Shellfishing, Ceramics, and Gender: Shell Midden Ceramics from the Kiskiak Site

Jessica Marie Herlich
College of William & Mary - Arts & Sciences

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Shellfishing, Ceramics, and Gender: Shell Midden Ceramics from the Kiskiak Site

Jessica Marie Herlich
Shrewsbury, Massachusetts

Bachelor of Arts, Cornell University, 2008

A Thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty of the College of William and Mary in Candidacy for the Degree of Master of Arts

Department of Anthropology

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Jessica Marie Herlich

Approved by the Committee, April, 2011

Committee Chair
Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies Martin Gallivan, Anthropology
The College of William and Mary

Professor and Department Chair Kathleen Bragdon, Anthropology
The College of William and Mary

ACLS/Mellon New Faculty Fellow Neil Norman, Anthropology
The College of William and Mary
The Middle Woodland period in the Middle Atlantic has been characterized by a hunter-gatherer lifestyle with an emphasis on the utilization of estuarine and riverine resources and settlement in coastal locations. This project is influenced by discussions within the archaeological community pertaining to the division between the prehistoric and the historic and by literature emphasizing the study of social history in contexts prior to the written record. Through ethnographic analogy and archaeological material, this study explores the possibilities for interpreting social constructs, especially gender relations, in a shellfishing setting prior to European contact. The Kiskiak site, located on the York River in Virginia, demonstrates a significant Middle Woodland component associated with shell midden deposits, and a ceramic assemblage from shell midden deposits (Test Unit 28) at Kiskiak is analyzed and interpreted. This project demonstrates that interpretations of gender relations, tradition, and social practice in a Middle Woodland context can be derived from documentary and ethnographic accounts of shellfishing and shellfish processing in conjunction with archaeological evidence. This study argues that the analysis of the ceramic sherds from Kiskiak’s Test Unit 28 demonstrates connections between gender relations and migrations and intermarriage, the division of labor, and community social roles.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Archaeological studies of prehistory in the Chesapeake, from the Paleoindian period through the Late Woodland, have frequently been conducted through a culture ecological, culture historical, or evolutionary lens, often overlooking processes related to cultural identities and historical developments (Sassaman 2004, 2010). The Middle Woodland period (300 B.C. – A.D. 800/900) of the Chesapeake region is a timeframe that demonstrates this intellectual focus. As its name (“Middle”) suggests, the Middle Woodland period in the Chesapeake is understood to represent a transitory stage during which indigenous people became gradually more sedentary, utilizing estuarine and marine resources and increasing their dependence on cultivated plants, and were involved in dynamic exchange networks (Dent 1995; Stewart 1992; Blanton 1992). Thus it is transitory between the Archaic period, in which populations were more likely to be mobile hunter-gatherers, and the Late Woodland, during which agriculture was well-established, and many societies were evolving towards chiefly organization (Dent 1995; Gallivan 2003; Potter 1993). The Middle Woodland exhibits characteristics of what precedes and succeeds it.

This study takes the position that while ecological and culture historical questions are significant in understanding the Middle Woodland, social questions, especially pertaining to gender, should be asked. This study attempts to contribute to the corpus of archaeological data of what is considered to be Chesapeake “prehistory” and to engage in

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1There has been a conceptual and methodological division in archaeology between what is referred to as the “prehistoric” and the “historic” periods (Lightfoot 1995: 200; Sassaman 2004, 2010). It has been argued that this division detracts from the study of long-term cultural change and cultural diversity (Lightfoot 1995: 200).
the anthropological and archaeological conversations related to the social history of the Middle Woodland period. A crucial element of the study will be reference to ethnographic and ethnohistorical analogy. Although the use of analogy in the analysis of archaeological data is often problematic, when carefully applied, it can be useful in gaining a better understanding of the social processes occurring at a site and the ways in which material culture is implicated (Nelson 1997: 56-57; McBrinn 2010: 11). In particular, this study suggests that women of the Middle Woodland period in the Chesapeake were the principle shellfishers and pottery makers (Sassaman 1991: 73) and that their activities will be visible in the archaeological record. Although there are theoretical problems associated with generalizing gender roles (Nelson 1997: 55), this study argues that ethnographic and ethnohistorical analogies to women’s work in the Chesapeake and elsewhere during the past several hundred years shed light on the material culture from a shell midden deposit of the Kiskiak site (44YO2) in Yorktown, Virginia and illustrate the value of using a gendered and socially dynamic framework (Sassaman 2010; Sassaman and Holly 2011).

Context

The Woodland period (extending from approximately 3000 years ago until the arrival of Europeans) in North America was a time of significant cultural change, represented archaeologically by such features as burial mounds as well as evidence for the development of socially and politically stratified societies (Milner 2004: 54; Dent 1995: 217). The history of the Middle Woodland period of the Chesapeake is complex and involves migrations as well as “persistent places” and long distance trade as well as co-occurring ceramic traditions (Gallivan 2010: 10; Blanton and Pullins 2004).
Subsistence practices during the Middle Woodland period include traditional hunting and gathering strategies but also an expansion of coastal and riverine resources such as fish and shellfish (Stewart 1992: 4). There is evidence of regional social interaction through the appearance of similar stylistic ceramic traditions from the Chesapeake throughout the Delaware valley as well as indications of ceremonial activities related to feasting and gatherings (Stewart 1998; Steadman 2008). It also appears that at least two groups with different cultural traditions coexisted in the region for a period of time, with one group’s practices gradually replacing the other’s practices (Blanton and Pullins 2004; Gallivan 2010: 13-14). It is possible that this replacement was related to the increase in the use of coastal and riverine resources by indigenous people resulting in “mutualism” between groups of hunter-gatherers and intermarriage (Blanton and Pullins 2004: 89-91; Gallivan 2010: 13-14).

During the Middle Woodland period, pottery design and composition change in distinctive ways (Dent 1995: 235-236). In the Chesapeake region, the Middle Woodland period has been divided into two periods: the Middle Woodland I period (500 B.C. – A.D. 200), which is defined by Popes Creek ceramics and the Middle Woodland II period (A.D 200-800/900), which is defined by Mockley ceramics (Stewart 1992: 2). Popes Creek ceramics tend to have net-impressed surface treatments and are sand tempered, and Mockley ceramics can appear with cord-marked, net-impressed, and plain surface treatments and are shell tempered (Egloff and Potter 1982: 99, 103-104). Other ceramic types discussed in this study include Accokeek Creek ceramics, which dates to the Early Woodland period (about 800 to 300 B.C.), Townsend ceramics, which dates to the Late Woodland period (about A.D. 945-1590), and Roanoke Simple-Stamped, which is
representative of the Proto-historic/Contact period (A.D 800 to sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) (Egloff and Potter 1982: 97-111; Dent 1995: 224-259). The present study looks at changes in these ceramic types throughout the test unit for evidence of gendered practice.

**Theoretical Perspectives**

As previously mentioned, cultural evolutionary theorists (who view societies in terms of an evolutionary trajectory, ranging from “simple to complex” [Johnson 1999: 22]) and cultural ecologists (who study societies in terms of adaptation to their environments [Johnson 1999: 144-145]) have assumed that hunter-gatherer populations were motivated primarily by environmental factors, assuming that hunter-gatherer groups were egalitarian and “simple” and that such groups would become sedentary agriculturalists as soon as the opportunity for agricultural production should arise (Sassaman 2004: 228). In the 1990s, this perspective was reevaluated and involved the concept of “‘complex’ hunter-gatherers,” more closely resembling hunter-gatherers whose societies were non-egalitarian, and the process of “historicization” in anthropological thought of the concept of “‘primitive’ society” (Sassaman 2004: 228-229, 231-236). The reevaluation of hunter-gatherer model and the increasing consensus that “hunter-gatherer” is not one “unified” social type is instrumental in the interpretation of Middle Woodland populations in the Chesapeake (Sassaman 2004: 230).

This current project takes into account the possibilities for incorporating the study of social questions, especially gender relations, traditions, and social practice, into the archaeology and interpretation of Middle Woodland hunter-gatherer societies. Barbara Roth notes that while archaeologists may “have come a long way in addressing issues of
concern to hunter-gatherer researchers, we have not necessarily taken the same steps in addressing gender in that same archaeological record” (Roth 2010: 7). A challenge that has been identified to the study of gender in hunter-gatherer groups has been that “you cannot ‘see’ gender in the archaeological record of foragers like you can in more socially complex societies” (Roth 2010: 7), but archaeologists, such as Barbara Roth, Maxine McBrinn, Margaret Conkey, and Ruth Tringham, argue that it is through “interpretation” of the archaeological record that any assessments of the past, including the example of settlement patterns, can be made (Roth 2010: 7; McBrinn 2010; Conkey and Tringham [1995] 1998). In spite of the difficulties of analyzing gender relations in Middle Woodland archaeological sites, I argue that it is still important to address these questions since they may potentially lead to a more complex view of the region’s social history.

**Gendered Activities in the Middle Woodland and the Kiskiak Site**

Middle Atlantic shell midden sites from the Middle Woodland period are of particular interest in this study and present an opportunity for studying social processes and gendered activity (Michael Klein, personal communication, 2010). From longitudinal research on shell middens in Alabama and detailed ethnographic analogies, Gregory Waselkov (1987) argues that women and children in general are “principal shellfish gatherers in subsistence economies” (Waselkov 1987: 96, 99). Kenneth Sassaman’s ideas regarding dynamic hunter-gatherer histories and the primary importance of social interaction in these histories also provide an ideal point of departure for considering archaeological, ethnographic, and ethnohistoric evidence of engendered practices in hunter-gatherer societies (as advocated by Roth [2010] and McBrinn [2010]). By implementing theoretical and methodological strategies that move beyond being
environmentally centered and towards “history and culture” (Sassaman 2004: 265-266), it may be possible to assess gender relations in the Middle Woodland of the Middle Atlantic and the Chesapeake.

