned through their thoughts and actions a cycle of exchange where cultural ideas and material culture was negotiated and shared (White 1991). The presence of brass and silver ornaments, wampum and iconographic rings in the feature clusters, albeit in small numbers, attests to a community that was involved in trading and bartering with the Natives living in and around the walls of the fort. The relatively low number (n=7) of high-status jewelry items such as pendants, brooches, cufflinks and earrings reflect a fairly limited 'cosmopolitan' sensibility at Fort St. Joseph for individuals living in the middle of the woods, hundreds of miles from the metropole (Brandão and Nassaeny 2009). The total of sixteen high-status objects from glass-inset rings, cufflinks, pendants, and earrings found at Fort Michilimackinac in contexts with known wealthy traders (Mr. Mitchell) demonstrate that individuals with wealth valued and possessed such imported European materials. Even if numerically those materials constituted only 12 percent of the total assemblages of materials from domiciles at Fort Michilimackinac, they were even rarer at Fort St. Joseph comprising only 4 percent of the total assemblage. Furthermore the far majority this material came from one cluster, Feature 14. Perhaps there, in opposition to the general sensibility around him or her, a high-status occupant resided. Confronted with this limited assemblage of imported European materials, the image of many individuals dressed in ornate jewelry and wearing garments adorned with imported ornaments does not match the assemblage by-in-large the adornment materials found at Fort St. Joseph.

The few high-status items do illustrate that dressing in fine imported European materials did not go completely unnoticed at Fort St. Joseph. Cuff-links and glass-inset rings were worn by

Europeans or by Natives as illustrated by George Winter in several of his early 19<sup>th</sup> century paintings which show Native Americans adorned in a combination of aboriginal and European materials (Cooke and Ramadhyani 1993). The presence of glass-inset rings, pendants and cuff-links reveal a populace that had not wholly given up their European sensibilities on the frontier (see Brandão and Nassaney 2009: 25). Instead, the paucity of buckles and imported ornamental metal hardware seems to suggest that the Frenchmen and their families living at Fort St. Joseph melded the functionality and durability of Native clothing styles with hybridized clothing styles that blended elements of the Old World, such as buttons, finger rings and religious medallions with hybridized tinkling cones, ear and nose bobs and represented a metaphorical stripping down of the fancier elements of European dress. From the material record it now seems clear that the French traders, women, and individuals of mixed ancestry at Fort St. Joseph tempered European dressing sentiments with the adoption of more available adornment items like plain durable buttons and eschewed footwear that would have required the acquisition and maintenance of multi-pieced buckles. Rather than ornate brooches and bracelets, the men and women of fur trade society living within the fireplace clusters likely wore Native inspired ear bobs and tinkling cones alongside their limited selection of imported European buttons, buckles and rings.

Evidence for a multi-cultural inhabitation within the clusters at Fort St. Joseph also stems from how British soldiers and wealthy traders at Fort Michilimackinac used personal adornment materials. The presence of British soldiers at Fort Michilimackinac was noted in the range and numbers of personal adornment materials, especially in the numbers of excavated buttons and buckles. These materials highlight the fact that British soldiers had at their disposal many adornment objects and dressed in military issued garments that employed such materials. Based on the 26 buttons and 21 buckles collected in a single British occupational level, we would expect to have recovered higher frequencies of similar objects at Fort St. Joseph if the structures around the fireplaces housed British soldiers. We know that British soldiers lived at different times at

Fort St. Joseph from the fort's inception to its ultimate demise in 1781 but it seems they were living someplace else on site and not in the areas examined in this thesis (Carvalhaes 2011).

Beyond the evidence of military personnel, substantial evidence of fur trading activities was found in the densities and ranges of adornment goods that seemed linked to the fur trade at Fort Michilimackinac. In Houses 1 and House D, *métis* women lived alongside their French husbands and bolstered trade with local Natives. The Fort St. Joseph clusters displayed remarkably similar material types and densities as those observed in the French levels within those two houses and conversely far less buttons, buckles and other adornment hardware than in the British military levels. In addition far fewer high-status items were found in the feature clusters than in areas associated with Mr. Mitchell, a wealthy British trader. Although it was difficult to create a specific template for the *métis* living at Michilimackinac a great diversity of items like body paint, tinkling cones, earrings and wampum were found at both locales. This adornment pattern of Native inspired materials and designs is consistent with documentary evidence at Fort St. Joseph which described a great number of Natives living around and within the fort site (Beeson 1900; Idle 2003; Nassaney et al. 2012).

