

**NATIVE AND AFRICAN CULTURES AND
THEIR RESISTANCE TO OPPRESSION IN FLORIDA
PRIOR TO 1850**

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Honors in the Major Program in Anthropology
in the College of Sciences
and in The Burnett Honors College
at the University of Central Florida
Orlando, Florida

Spring Term 2008

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ABSTRACT

Resistance to oppression is a phenomenon that occurs world-wide and that shows remarkable variation in its manifestations over both time and space. This social phenomenon was particularly evident among Native Americans and Africans in the United States, where, during the period from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries, Europeans and Americans employed strategies and implemented laws designed to subjugate both ethnic groups. Resistance strategies ranged on a continuum from suicide to *maronnage* (the act of obtaining freedom from slavery by means of fleeing a plantation) to open warfare.

This study provides an historical overview of the oppressive tactics or strategies employed by both Europeans and Americans in subjugating Native Americans and Africans within the boundaries of modern Florida, and a quantitative analysis of the resistive strategies with which the oppressed responded. This quantitative analysis was achieved through the use of a model I developed for looking at specific battlefield tactics utilized by both the Native Americans and Africans in Florida. Ethnographic data pertaining to the social, political and economic lives of Native Americans of Florida and the affiliated cultures of the Africans, free and bound, in Florida provides a cultural context that will allow us to better understand the strategies they employed in resisting their oppression. By analyzing the resistive tactics employed by both Native Americans and Africans against the oppressive tactics utilized by Europeans and Americans in the subjugation of these two groups in Florida, I was able to provide further insight into the cultural component of warfare. Due to the Eurocentric process of structural amnesia, this cultural component has been largely overlooked by many scholars.