One Middle Woodland feature at the Kiskiak site, located on the York River in Yorktown, Virginia, is the focus of this study. Kiskiak is located within the Chesapeake drainage, the portion of the Middle Atlantic coastal plain surrounding the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries (Dent 1995: 3, 221). A significant contribution of this analysis is the fact that the ceramic data from Kiskiak was excavated from deeply stratified deposits, which is a rare occurrence in the region (Gallivan, personal communication, 2010). Analysis of ceramic sherds recovered from this stratified shell midden at the site, including a study of attributes such as vessel dimension and function, as well as a study of their patterns of deposition will be used to pose social questions about gender relations during the Middle Woodland. In addition to exploring social questions, this ceramic analysis will also build on the culture history (Dent 1995) of the Chesapeake and Middle Atlantic by showing a change in ceramic types over time from the Early Woodland period through the Early Colonial Era.

Overall, the results from the ceramic analysis will allow for a better understanding of gender relations during the Middle Woodland period and throughout the occupation of the site by looking at continuity, migration and intermarriage, the division of labor, and social roles within the community (e.g. ceremonial activity, group mobility [Williams and Bendremer 1997]). On the one hand, the continuity in use of the shell midden deposit indicates continuity of place, which may be related to continuous productivity in shellfishing at the site, and consequently, in women’s work there through time. On the
other hand, the changes in ceramic type over time may be representative of migrations and intermarriage between hunter-gatherer groups (Fiedel 1990, Gallivan 2010), which relates to Sassaman’s discussion of “diaspora and coalescence” (Sassaman 2010: 48-50). Furthermore, vessel morphology and size demonstrate a change over time from the early Middle Woodland to the Proto-historic/Contact period, which have implications for changes in engendered daily practice and work. Vessel morphology and decorations in the Middle Woodland component of the shell midden also links to gender relations through the potential of ceremonial activity occurring at the site during this period.

The following study begins with the social archaeology of shell fishers and shell mounds, taking into consideration questions related to gender, social practice, and tradition. Following these theoretical models, first, I offer a characterization of Native North American shellfishing practices and its relationship to gender derived from documentary and ethnohistorical sources. Next, I present a comparative assessment of shell mound sites in the Middle Atlantic region, including the Kiskiak, Maycock’s Point, and White Oak Point sites. The project concludes with a detailed analysis of the results of Kiskiak’s shell midden ceramics and its implications for gender in the Middle Woodland period of the Chesapeake region and the Kiskiak site.
Chapter 2: Middle Woodland Shellfishing: Gender, Tradition, and Social Practice

Increasingly, archaeologists modeling and investigating the deep past are looking to historical and ethnographic material to explore their data. These comparative case studies provide novel insights and richer renderings of the past. This chapter builds on comparative theorization and utilizes historical documents and accounts to understand social and cultural interactions in settings that extend far beyond the bounds of written accounts in North America. More specifically, this discussion will address how historical documents and ethnohistory related to shell and shellfishing practices will lend to drawing connections between gender relations and the social structuring of shell midden deposits of the Kiskiak site. I will discuss shell middens, shellfishing, and feasting in relation to gender relations, social practice, and traditions (sensu Pauketat [2001]) in order to demonstrate the significance of conclusions drawn from Kiskiak’s shell midden ceramics.

Interpretations of these social concepts during the Middle Woodland period will be derived from documentary and ethnographic accounts of Native Americans from the eastern coast of North America, and, to a lesser extent, the western coast of North America as well. The historical documents from eastern North America include the works of early Virginia colonists such as The Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles by John Smith (1624) and The Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania by William Strachey (1612). Ethnographic accounts from the nineteenth and early twentieth century are also useful for deriving interpretations about social relations, such as gender and social practice, in the past (Speck 1948; Drucker 1955). The process of applying data and observations from later ethnographic contexts to
earlier contexts will involve cautious consideration of the difficulties of generating analogies and the possible dissonance between case studies. Secondary source material regarding ethnography of shell middens and shellfishing is available and are particularly important to my interpretations of the ceramic assemblage (Waselkov 1982, 1987; Klein 1999; Moss 1993). Through the application of information from primary and secondary ethnographic and documentary records, interpretations of gender relations and social history in the Middle Woodland period will be formulated. In the following section, I consider the important subject of the perceived divide in archaeological and anthropological research between prehistory and history and how intellectual imaginary impedes the incorporation of gender and social practice in what has been defined as “prehistory.”

**Prehistory Versus History in Archaeology and Anthropology**

An objective of this study is to engage with the theorization and problemitization of “prehistory” and its significance in archaeological interpretations of the past. This has been demonstrated in the work of such archaeologists as Kent Lightfoot who considers how understandings of what is referred to as the prehistoric is instrumental to interpreting later “historic” periods (Lightfoot 1995: 200). The origins of the division between prehistory and history were initially derived from “a segregated view of the past” in which scholars examined the past as if Native American and European American communities were disparate (Lightfoot 1995: 202). Historical archaeologists have also tended to identify their work as distinct from the work of “prehistoric archaeologists” by emphasizing historical archaeology’s access to documentary and oral archives (Beaudry 1988: 1; Deetz 1996: 31; Lightfoot 1995: 203). Mary Beaudry argues that “Most
prehistorians deal with totally different categories of phenomena than do historical archaeologists” (Beaudry 1988: 1). However, questions of gender and social practices should not be limited to the “historic period,” and by reevaluating the “artificial” division (Lightfoot 1995: 202), as Lightfoot labels it, between the prehistoric and the historic, analysis of long-term culture change and cultural diversity is applied (Lightfoot 1995: 200).

The work of Kenneth Sassaman has reassessed the prehistoric period through a social analysis of ancient complex hunter-gatherer societies and reviews the history of the research pertaining to this subject (2004), and he argues, similarly to Lightfoot, that prehistory is not a useful perspective for “conceptualizing” past societies (Sassaman 2010: 1). He further discusses how scholarship pertaining to hunter-gatherer societies typically does not ask social questions or engage in such theoretical conceptualizations as agency and practice (Sassaman 2004: 266). Evolutionary and ecological approaches have been a significant part in how hunter-gatherer societies have been studied, and Sassaman argues that although these approaches should not be replaced by studies that explore social questions, research that has been overwhelmingly derived from an evolutionary perspective should be “retooled” so that it incorporates historical and cultural processes (Sassaman 2004: 265-266). This intellectual lacunae relates to how gender in the “prehistoric” past has been studied. For example, Margaret Conkey and Joan Gero write in Engendering Archaeology: Women in Prehistory (1991) how studying the past through an “engendered” perspective allows for “a focus on the people of prehistory” instead of “the remains of prehistory” (Conkey and Gero 1991: 15). This oversight in gender and the role of women is a common issue in ethnography and ethnoarchaeological practice,
which utilizes ethnographical observations to understand the archaeological record (Weedman 2006: 276-277; David and Kramer 2001), but through these techniques a better understanding of gender relations is possible. The next section will explore how gender relations have been studied in the “prehistoric era.”

**Gender and the Prehistoric**

In her article regarding “Engendering the Archaic Period in the Desert West,” Barbara Roth writes that the exploration of gender relationships in the Archaic Southwest is limited and explains that her article is “a ‘call to action’ for researchers on the Archaic period to incorporate gender into their investigations” (Roth 2010: 7). The subject of this paper is not the Archaic, but Roth’s arguments apply to the Middle Woodland period of Virginia as well. The incorporation of gender, especially in terms of women, into what has been considered to be “prehistory” is an instrumental method for “inquiring into what cultural meanings might have been bound up with engendered activities” (Conkey and Gero 1991: 15). Analysis based on engendered processes leads to a better understanding of many aspects of social life, including what Conkey and Gero consider to be prominent questions addressed in archaeology such as societal structure and organization, subsistence practices, technology, and art forms and representations (Conkey and Gero 1991: 15). The process of “engendering the past” may begin by placing gender as the “center” point of research studies so that the “problematiz[ing]” of questions related to social structure and material culture begins with their relationship to gender (Conkey and Gero 1991: 14-21). The significance of studying the past through the lens of gender involves developing “a focus on the people of prehistory” and drawing back from the practice of viewing “society and culture as an object of study” (Conkey and Gero 1991: 15).
The use of analogy and direct historic methodology is useful for conceptualizing prehistoric gender relations although there is the danger that gender may lose its diversity in expression (Conkey and Gero 1991: 18). However, Conkey and Gero do not view the application of analogy as an impossibility for archaeological and anthropological research but instead view it as a methodology to be applied carefully (Conkey and Gero 1991: 18). Therefore, ethnographic analogy becomes a way of making effective and engendered “links” (Conkey and Gero 1991: 18).