Taken collectively, the lack of British soldier adornment materials, the similarities between the Fort Michilimackinac small time French fur traders and the adornment patterns present in many of the fireplace clusters, and the existence of female specific adornment objects within the clusters supports the idea that a multi-ethnic community comprised of French fur traders, their wives, and Natives were living within the proposed structures at Fort St. Joseph. This mixture of French men employed as small, seasonal fur traders, Native women, and the *métis* offspring of unions between Frenchman and Natives occupied in various combinations the totality of the five projected domiciles. Conversely the military likely lived somewhere else. The modest assemblage of adornment materials collected from the clusters signifies a community of individuals that had relatively few adornment objects and fashioned other necessary clothing

materials from Native-American inspired designs; in doing altering their own clothing customs to not rely on European manufactured adornment materials.

## CHAPTER VII

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This thesis sought to address issues of cultural change and continuity on the frontier of New France in the context of complex interactions between the French and Native Americans in fur trade society. The aim of my study was to investigate colonialism in terms of its impact on cultural interaction and explore how identity is expressed through adornment material. I also sought to demonstrate how individuals used objects of adornment to express their identities along ethnic, gender, status and occupational lines by examining excavated adornment materials from Fort Michilimackinac and Fort St. Joseph.

To determine who was occupying structures surrounding five identified feature clusters at Fort St. Joseph I examined the personal adornment material excavated from these areas. As objects of personal adornment express peoples' social identities, these materials were examined in order to describe who was using such objects at Fort St. Joseph and how those objects were linked to gender, social status, occupation and ethnicity (Brandão and Nassaney 2009). Towards this end, two comparative domicile contexts at Fort Michilimackinac were examined and general patterns observed on the kinds of adornment objects used and deposited by distinct groups of people. These materials from Fort Michilimackinac were then compared to observed patterns of adornment usage at Fort St. Joseph. In order to interpret the identities of the Fort St. Joseph occupants I explored the extant literature on colonial encounters, identity formation, and its materials implications, particularly in the realm of adornment objects in New France in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. I then outlined several categories of personal adornment and described how the materials have been classified by historical archaeologists and worn by varying individuals. By introducing two occupational contexts from Fort Michilimackinac where different stratigraphic levels are



attributed to individuals with known ethnicities, genders and occupations I created adornment profiles based on the house's various occupants. Within these domiciles divergent patterns of adornment consumption expressed the sartorial lives of French traders, Native women, and British soldiers.

An examination of the five feature clusters at Fort St. Joseph centered on an intra-site analysis sensitive to variations in the excavated adornment materials by cluster. Using the adornment framework established at Fort Michilimackinac I drew several conclusions about the identities of the inhabitants at Fort St. Joseph. The analysis indicates that members of the military were not bunking in the structures around the feature clusters at Fort St. Joseph. British soldiers, as well as the priest, Commandant and French soldiers, likely lived in a different section of the fort not yet investigated. I conclude that a diverse blend of Native Americans, French fur traders and their *métis* offspring occupied domestic areas at Fort St. Joseph. This is consistent with the patterns observed at Fort Michilimackinac where strong evidence of fur trading activity was seen in French contexts along with a limited assemblage of adornment materials. This pattern differed from the denser accumulations of personal adornment material found in British levels. At Fort Michilimackinac compelling evidence of fur trade activities was supported by a Native population living around and within the fort that necessitated a great deal of trading and thus an accumulation of objects of adornment. The numerous adornment material found in houses where soldiers lived at Fort Michilimackinac was very different from the limited assemblage found at Fort St. Joseph where trade was more sporadic than at Fort Michilimackinac.