Necessarily, a study of gender must address its intellectual ties to feminist theory as discussed in the social sciences and humanities, but it has had a significant impact on ideas in gender theory (Gilchrist 1999: 1-2). The “First Wave” in feminist theory pertained to the women’s suffrage movement from 1880-1920, the second wave was in the 1960s and was based on equality in the public and private spheres, and the third wave took place in the 1990s and focused on pluralistic experiences of gender (Gilchrist 1999: 1-2). Gender theory was impacted by the three waves of feminist theory but occurred in different chronological time frames (Meskell 2001; Gilchrist 1999: 1-2). In the First Wave, there was a focus on “finding women,” especially within the context of the prehistoric record (Meskell 2001: 194). The “Second Wave” occurred in the 1990s and positioned women as “active agents” in establishing “their own social realities, and in the third wave, which occurred in the late 1990s, feminist archaeology moved towards incorporating other elements such as “age, sexual orientation, ethnicity” and thinking about differences within masculinity and femininity (Meskell 2001: 195; Gilchrist 1999: 1). Archaeology also has, according to Conkey and Gero, not placed enough emphasis on the importance of women’s work, which may be due to the “androcentric filter of
ethnography” as mentioned earlier (Conkey and Gero 1991: 19). This awareness of the androcentric nature of ethnography and anthropology is a part of the reaction against patriarchy in the second wave movement (Gilchrist 1999: 2-3). Shellfishing is one such example of how women’s work in a social group may have been underrepresented since ethnographers may have viewed it as a “low-ranked foodstuff” due to its connection to women’s spheres of daily practice and an intellectual focus on men’s work (Conkey and Gero 1991: 19; Claassen 1991: 277-278). Moss writes that androcentric bias in ethnography and archaeology accounts for the lack of emphasis on shellfishing on the Northwest coast since women were more closely associated with shellfish than men (Moss 1993: 632). This bias is also an issue to be aware of when analyzing historical documents such as that of Smith and the early colonial explorers in Virginia since it is likely that they may have been more “comfortable using native male informants,” which thus lead to a greater “emphasis on male activities” and a lesser emphasis on the spheres of women and children (Williams and Bendremer 1997: 137).

One way of considering shellfish in a prehistoric setting such as the Middle Woodland period in Virginia is through the argument that gender can be studied through cultural and symbolic associations to food ways (Hastorf 1991: 135). Hastorf writes that “specific foods, their uses, and associations communicate, reaffirm, and aid in the construction of the cultural system, acting as a system of signs containing social messages” (Hastorf 1991: 135). For example, archaeologists tend to associate plant remains with women’s work, which is of significance since plant foods tend to “have specific connotations” within a social community (Hastorf 1991: 135). This process illustrated by Hastorf in terms of how food is integrated into the social and symbolic
system of a community relates to the potential role of shellfishing within a community and, consequently, to the social position of women as well due to their involvement with this activity.

Although this type of art is not necessarily available for the Middle Woodland period of Virginia, research related to Mayan culture representations of women in art show how they are innovators of types of food and products that are significant culturally and economically (Hendon 1997: 37). This representation of the significance of women due to their work with natural resources (in this case in terms of shell) for the benefit of the community still has resonance. The connection between gender, shellfishing, and the social system of a community may also be related to Mary Beth Williams and Jeffrey Bendremer’s discussion of how in New England foraging activities such as shellfishing determined the mobility of a group (Williams and Bendremer 1997: 145). The amount of shellfishing that could be carried out had an impact on the sedentary settlement patterns of the larger social group (Williams and Bendremer 1997: 145), and this observation may be an element to consider when looking at settlement patterns, the division of labor, and women’s authority in how it is to be carried out. This relates to the shell midden deposit at Kiskiak since the archaeological data demonstrate continuity of use from the Early Woodland through the Proto-historic/Contact period, and it may be that the significance of women’s work at the site dictated the continuous use of the site. Having discussed how archaeologists study gender relations in archaeological contexts prior to ethnography and historical documents, the following section discusses how through careful application of ethnography, historical accounts, and analogy, it is possible to discuss gender relations in “prehistoric” settings.
Ethnography, Analogy, and Gender

Analogy is a widely utilized element in archaeological research (David and Kramer 2001: 1), and its application has been debated by archaeologists for many years. A standard definition of analogy is “a form of inference that holds that if something is like something else in some respects it is likely to be similar to others” (David and Kramer 2001: 1). Archaeological applications of analogy have ranged between Julian Steward’s discussion of the direct historical approach as well as the ideas of Lewis Binford and middle-range theory. Steward outlined a methodology for the direct historic approach involving extrapolating backwards in time from the “known to the unknown,” which includes identifying sites from the historic era, analyzing the “cultural complexes” of these sites, and then assessing earlier sites from this data (Steward 1942: 337). Binford’s arguments emphasized the need for considering process and his methodology included the study of the ethnographic present to understand processes in past contexts (Binford 1967; Johnson 1999: 49-51). Binford’s middle-range theory involves the use of “middle-range” assumptions, which relate the “static archaeological record” to larger concepts such as social relations and life ways in past contexts (Binford 1967; Johnson 1999: 50). Binford writes in his article “Smudge Pits and Hide Sticks: The Use of Analogy in Archaeological Reasoning” (1967) that “an analogy is not strictly a demonstration of formal similarities between entities; rather it is an inferential argument based on implied relationships between demonstrably similar entities” (Binford 1967: 1). Through this analogical bridge, scholars extend observations in the present to archaeological actors of the much deeper past (Johnson 1999: 50).

The uncritical application of analogy has been disapproved by archaeologists and
anthropologists (e.g. Gould in Gould and Watson 1982), and there is a strong emphasis on the importance of well founded and supported analogy (Lightfoot 1995: 204-205). Matthew Johnson describes problems that have arisen from the application of middle-range theory although he argues that Binford’s methodology is useful since it has the potential of relating the archaeological record to “past dynamics” (Johnson 1999: 59). He does explain that issues related to its application include “uniformitarian assumption,” or the assumption “to assume that conditions in the past were like those in the present,” (Johnson 1999: 55, 59-61) and lack of cultural change over time (Johnson 1999: 61-62). Lightfoot similarly argues that the use of analogy that is referred to as “‘specific’ analogy” or “‘direct historic’ analogy” does not include consideration of the processes of cultural change and therefore ethnography and historical documents are directly applied to “reconstruct the past” (Lightfoot 1995: 204). This application of analogy is considered “ahistorical” (Lightfoot 1995: 204). Alison Wylie discusses how anthropologists in order to address problems with the use of analogies developed the “direct historical method,” (Wylie 1985: 74-75) and in her article “The Reaction Against Analogy” (1985), she discusses “formal” and “relational” analogies in which “formal analogies” involve a “point for point assessment of similarities or differences in the properties of source and subject” (Wylie 1985: 94; Johnson 1999: 61) and “relational analogies” utilize “a demonstration that there are similarities between source and subject with respect to the causal mechanisms, processes, or factors that determine the presence and interrelationships of…their manifest properties” (Wylie 1985: 95; Johnson 1999: 61). Wylie concludes that overall analogies are useful tools for studying the past as long as there is recognition of “dissimilarities between the past and present” (Wylie 1985: 107)
and that “relational analogies” tend to be more useful and have stronger “arguments” than “formal analogies” (Wylie 1985: 105-106).

The importance of the study of gender in ethnoarchaeology has progressively increased over time, and this literature frequently utilizes ethnohistory and inferences from ethnographies for drawing archaeological conclusions (Weedman 2006: 253). However, criticisms of analogy are evident in literature pertaining to gender archaeology and ethnoarchaeology. There is the potential for “essentializing” women in which the experience of women is made to be uniform and generalized (Nelson 1997: 55, 56-58). Another issue with ethnographic analogy identified by gender archaeologists is the predominance of androcentrism in ethnographic narratives, and it is necessary for archaeologists interested in gender relations to take this bias into account (Nelson 1997: 56). Nonetheless, the combination of “a search for universals,” including associations between women and particular activities, combined with “an interest in female agency and women’s contributions to innovation and change” has been a prominent mechanism for studying gender relations in North American archaeology (Gilchrist 1999: 6). For example, Kathryn Weedman explains that ethnoarchaeology in North America, Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific demonstrate how women are primarily making pottery (Weedman 2006: 272). This information provides an important step in the process of including women in the historical narrative and demonstrating how women made important societal contributions, which is especially useful in the analysis of the shell midden deposit at Kiskiak in this project (Weedman 2006: 277). The following section will demonstrate linkages present in ethnohistory and ethnography between shellfishing and gender from which archaeologists may be able to interpret gender relations in the
past.

**Shellfishing and Gender**

Archaeologists have utilized ethnographic and documentary data for furthering the understanding of shellfish processing, which has been helpful for gaining information on potential documentary sources as well as helping to understand how to potentially interpret this information in terms of social processes. Particularly useful sources include an article (1987) by Gregory A. Waselkov, a paper by Michael Klein (1999), and an article by Madonna Moss (1993). Waselkov’s work discusses ethnography of shellfishing on an international scale, and Klein and Moss’ work are more regionally based (Klein looks at the Chesapeake and Moss at the Northwest coast) and all include discussion of gender relations. This paper builds most directly on early ethnographic accounts than Klein’s paper, which is primarily archaeological, and emphasizes the Middle Atlantic region unlike Moss’ article. However, Klein’s and Moss’ research are important examples of how ethnography can be utilized to derive interpretations of gender based upon Kiskiak’s shell midden deposit.

Waselkov broadly discusses how societies that utilize shellfish go about procuring them and processing them as well as how oysters are cooked and stored by various communities (Waselkov 1987: 93-138). His work draws from ethnographic accounts of shellfishing from around the world, and he writes that “the most detailed reports” are about the Maori in New Zealand, the Yahgan, Ona, and Alacaluf in South Africa, and Yuki and Yurok in California (Waselkov 1987: 96). The descriptions that he provides are thorough and useful in identifying sources as well as information from which more theoretical analysis can be made. For example, he discusses seasonality and shellfishing
based upon ethnographic accounts as well as the benefits of eating shellfish in terms of protein and calorie intake (Waselkov 1987: 109-114; 119-123). He also elaborates on how shell mounds might be geographically developed as well as optimal foraging strategy models, which is a primarily ecological approach and involves analysis of archaeological and ethnographic data to evaluate subsistence resources available to hunter-gatherer societies, based upon shellfishing (Waselkov 1987: 114-119).

The ethnographic accounts compiled and discussed by Waselkov incorporate gender, but he writes that he is not optimistic about the potential of archaeologically identifying gender in a shell midden (Waselkov 1987: 99). He does suggest from ethnographic evidence that shellfish processing tended to be more closely associated with women (Waselkov 1987: 97-99) and expanding on this work it may be possible to view the shell midden deposit at the Kiskiak site as a representation of women’s collective work and action. Based upon his ethnographic accounts, Waselkov argues that “the reader probably has noted that women and children were most often involved in shellfish gathering” (Waselkov 1987: 97). In terms of male involvement with shellfishing, Waselkov discusses how “when men did participate they tended to concentrate on strenuous methods that required greater physical prowess” (Waselkov 1987: 97). While men would bring back larger loads of shellfish than women, it was the women who devoted more time to shellfishing in all of the social groups where shellfishing was conducted for subsistence and not for commercial purposes (Waselkov 1987: 99). An example of male involvement is that of diving for shellfish as opposed to gathering in reference to documentary sources regarding the Powhatan (Waselkov 1987: 97).

Waselkov is hesitant in his writing to make generalizations regarding hunter-gatherer
social dynamics. He writes that it was difficult to establish gender relations in a shell midden without essentializing the relationships between artifacts associated with males and females (Waselkov 1987: 99). While this argument has merit, it seems problematic to not attempt to discuss gender relations and shellfishing in communities where shellfishing is an important element of subsistence and daily life, and I argue that it is possible to discuss gender relations in a shell midden context through a combination of historical documents, ethnography, and archaeology (Klein 1999: 143).

Klein and Moss consider gender and social practice in their work, which are also both based on ethnography and archaeology. Klein references the work of Cheryl Claassen who writes that archaeologists studying shellfishing do not sufficiently address the relationship of shellfishing to the various members of the community (Claassen 1991: 277; Klein 1999: 143). Klein utilizes the work of Waselkov and the historical record by referencing the writings of Captain John Smith regarding the Virginia Powhatan (Klein 1999). His focus is primarily on gender and the archaeological record related to shellfishing and stone tool technology, but he does argue that shell middens are not exclusively places of women’s work but that many shell middens are closely associated with women’s daily life (Klein 1999: 143-144). Claassen argues that studies of shellfishers tend to “deny gender, deny human choice, and recognize no consequences of adopted cultural behaviors” (Claassen 1991: 277), and like Claassen, this current study aims to encourage the incorporation of gender when studying social contexts, especially since based upon ethnographic evidence it is likely that a shell midden deposit represents a place in which women were making contributions to the diet and productivity of their society (Claassen 1991: 276). In Moss’ article, she makes the statement that “in the
worldwide debate over the role of shellfishing in cultural evolution,” archaeologists have primarily focused on “the economics of shellfish procurement and the nutritional value of shellfish,” which she refers to as “limited” (Moss 1999: 646). Moss’ work pertains to the Northwest Coast and the Tlingit, and she writes that her work makes use of “ethnohistorical and oral historical data” (Moss 1993: 631). Moss’ study utilizes “specific ethnographic analogy,” and she argues that it is useful in terms of interpreting gender of “prehistoric shellfishing on the Northwest coast by presenting it within its larger and cultural context” (Moss 1993: 632). Therefore, Moss’ study provides another example for how through ethnographic and archaeological evidence conclusions related to gender and shellfishing may be derived. The following section provides documentary evidence from the region in which the Kiskiak site is located that relates to gender and shellfishing.

**Documentary Record and Shellfishing Practices**

In order to make interpretations of gender and social relations and the Middle Woodland period in the Middle Atlantic, I draw from texts from the early colonial period of Virginia. The colonial-era writings are biased and problematic but also offer information regarding social processes in contexts connected to shellfishers. The work of John Smith, such as *The General History of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles* (1624), is especially useful for analyzing possible connections between shellfishing and gender relations since he was involved in many exploration and trading ventures providing him with accounts of interactions with native peoples and observations of native life ways (Rountree 1989: 3). William Strachey also was involved in expeditions that led to interactions with native groups in Virginia, and he wrote an account of
Virginia entitled *The Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania* (1612) (Rountree 1989: 4). However, his accounts of native peoples in this text tend to be borrowed from John Smith (Rountree 1989:4; Wright and Freund 1953: xxvii-xxviii), but according to Louis B. Wright and Virginia Freund, Strachey still includes information based upon his own observations and not just those of others (Wright and Freund 1953: xxxi-xxxii). The work of Roger Williams, *A Key into the Language of America* (1643), while not from the Middle Atlantic region, provides useful documentary evidence pertaining to shellfishing and Algonquin groups. Another line of evidence is from early ethnographic accounts from the early twentieth century of social groups utilizing shellfishing in subsistence practices. These texts provide supplemental information for assessing the Middle Woodland period of Virginia (Drucker 1955; Speck 1948).

Both John Smith and William Strachey mention how oyster and shellfish beds are prevalent during their explorations. Smith writes that during one expedition to meet the “Chisapeacks and Nandsamunds” he observed when “coasting the shore towards Nandsamund” that it was “most Oyster-banke” (Smith 2007: 351-352). Strachey similarly mentions in his descriptions of Virginia that “the Shoares of our Rivers, whole banckes of Oysters and Scallopps, which ly vnopenped, and thick togethier, as if there had bene their naturall Bed, before the Sea left them…” (Strachey 1953: 40). However, in his “Relation of Virginia” (1609), Henry Spelman primarily discusses corn and animal meat in terms of food ways amongst the Virginia Powhatan, but he does mention that there are “fish in abundance whereon they live most part of the summertime” (Spelman 1998: 487, 492-493). Gabriel Archer supports these accounts related to shellfish in his “A Relation” (1607) in which the English trade with a Powhatan man who had during the
Englishmen’s expedition “with two women and another fellow of his own consort followed us some six mile with basket full of dried oysters, and met us at a point where, calling to us, we went ashore and bart’red with them for most of their victuals” (Archer 1998: 103). Although somewhat vague, this account provides an example of an association between oysters and Powhatan women and potentially a connection to women’s daily work. Archer also writes that when he went to meet Opossunoquonuske of Appamatuck he and his group were hosted by the community during which he mentions how “some boys were sent to dive for muskles” (Archer 1998: 112-113; Rountree 1989: 38, 159). Although this description indicates that it was adolescent not adult men involved in the activity, this example still provides an example of how shellfishing may have involved not only women but also men.

Smith and Strachey discuss the roles of men and women in Powhatan society and include an illustration of their observations of division of labor between Powhatan men and women. Smith writes that “the men bestow their times in fishing, hunting, warres, and such manlike exercises, scoring to be scene in any woman-like exercise” and describes how “the women and children doe the rest of the worke. They make mats, baskets, pots, morters, pound their corne, make their bread, prepare their victuals, plant their corne, gather their corne, beare all kind of burdens, and such like” (Smith 2007: 284). Smith explains that “small companies” of Virginia Powhatan live a lifestyle separate from the main population in May and June in which they “live upon fish, beasts, crabs, oysters, land Tortoises...,” which demonstrates that shellfish is still a dietary product, but he does not distinguish who is involved in the shellfishing (Smith 2007: 284-285). It appears though that fishing and hunting seem to be related to one another and
both fall within the realm of men’s work, and since the activities of men appear to be better specified by Smith than the activities for women, it is likely that shellfishing fell within the sphere of women’s work (Moss 1993). Strachey writes that “women plant and attend the gardeins, dresse the meat brought home, make their broathes and Pockerehicory drinkes…,” suggesting that women are involved in cooking (Strachey 1953: 114). This is significant because it develops another association between women and shellfishing. Later in his text Strachey writes that he observed how Powhatan individuals would “boyle Oysters and Mushells togethier, and with the broath they make a good spoon-meat” and that “Oysters vpon strings (being shaa’ld and dryed) in the smoake, thereby to preserve them all the yeare,” which suggests how preparation of shellfish was a part of cooking and dietary practices (Strachey 1953: 128; Rountree 1989: 38, 159).

Williams and Bendremer indicate that there are elements of Roger Williams’ A Key into the Language of America (1643) representing examples from New England in the early colonial era that link women’s work and shellfishing (Williams and Bendremer 1997: 144). An example of this association is Williams’ statement regarding the Narragansett that “This is a sweet kind of shellfish, which all Indians generally over the Countrey, Winter and Summer delight in; and at low water the women dig for them” (Williams 1827: 103-104; Williams and Bendremer 1997: 144). He further writes that the women “boile” the shellfish, which “makes their broth and their Nasaump (which is a kind of thicken brode) and their bread seasonable and savoury, in stead of Salt” (Williams 1827: 104). In terms of later ethnographic texts, an account of connections between women and shellfishing is evident in Philip Drucker’s ethnographic work. He
writes how on the Northwest coast there are “numerous edible shellfish” and “that the Indians did not disdain these delicacies is proved by the fact that old village sites from Yakutat to Trinidad Bay are marked by great mounds consisting mostly of the shells discarded after meals made of the shellfish” (Drucker 1955: 41-42). He elaborates that “gathering shellfish was generally regarded as a woman’s task, although men occasionally aided their wives,” and he specifies that there is a tool made from muscle shell that he describes as “the areally universal woman’s knife” (Drucker 1955: 42; Moss 1993: 632, 648).