Perhaps due to its role as a large regional distribution center, the mix and matching of European and Native adornment styles and materials seen at Fort St. Joseph was not observed in the same regularity in the two Fort Michilimackinac domiciles examined. As demonstrated by the large amount of Native American objects of adornment intermixed with a limited selection of European adornment objects, a cultural exchange and arguably an ethnogenesis took place at Fort

St. Joseph that had ramifications on the adornment styles of the French fur traders and their families. As Loren and Beaudry write (2006: 265) individuals who utilized different combinations of adornment accrued some advantage as by mixing European and Native fashions individuals displayed a willingness to move between social, political and economic realms by utilizing mixed different dressing styles in daily practice. Whereas strong evidence of a Native inspired adornment signature was found at Fort St. Joseph the numerous British military adornment materials found at Fort Michilimackinac reflect a strong persistence in utilizing imported European adornment items. Indeed this pattern may reflect a major difference between French and British fur trade societies.

These data confirm the fact that small, mixed families of French traders and seasonal *voyageurs* lived around the fireplace clusters at Fort St. Joseph. Evidence of large scale trade and an accumulation of merchandise and adornment material as seen in House D, where the British trader Mr. Mitchell resided, was not observed in the Fort St. Joseph clusters. From the Fort Michilimackinac domiciles evidence of a strong Native presence in the form of numerous examples of body pigments, tinkling cones and wampum surfaced. Similarly at Fort St. Joseph the adoption of Native customs and lifeways into a newly created hybridized cultural amalgamation was confirmed by the strong documentary evidence of inter-marriage between Native women and French men, and a plethora of artifacts that blended Native styles with European materials such as tinkling cones, wampum, ear bobs and body pigments.

In a master's thesis there are many limitations, some self-imposed, others derived from the choices in data collections and the breadth of topics analyzed. This particular thesis is no different. Choosing to focus on personal adornment materiality limited the scope of my study as it precluded looking at other categories of material culture. While our understanding of Fort St. Joseph increases with every study that addresses the archaeology of the site, more work needs to be done in linking notions of identity to other artifact categories such as ceramics or faunal

remains which would provide data sets sensitive to how people expressed their identities through their diets and use of household goods. For example, faunal remains from Fort St. Joseph suggest that Fort St. Joseph occupants consumed wild game that reflected learned Native food ways (Becker 2004). Analyzing domestic materials like ceramics and glassware would also broaden our understanding of the complex social lives of the Fort St. Joseph inhabitants by seeing if such materials reveal insights into occupants' class and social status. The presence of high-status ceramics in these clusters might refute my conclusions about small-time fur traders occupying such areas whereas a preponderance of utilitarian wares might support my conclusions. Other limitations stemmed from unique formation processes at Fort St. Joseph such as the fact that the entire site was plowed during its duration as a farmstead in the late 1800s. This fact helped conflate issues in establishing tight spatial controls on the exact provenience of excavated artifacts. These issues of the past have further complicated the problem of establishing the relationship between artifacts and where they were initially deposited although many of the materials examined did originate from undisturbed contexts beneath the plowzone and as such were instrumental in establishing the exact location of the fireplaces within the clusters as these materials being in undisturbed contexts accurately reflected where they were likely used and deposited. In addition, the matter of ascertaining whether a button or tinkling cone was a trade item or a personal possession remains nebulous and difficult to conclusively answer. Likely many objects such as tinkling cones were used as trade items by some and worn and kept by others as personal goods, including those who were prospective traders of such materials themselves.

Though it was challenging to infer the social identities of the cluster's occupants I believe that the individuals living at Fort St. Joseph are better known, and that their possible occupations and ethnicities are better understood. By examining materials used as objects of bodily adornment and ornamentation, future archaeological work can build off the conclusions rendered in this thesis to more fully understand the inhabitants of Fort St. Joseph. This study revealed important

insights into the study of colonialism, the materiality of identity, and adornment practices and customs in the context of ethnogenesis and cultural interaction by contributing to our understanding of adornment, identity, New France and colonialism. This thesis revealed that the forces of colonialism in New France ushered in a web of interactions between Natives, French and British traders, and soldiers that had a dramatic effect on the kinds of adornment materials worn and traded by diverse groups of people. Furthermore the differences in what diverse groups of people varying across ethnic, gender and social status lines adorned themselves with are archaeologically accessible. By examining and comparing two 18<sup>th</sup> century French colonial fur trade sites I have been able to offer informed conclusions on the occupants of structures at Fort St. Joseph while elaborating on the broader processes that contributed to identity formation in New France in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

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