Tradition and Social Practice

Having reviewed ethnographic and documentary material related to shellfishing and gender, the following is a discussion of how traditions might be a useful perspective for looking at the relationship between shellfishing, gender, and ceramics. In the beginning of his edited volume The Archaeology of Traditions (2001), Timothy R. Pauketat writes that “People have always had traditions, practiced traditions, resisted traditions, or created traditions” (Pauketat 2001: 1). The concept of tradition has been viewed as a practice or item that is passed down through generations and does not represent change, but in the case of Pauketat’s study, the definition of tradition is more fluid and involves “dynamic” communications with the past so that that it is not a “passive” process (Pauketat 2001: 1-3). A connection is also made between the process of tradition making and history, and Pauketat writes that “History is the practicing and embodying of traditions on a daily basis” in which he elaborates that “practice” involves the “doing and being” of actions conducted in daily social life (Pauketat 2001: 4-5). In the case of ceramics, it may be possible to draw connections between ceramic style
change and traditions since it has been argued that through the actions of daily life traditions are developed (Lightfoot 2001: 241). Lightfoot writes that “cultural practices may be performed that are linked to the past but redefined or reinterpreted in order to be made meaningful in contemporary social contexts” (Lightfoot 2001: 241). This concept can perhaps be applied to changing ceramic styles over time in Test Unit 28, and if women were producing the pottery, this interplay of change (e.g. intermarriage into a new group) and persistence (e.g. continued shellfishing practices) in women’s daily lives may be reflected in the ceramics.

This description of the meaning of tradition is relevant to the discussion of shellfishing and analysis of later contexts to understand the past (as in this case of the Middle Woodland period). For example, in terms of the shell midden deposits found in archaeological settings, the accumulation of shell over time may represent continuity and tradition of place and of subsistence practices (Claassen 1997: 68; Williams and Bendremer 1997: 144-149). The emergence of agriculture in the Late Woodland in coastal Virginia is another element to consider when discussing sedentism and continuity of place, which may have begun with the shellfishing of the Middle Woodland and continued through time (Turner 1992: 106). Claassen also writes that the increase of horticulture may have “lessened the symbolic relevance of shellfish” (Claassen 1991: 295). However, it could also be reversely argued that shellfish became symbolic in new ways, perhaps in terms of connections with the past, when horticulture became a prevalent part of subsistence practices. Shellfish may have been incorporated into subsistence practices in a new way when horticulture became predominant by being utilized as a fertilizer for growing crops (Little 2010: 188). Elizabeth Little suggests that
in New England, native peoples living on the coasts discovered “that old shell midden material, including soil, shell, charcoal, bone, and the occasional stone flake, could increase the yield of beans and maize...” (Little 2010: 188). This would also encourage continuity of place and perhaps redefine the significance of shell through practice for the community.

When looking in John Smith’s accounts of Virginia, there is much discussion of trade and exchange with the Powhatan, but shellfish and fish are not highlighted as primary exchange goods. He writes regarding one exchange with Powhatan that “for a pound or two of blew beades, he brought over my king for 2. or 300. Bushells of corne” (Smith 2007: 327). The fact that shellfish is not a focal point in exchange relations and subsistence measures for the European colonists may be representative of the significance of other products, such as that raised by agriculture or from hunting, to Powhatan society. It is probable that this would have been different had the exchange occurred during the Middle Woodland period when shellfish was heavily processed. George Hamell discusses color symbolism in Iroquoian, Algonquian, and Siouan ideology, and he illustrates how the colors blue and white may have signified the ideas of “Life, Mind, Knowledge, and Greatest Being,” which were likely represented by shells and crystals found in nature (Hamell 1983: 5-7). Hamell also writes that “Within social states-of-being, white shell, whether fresh-water or marine in origin and regardless of its natural or manufactured form, functions as a metaphor for light, and thus for life itself, particularly in its sentient aspect” (Hamell 1992: 457). This may suggest significance to such excerpts from historical documents as William Strachey’s description of how “their Queenes fasciae crinales, Borders, or Frontalls, of white Beades Currall and Copper” and
that the Powhatans are “Covetous of our Comodities, as Copper, white beades for their women…” (Strachey 1953: 75). Smith also writes that he observed a Powhatan man who had “tyed on his head, a peece of copper, a white shell, a long feather...” (Smith 2007: 318) as well as Powhatan women who wore “a great chaine of white beads about each of their neckes” (Smith 2007: 326). Archer too makes the observation that “and if pearl we have seen the kings’ ears and about their necks come from these shells, we know the banks” when discussing how “we have good fishing for muskles, which resemble mother of pearl” (Archer 1998: 121). These examples signify the continued use of shell, perhaps for symbolic purposes, in daily life and practice amongst the Virginia Powhatan.

The use of shell in daily practice is not limited to historical texts and is documented in ethnographic accounts as well. Frank Speck’s observations (1948) of the Wampanoag in New England demonstrate the importance of shellfish in subsistence practices. He writes that “the abundant shell heaps of coastal Massachusetts leave no doubts as to the importance of marine life, especially the mollusks, in the economy of the aboriginals,” which may demonstrate continuity of practice over time in New England (Speck 1948: 257; Williams and Bendremer 1997: 145). His statement that “There is also evidence that the Indians of the interior journeyed to the coast to obtain shellfish, which were smoked or dried for winter use,” may also signify continuity in terms of practice regarding New England native peoples’ relationship to the ocean and coastline (Speck 1948: 145). Historical documents also present other uses of shell in daily life, such as for example, John Smith’s description of how when the Powhatan cut their hair it involves “for Barbers they use their women, who with two shells will grate away the hayre, of any fashion they please” (Smith 2007: 282). This recalls, although from a
different place and context, Drucker’s discussion of how shells were manipulated into knives used by women in daily practice, which suggests that shells served not only as a part of subsistence and ornamentation but also for technological purposes (Drucker 1955: 42).

Another component of tradition and practice to consider when discussing shellfishing and the Middle Woodland period is that of feasting. Michael Stewart has illustrated connections to feasting for the Middle Woodland period based upon the presence of Abbot Zoned Incised ceramics (as mentioned earlier in this paper) at Middle Atlantic Middle Woodland sites (Stewart 1998: 174). Stewart writes regarding these “highly decorated ceramics” that they would have “functioned in public ceremonies…, perhaps feasting,” which he deduces may have been due to “gathering of groups during the intensive seasonal focus on fishing and shell fishing” (Stewart 1998: 174; Stewart 1992: 11). He also references Drucker’s ethnographic work when making this connection and writes that “the feasting bowls of the Northwest Coast native societies are a general ethnographic analogy for this proposition” (Stewart 1998: 174; Stewart 1992: 11; Drucker 1955: 79-81). Stewart mentions “fish runs” as a potential time for these community gatherings, and he writes that the Abbott Zoned Incised ceramics may have represented a “symbolic message to the groups gathered” (Stewart 1992: 11-12). This suggests a cultural connection across geographic space since Abbott Zoned Incised pottery originated in the Delaware Valley but also appear on sites in Virginia (Stewart 1992: 11-12).

It is evident from the historical documentary record of Virginia and the Middle Atlantic that feasting and ceremonial gatherings continued to be a method of
communication and exchange in the early colonial era. An example is John Smith’s account of a feast in which he mentions fish but not shellfish is when the wife of Granganameo of Roanoke provided “frumentie, sodden venison, and rosted fish; in like manner melons raw, boyled rootes and fruites of divers kindes” (Smith 2007: 231-232). It is possible that there may have been “taboos” related to shellfish and feasting, and Claassen mentions, although in reference to a different time period and cultural context, how in the case of “one Polynesian culture, mollusks collected by women are deemed unsuitable for guests” (Claassen 1991: 278). Also, archaeologists have discussed that ethnographic evidence suggests that in many societies food preparation for ceremonial occasions and feasts is carried out by women (Joyce 2010: 229-230). Arthur Joyce writes that through feasting and the preparation of food, gender roles are “represent[ed], reproduc[ed], and transform[ed]” (Joyce 2010: 229). This argument is useful for assessing gender relations in the Middle Woodland context of the shell midden deposit since the findings of the ceramics analysis suggests that ceremonial activity may have been carried out at the site.

Conclusions

Through ethnography, documents, and archaeology and the utilization of analogy (Wylie 1985; Conkey and Gero 1991; Lightfoot 1995), it is possible to begin to view what has been defined as the “prehistoric” from a more social perspective rather than a primarily environmental and ecological description. The application of these lines of evidence to the Middle Woodland period of the Middle Atlantic, especially Virginia, has demonstrated that social concepts such as gender relations, social practice, and traditions arise in this context. Interpretations of gender relations can be derived from accounts of
the division of labor and the relationship of subsistence practices to gender as demonstrated in the works of early colonial explorers and settlers. Social practice and shellfishing has also been illustrated through discussions of continuity of place and feasting. In conclusion, it is evident that ethnographic evidence and historical documentation is instrumental in assessing how shellfishing and shellfish may have been incorporated into the gender and social relations of time periods prior to written accounts and records. As more research is conducted with the concepts of social and gender relations in mind, interpretation will expand and introduce new perspectives on how to view and connect past time periods and cultural contexts. Having reviewed the ethnographic and historical documentary literature related to shellfishing, gender, and social relations, the following chapter presents archaeological data related to the Middle Woodland period of the Chesapeake region, focusing on shell midden contexts.
Chapter 3: Virginia Middle Woodland Shell Midden Sites

The following chapter discusses Middle Woodland archaeology in the Chesapeake, especially in terms of shell middens and shellfishing. The objective is to evaluate shellfishing practices and their relationship to gender, social practice, and tradition as discussed in the previous chapter can be applied. Three sites will be the focus of this discussion: the Kiskiak site (from which the ceramic data in this analysis was excavated), the Maycock’s Point site, and the White Oak Point site. The Kiskiak (44YO2) site was surveyed in 1999-2000 by WMCAR (William and Mary Center of Archaeological Research) (Blanton et al. 2005: 27), and excavations at the Kiskiak site led by Dr. Martin Gallivan of the College of William and Mary resumed in the summer of 2010. The Maycock’s Point (44PG40) site includes evidence from the Middle Woodland period as well as from the seventeenth century colonial era (Gallivan, Duncan, and Heinsman 2005: 2). The White Oak Point (44WM119) site data includes the excavations at the site by Gregory Waselkov and Stephen R. Potter that were recorded in Waselkov’s 1982 dissertation, and it was described by Waselkov as a site that “promised to provide ample data in reliable stratigraphic contexts on shellfish gathering from the Late Archaic through Protohistoric periods” (Waselkov 1982: 215), which closely resembles the archaeological chronology at Kiskiak. However, before discussing these three individual sites, an overview of archaeological research and the Middle Woodland period of the Chesapeake region is provided.

The Middle Atlantic and Chesapeake in the Middle Woodland

The following is a review of the contextual background of this study, reviewing information pertaining to the Middle Woodland period in the Middle Atlantic (especially
focusing on Virginia). The Middle Woodland period has been defined as approximately
dating to 500/400 B.C. to A.D. 800/900 (Stewart 1992: 1). The period is also typically
divided into two parts: Middle Woodland I (500 B.C. to A.D. 200) and Middle Woodland
II (A.D. 200 to 800/900), and the Middle Woodland I period is defined by the ceramic
type known as Popes Creek while the Middle Woodland II period is defined by Mockley
ceramic types (Stewart 1992: 2; Potter 1993: 62; Gallivan 2003: 196). This cultural
period is characterized by relatively sedentary settlement practices that rely on hunting
and gathering subsistence strategies (Stewart 1992: 4). However, there is also a reliance
on marine resources such as shellfish and fish and plants that grow in estuarine and
riverine environments (Stewart 1992: 4). The coastal region of Virginia is of particular
interest since the Kiskiak site is located on the York River. A relationship between more
complex social organization and the increasing incorporation of marine resources into
subsistence and daily life is suspected in the coastal region (Stewart 1992: 4). There are
sites that appear in the region during this period that exhibit massive quantities of shell
such as the Popes Creek site on the Potomac River where the shell midden takes up about
6 hectares and is about 8 meters thick (Dent 1995: 240-241).

The ceramic type prevalent in the first part of the Middle Woodland period is
Popes Creek, which is sand tempered and has a net-impressed surface treatment (Dent
1995: 236; Gallivan 2003: 196). The second part of the Middle Woodland period
demonstrates a major increase in the use of shell in ceramic tempering as exemplified in
the Mockley ceramics (Stewart 1992: 9). Dent discusses whether or not the application
of shell in ceramic tempering represents a “technological horizon” (Stewart 1992: 9).
The implementation of shell in ceramic temper is useful in decreasing thermal shock
when vessels are used for boiling and cooking (Stewart 1992: 9; Rice 1987: 229). Shell also makes the weight of the vessels lighter, and therefore shell temper may have had an impact on vessel size (Stewart 1992: 9). Rita Wright encourages archaeologists to associate these technological changes as innovations developed by women through their practice of pottery production (Wright 1991: 213-215). A description of Mockley ware is “medium to large coil-constructed jars with direct rims and rounded or semiconical bottoms” (Potter 1993: 65) with a “paste” that is “approximately 20 to 30 percent…coarse, unburned, crushed shell, usually oyster or, occasionally, freshwater mussel” (Potter 1993 66). Another significant ceramic type in the Middle Woodland period is that of Abbott Zoned Incised (AZI) pottery, which is primarily found in the Delaware Valley (Stewart 1992: 10). The distribution of this ceramic type and its unique decorative style have raised questions related to social interactions and exchange (Stewart 1992: 10-11; Stewart 1998). Laura Steadman conducted an archaeometric study (which will be described further in the section on Maycock’s Point) on AZI sherds and found that AZI sherds uncovered in Virginia were being produced locally (Steadman 2008: 65).

The Woodland period in the Middle Atlantic demonstrates an increase in population growth (Custer 1994: 340). An increase in vessel size over time has suggested that there may have been an increasing demand for food storage methods (Custer 1994: 340). Changes in settlement patterns include greater settlement on “riverine settings” than in previous periods (Gallivan 2003: 196). Although groups in the Middle Woodland do not demonstrate a subsistence pattern based upon “tropical cultigens – the typical maize, beans, and squash triad,” which Dent explains “appears in the Piedmont circa AD 900” (Dent 1995: 268), Dent argues that “exploitation of the
resources” in the region “was mostly complete” (Dent 1995: 268). Martin Gallivan conducted an analysis of “settlement mobility and demography” along the James River and looked at processes for identifying “relatively sedentary communities from short term, repeated site occupations” (Gallivan 2003: 75). He argues that there was more evidence of sedentariness in the James River Valley between A.D. 1200 to 1607 and that there was more “single, brief occupation” during the Middle Woodland (Gallivan 2003: 79). It was found that several of the sites from the Middle Woodland had been occupied for short periods of time but on multiple occasions (Gallivan 2003: 83). His analysis indicates that the sizes of groups occupying the sites in the Middle Woodland were small, and he concludes that the evidence from the James River Valley during the Middle Woodland depicts populations of “small-scale, mobile foragers, with some riverine locations that were used over multiple settlement rounds exhibiting a particularly dense array of archaeological deposits” (Gallivan 2003: 84).

Stephen Potter discusses a study conducted by Leland Gilsen in 1979 in which Gilsen argued that hunter-gatherer groups had main settlements on estuarine locations in the late summer through winter where shellfishing was a primary resource and was supplemented by hunting and plants (Gilsen in Potter 1993: 138-139). In the late winter through early summer, more temporary sites were occupied on riverine areas for the purposes of catching fish and utilizing inland resources (Gilsen in Potter 1993: 139). This corresponds with Lewis Binford’s logistical model in which small task groups are sent from a primary settlement to obtain resources (Binford 1980: 10; Blanton 1992: 69; Gallivan 2010: 10). Another perspective on settlement patterns during the Middle Woodlands is a “fusion-fission system” in which at particular points of the year groups...
from different areas would come together at certain sites (Blanton 2010: 71; Potter 1993: 140; Gallivan 2010: 10).

Also, in terms of social structure, comparisons have been made between the Middle Woodland period in the Chesapeake and cultures such as the Adena and Hopewell who had “‘big men’” systems (based on Marshall Sahlins’ model) (Blanton 1992: 77; Steadman 2008: 60). In these systems, there is a tribal leader who orchestrates trade and communication with other groups (Blanton 1992: 77-78). Jeffrey Hantman and Debra Gold have suggested that “production and limited treatment of certain vessels” (in this case they are discussing steatite bowls in the Late Archaic and then AZI ceramics in the Middle Woodland) brought “the emergence of ranking and elite individuals” within social groups in the Chesapeake (Hantman and Gold 2002: 287-289; Steadman 2008: 60-61). Inequalities resulting from this system were kept in balance through the “‘rise and fall’ of different venues of status” marking what Hantman and Gold refer to as a “cyclical pattern” (Hantman and Gold 2002: 286-287; Steadman 2008: 60-61).

The Middle Woodland period in the Middle Atlantic indicates interactions between various populations, which is demonstrated in the distribution and appearance in Virginia of AZI sherds, as previously mentioned, indicative of a site in New Jersey known as the Abbott Farm site (Dent 1995: 222). There is also evidence of an “exchange network” in the region due to “the distribution of rhyolite and other exotic stone materials throughout the coastal plain” (Potter 1993: 140). Gallivan discusses a division in archaeological evidence between sites on either side of the “fall-line boundary” (or where “east-flowing rivers cross from the hard, igneous and metamorphic rocks of the Piedmont into the softer, unconsolidated sediments of the Coastal Plain” [Gallivan 2003: 16])
However, he explains that during the Middle and Late Woodland periods there are examples “of shared ceramic style” on both sides of the fall line suggesting that it had become a “boundary through which stylistic innovations flowed” (Gallivan 2003: 128).

Population migrations are another topic of discussion for the Middle Woodland period. It has been suggested that two waves (in the time frame of 600/200 BC and 300/700 AD) of Algonquian speakers migrated into the Chesapeake region (Stewart 1992: 21-22; Hayden 2009: 7-8; Gallivan 2010: 11-12). Based upon linguistic research, glottochronology, and archaeological material culture, Stuart Fiedel argues that Proto-Algonquian groups migrated from the region of Southern Ontario between 600 BC-500/700 AD (Fiedel 1990: 216-217; Gallivan 2010: 11). The first wave of movement may have occurred prior to 200 BC based on archaeological and linguistic data, and a second wave may have occurred around 600-750 AD (Fiedel 1990: 223-224). Jay Custer also argues that a migration happened in the transitory period (around 800-1000 AD) between what he classifies as Woodland I and Woodland II in the Delmarva Peninsula, which corresponds with the transition between the Middle Woodland and Late Woodland for the Chesapeake (Custer 1990: 273-274). Studies of cordage twist, which is imprinted in ceramic surface treatments, have also been utilized in assessing migration patterns (Gallivan 2010: 12). The direction in which an individual twists cordage is a learned skill and tends to be consistent throughout the course of the individual’s life (Gallivan 2010: 12). Anna Hayden conducted a study of cordage twist on ceramics in the coastal plain area of Virginia, and although her results were somewhat chronologically inconclusive, she found that lithic and sand tempered ceramics tended to display both of two variations
of cordage twist while shell tempered ceramics, which is linked to beginning around 200 AD), were nearly homogenous in terms of cordage twist direction (Hayden 2009: 29, 42-43).

It is evident from this review of Middle Woodland archaeology in the Chesapeake region that gender relations is not a primary topic of discussion. Michael Klein (1999) does have a study in which he reviews shell middens and gender relations in the Chesapeake and compares lithic assemblages from various shell middens, and Joshua Duncan and Michael Klein (2008) presented a paper on “social transformation” in the Middle Woodland period, including division of labor by gender (Duncan and Klein 2008). This study of the ceramics from Test Unit 28 at Kiskiak is a step towards further incorporating gender relations into the discussion of the Chesapeake’s Middle Woodland period.

**Maycock’s Point**

Maycock’s Point (44PG40) is an example of a Middle Woodland site in the Middle Atlantic and includes a shell midden that has been radiocarbon dated to approximately A.D. 250-800 (Barber and Madden 2006: 62). The site is located on the James River and is about 22 miles from present day Richmond (Steadman 2008: 19; Barber and Madden 2006: 61; Gallivan, Duncan, and Heinsman 2005: 2). A study of the Mockley ware from the site was conducted in 1980 by Antony Opperman, who found that the size and thickness of the pottery was consistent during the site’s occupation (Gallivan et al. 2005: 6, Opperman 1980: 21-27). Opperman also found in a later study that the occupants of the site significantly utilized “estuarine faunal resources” and that
the site was primarily inhabited only part of the year and during the warmer months (Gallivan et al. 2005: 6; Opperman 1992: 90-96).

A significant component of this site is the presence of Abbot Zoned Incised (AZI) pottery, a pottery type that is found on Middle Woodland sites in the Middle Atlantic but does not occur as prevalently as Mockley ware (Stewart 1998: 161; Barber and Madden 2006: 66). This pottery type, dating to about A.D. 200 to A.D. 900, has been found at about 10 sites in Virginia and is primarily associated with the Abbott Farm site in New Jersey (Steadman 2008: 14). It has been described as pottery displaying “noncurvilinear and geometric designs on their exterior walls, often on or near the rim of the vessel” (Steadman 2008: 12). Stewart writes that this pottery type was unprecedented and “distinctive” for the region (Stewart 1998: 161). He suggests that this pottery type had ceremonial purposes and may have been a part of gatherings like feasts (Stewart 1998: 174). He also suggests that the AZI pottery may have been associated with “communicating social messages” through their decorative designs (Stewart 1998: 174). The fact that the pottery type is localized and not widespread indicates to Stewart that this pottery type was meant for “public gatherings” that had social “meanings” (Stewart 1998: 174-176). AZI pottery is additionally mostly found on sites in “wetland habitats” (Stewart 1998: 171; Steadman 2008: 62), which further connects feasting related to marine or riverine subsistence strategies (Steadman 2008: 62; Stewart 1998: 174-176).

Laura Steadman (2008) found through LA-ICP-MS analysis that AZI was being produced locally (Steadman 2008: 65). She concludes that instead of being part of a long distance trade, AZI may have been related to “marriage-alliances” and that it served a function in “communal feasting events,” which she argues would have “served to
reinforce group membership and maintain connections to kin and ancestors from the north” (Steadman 2008: 66). Curvature measurements were also taken of the AZI ceramics from Maycock’s Point as well as a sample of Mockley ware ceramics for this analysis. These measurements provide a comparative data set for the Kiskiak ceramic curvatures. The results from this comparative analysis will be explained in Chapter 4.

**White Oak Point (44M119)**

The White Oak Point (44M119) site was excavated and reported on by Gregory Waselkov. This site is located on the Nomini Creek, which is a tributary of the Potomac River, and includes a shell midden with “deeply stratified” deposits (Waselkov 1982: 122). The site includes deposits from the Late Archaic through the Proto-historic/Early Historic eras (Waselkov 1982: 131). He discusses how components of the site represented shellfish processing and periods of occupation but that methods of dating prevented an accurate picture of the temporal relationship between these components (Waselkov 1982: 128). However, he describes how “in the early occupations of the site, shellfish were apparently roasted directly on the ground surface and the discarded shells form the bulk of the extensive layers and heaps” (Waselkov 1982: 132). There is a shift in shellfish processing in the Late Woodland when shellfish was being prepared in “shallow basins” (Waselkov 1982: 132). Waselkov suggests that this may be linked to the creation of a cooking method that involved using many shells for producing “the same heat retaining function as sandstone and quartzite cobbles,” and he argues that “the presence of deep deposits of dead shells was a necessary pre-requisite for the adoption of this method” (Waselkov 1982: 134). In terms of “intensification in oyster collecting,” Waselkov describes how “the number of oysters per unit of midden” increased in the
Early Woodland as well as in the Late Woodland (Waselkov 1982: 201). There was also low diversity in species types in the Middle Woodland and Late Woodland, which represents “subsistence specialization” (Waselkov 1982: 202). He also concludes that White Oak Point was seasonally occupied (in the Spring) from the Late Archaic through the Proto-historic/Early Historic period and that oysters were harvested in a manner that never resulted in overharvesting (Waselkov 1982: 206-207). Waselkov discusses how in the Late Woodland there is an increase in the processing of mammals and fish, which is a change in subsistence strategies that may have been related to the beginning of agriculture (Waselkov 1982: 207-208).

**Kiskiak (44YO2)**

The results of the WMCAR project from 1999-2000 indicate that there are deposits at the site, which is located on the York River in Yorktown, Virginia, representing the Late Archaic through Late Woodland/Proto-historic eras (Blanton et al. 2005: 27). The site of Kiskiak is likely the location of the settlement of a Virginia Algonquian group known as the Kiskiaks, which was also a part of the Powhatan confederacy (Rountree 1989: 8-9). In his accounts of Virginia in the early seventeenth century, John Smith recorded the names of Virginia Algonquian groups and includes Kiskiak on a map of the region that illustrates the locations of native groups (Rountree 1989: 9-12). The results from the WMCAR project demonstrate two components of the Kiskiak site: a forested bluff area and Mason Row housing. Within the forested bluff area, evidence of Late Archaic as well as Middle Woodland material culture, such as Mockley ceramics, was found, and within the Mason Row housing area, ceramics related to the Late Woodland/Proto-historic were identified (Blanton et al. 2005: 32). WMCAR
excavated a total of 27 units at the site (Blanton et al. 2005: 32), and seven features related to Native American history were recorded as well, of which features 2 and 3 (located in the forest bluff portion of the site) demonstrated Middle Woodland deposits of ceramics (Blanton et al. 2005: 49). A significant feature identified at the site is a Late Woodland/Proto-historic era ditch in the Mason Row housing area, which may have been a defensive boundary line (Blanton et al. 2005: 52). There is also evidence of a Late Woodland period house structure in the Mason Row house area (Blanton et al. 2005: 55-56).

WMCAR identified 6,261 Native American artifacts from Kiskiak, of which 4,818 were ceramic sherds (Blanton et al. 2005: 62-63). Ninety-seven percent of the sherds with unidentifiable surface treatment are shell tempered, and the remaining three percent are lithic tempered. Of the 1,788 sherds with identifiable surface treatment, 665 are simple-stamped and 687 are fabric-impressed, and these sherds are primarily shell tempered. There are also 150 incised sherds (predominantly shell tempered) that are likely Rappahannock Incised, although some of the sherds show cord-marking or simple-stamping, which indicates that the incising practice occurred before and after the Rappahannock Incised period (Blanton et al. 2005: 64). The Middle Woodland ceramic wares at the site include cord-marked and net-impressed sherds (of which 28% are lithic tempered and may be Popes Creek ceramic ware). The examples of lithic tempered cord-marked ware may be identified as Varina (Blanton et al. 2005: 65). There are 143 cord-marked and shell tempered ceramics (Mockley ware) and 43 net-impressed and shell tempered ceramics. The ceramic evidence indicated that the site was primarily occupied during the Late Woodland/Proto-historic (A.D. 1200-1622) with “moderate intensity” in
the Middle Woodland period (which WMCAR dates to primarily 500 B.C.-A.D. 200) (Blanton et al. 2005: 65). In terms of lithics, the majority are either quartz or quartzite, and they primarily include flakes, of which most are debitage (Blanton et al. 2005: 65-66). The next most common lithic type is fire cracked rock (Blanton et al. 2005: 68). Nine cores and 11 groundstones were found as well as 9 projectile points (Blanton et al. 2005: 66-67). Faunal analysis (364 animal bones) and botanical analysis from sixty liters of soil samples was carried out for the site as well (Blanton et al. 2005: 68-69).

Excavations at Kiskiak resumed in the summer of 2010 led by Dr. Martin Gallivan of the College of William and Mary. Twelve test units were positioned in the forested bluff area where WMCAR had placed several units. One of the most significant units was Test Unit 28, which extended vertically for 10 strata and included a large shell midden deposit. The focus of this study is the ceramics from this unit. Test Unit 28 resembles Test Unit 4 that was excavated by WMCAR. WMCAR explains how Test Unit 4 is “an unusually complete cultural historical sequence for Tidewater Virginia” (Blanton et al. 2005: 41), which consequently means that Test Unit 28 is as well. The earliest date from the unit is about 1.26-1.46 m below ground surface in Level IVd and IVe, and a date to the Late Archaic (radiocarbon indicates 1610-1110 B.C.) is found in Level IVd (Blanton et al. 2005: 41). Above this layer is a Middle Woodland deposit, and the radiocarbon date indicates A.D. 250-290 (Level IVa- IIIId). Radiocarbon from levels above this indicated a Late Woodland deposit (A.D. 1440-1660) (upper levels of Stratum III). In Stratum I and II of Unit 4, there are fewer artifacts and “interpreted mainly as postoccupational accumulations” (Blanton et al. 2005: 41). The stratigraphic sequence of TU 28 is similar to this pattern, and although radiocarbon dates have not been taken for
this unit, the dates from TU 4 are useful due to corresponding stratigraphic patterns. It also seems that TU 4 had been on the periphery of the shell midden while TU 28 was more in the midst of the midden due to the large quantities of shells excavated from it (Gallivan, personal communication, 2010). The excavation of TU 28 may suggest a larger Middle Woodland occupation at the site than had previously been expected. Also, located near TU 28 was a set of test units that demonstrated a posthole pattern potentially representing a structural building. This association may represent a living pattern (a possibility might be food processing) related to the shell midden deposit.

Although this study focuses on a single test unit, Test Unit 28 is still informative as a historically deep and materially rich deposit. The stratified levels of Test Unit 28 encompass periods in time in which regional archaeology has demonstrated changes in settlement and subsistence practices and relationships between different groups of peoples (e.g. exchange and migrations). This test unit provides a space in which chronological change and processes can be discussed in a stratified and localized place. Its association with shellfishing is also useful in terms of engaging the Middle Woodland period’s broader archaeology since estuarine and riverine resources are significant attributes of the Chesapeake’s Middle Woodland period. Although this test unit may not be identical to the patterning of other archaeological sites in the region, it does represent a well-documented transition of stratified deposits at Kiskiak, which makes it possible to interpret what occurred in this particular place.

This chapter has illustrated interesting trends and defining characteristics that have been identified through archaeological research of the Middle Woodland period of the Chesapeake, including population movements, increasing sedentism, exchange and
interactions between groups, and prevalence of shellfishing and utilization of estuarine
and riverine resources. The following chapter will utilize this knowledge of the
archaeological record for the region and time period in conjunction with theoretical
concepts of gender and social relations to examine TU 28 and its ceramics in closer
detail.
Chapter 4: Kiskiak Test Unit 28 Ceramic Analysis

Having illustrated the theoretical concepts and questions to be addressed in this study and having reviewed archaeological evidence from the Middle Woodland period of the Chesapeake, I turn to the data from Kiskiak. The following is an analysis of the ceramic assemblage from Test Unit 28 (excavated in 2010) of the Kiskiak site (44YO2). All of the sherds (approximately 1,384 sherds in total) in this research study are from a single test unit (Test Unit 28) that exemplified stratified deposits dating from the early Middle Woodland period (about 500 B.C.-A.D. 200) through the Late Woodland/Proto-historic (about A.D. 1400-1600). Although this study is focused on one test unit, the stratified deposits and material culture from Test Unit 28 provides a significant example for interpreting cultural and social processes in the region and the Middle Woodland period. The majority of strata in the unit (from Stratum 5 to Stratum 10) are part of a shell midden feature from which thousands of shells, representing various types of shellfish, were excavated. Artifacts from the excavation are currently being cataloged, and a limitation to this analysis is that there are remaining artifact categories that are not incorporated into the discussion. However, this project is focused on the ceramics of TU 28 since ceramics can be considered to be a means of exploring cultural traditions and social practice, and TU 28 includes stratified deposits representing an extensive time depth in the cultural geography. While the analysis of the data from the 2010 excavation is still in progress, there is useful information to be gleaned from the ceramic typology and measurements from TU 28, especially in terms of understanding culture change, gender relations, and the site’s history.
The results of the WMCAR project indicate that there are deposits at the site representing the Late Archaic through Late Woodland/Proto-historic eras (Blanton et al. 2005: 27). The time period of particular interest in this project is the era of Middle Atlantic history known as the late Middle Woodland or Middle Woodland II (from about A.D. 200-800/900), which is a part of the larger Middle Woodland period, dating to about 2,300 years ago until about 1,100 years ago (Stewart 1992: 1). The majority of the sherds from the shell midden feature of TU 28 are considered to be the ceramic type known as Mockley, which is indicative of the late Middle Woodland. The following chapter discusses qualitative (surface treatment, tempering, ceramic type, shape) and quantitative (diameter, size, volume) results from the analysis of the ceramic sherds. These results are meaningful in the interpretation of gender relations, social practice, and traditions in the Middle Woodland period and in change over time from the Early Woodland to the Proto-historic/Contact period.

**Research Design**

Test Unit 28 consisted of ten strata, of which stratum 6 through 10 were the most intact, and 26 levels (Stratum 1: Level a; Stratum 2: Level a; Stratum 3: Level a; Stratum 4: Level a; Stratum 5: a-c; Stratum 6: Level a; Stratum 7: Level a-d; Stratum 8: Level a-b; Stratum 9: Level a-h [only Level a-c had ceramics], Stratum 10 (Level a-b). As previously discussed, stratum 5-10 were predominately part of the shell midden, and these levels of the unit are of the most interest in terms of talking about gender relations and social practice as it relates to shellfish processing and the Middle Woodland period. The data collection also had a sampling strategy that involved only taking measurements for sherds greater than 3 cm in size. However, for one context in the unit, the large
number of sherds made it more efficient to measure half of the sherds that measured 3 cm and over.

Data were collected on the sherds in terms of temper, surface treatment, and portion of the vessel from which the ceramic came. For temper, the classification options included sand, lithic, shell, and undetermined tempering. For surface treatment, the classification options included cord-marked, fabric-impressed, net-impressed, plain, simple stamped, and undetermined. For portion of the vessel, the classificatory options included base, rim, wall, and undetermined. These characteristics were used to determine ceramic type categories based on ceramic typologies for the region (Rice 1987: 274-277).

The primary typology used was that of Keith T. Egloff and Stephen R. Potter’s “Indian Ceramics from Coastal Plain Virginia” (1982). The ceramic types represented in the ceramic assemblage from TU 28 include Accokeek Creek, Popes Creek, Mockley, Townsend, Rappahannock Incised, Roanoke Simple Stamped, Plain, and undetermined. Accokeek Creek ceramics have been described as “vessels are large to medium, with conical or semiconical bases and straight or slightly everted or inverted rims” (Egloff and Potter 1982: 99). The ceramic is sand tempered, sometimes including quartz as well, and can be cord-marked, net-impressed, or fabric-impressed in terms of surface treatment (Egloff and Potter 1982: 97-99). This ceramic type tends to date to approximately 800 to 300 B.C. (Egloff and Potter 1982: 99). Egloff and Potter describe Popes Creek as a vessel type that involves “large, wide-mouthed jars with direct rims and walls that descend in slight, even curves to a conical or semiconical base” (Egloff and Potter 1982: 99). The ceramic is sand tempered and net-impressed, and it dates to approximately 500 B.C. to A.D. 200 and is primarily located in coastal Virginia (Egloff and Potter 1982: 99).
Mockley ware ceramic vessels have been described as “medium to large, coil-constructed jars with direct rims and rounded or semiconical bottoms” (Egloff and Potter 1982: 103). The ceramic type is shell tempered and is predominately cord-marked, and it dates to about A.D 200/300 to 800/900 (Egloff and Potter 1982: 103). Townsend ceramic vessels are described as “wide-mouthed jars, varying from large to small, which are coil-constructed, with direct rims, conoidal bodies, and rounded or semiconical bases” (Egloff and Potter 1982: 107). They are shell tempered and fabric-pressed, and they tend to date to about A.D. 945-1590 (Egloff and Potter 1982: 107-109). A type of Townsend ceramic is Rappahannock Incised, which resembles Townsend ceramics but with incising in its surface treatment as a decoration (Egloff and Potter 1982: 107). Roanoke Simple Stamped ceramics are simple stamped and have a linear surface treatment from the application of a “thong-wrapped paddle” (Egloff and Potter 1982: 109-111). These vessels are described as “small and globular with straight to slightly excurvate rims” and are dated to be from A.D. 800 to the arrival of Europeans in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Egloff and Potter 1982: 109-111). The ceramic classification of “plain” does not represent a particular ceramic type but is used as a description for ceramics in the assemblage that do not have specific surface treatment. The analysis of the sherds include a chronological interpretation of the sherds in terms of ceramic traditions, which have been broadly defined as Mockley (representing the Middle Woodland), Townsend (representing a transition into the Late Woodland), and Roanoke (representing a transition into the Proto-historic/early colonial era).
The quantitative measurements in this analysis includes axial and profile diameters, thickness, and volume calculations. The axial and profile diameters (see figure 1; from Hagstrum and Hildebrand 1990: 389) were based on a methodology developed by Michael Klein in his dissertation (1994) and presentation at the Eastern State Archaeological Federation Conference in 2003. Klein illustrates an alternative method to using a system based on matching the sherd’s curvature to a series of concentric circles for determining the diameter of a vessel based on a sherd (Klein 1994: 139-140). This involves taking measurements of the length of a chord of a circle of which the sherd is a part and of the line perpendicular to the chord (see figure 2, from Klein 2003) and then utilizing the following equation: \( D = \frac{(AC/2)^2 + (BD)^2}{BD} \) (Klein 1994: 139-140; Klein 2003). These measurements were taken with a depth/angle gage, which was recommended by Klein (2003). Another formula utilized was that of volume, and the diameter calculations enabled this measurement to be recorded. This calculation was done in order to try to approximate how large the vessel from which the sherd had originated may have been. The formula utilized for volume is \( \frac{4}{3} \pi (\text{Axial Radius})(\text{Axial Radius})(\text{Profile Radius})/2 \), which is based on the volume calculation for an ellipsoid (but is divided in half so as to take into account that a vessel would not be a full ellipsoid in shape) (Rice 1987: 219-222; tutorvista.com; variation of Hagstrum and Hildebrand 1990: 400). The results of this calculation were classified in the following
system: \(<10,000 \text{ cm}^3 = \text{Very Small}, 10,000-50,000 \text{ cm}^3 = \text{Small}, 50,000-100,000 \text{ cm}^3 = \text{Medium}, 100,000-500,000 \text{ cm}^3 = \text{Large}, \text{ and }>500,000 \text{ cm}^3 = \text{Very Large.}\)

The final calculation is that of a ratio based on the relationship between the profile diameter and the axial diameter calculated for each sherd (Rice 1987: 215-217). This is derived from dividing the profile diameter by the axial diameter. Values greater than 1 indicate that the profile is greater than the axial diameter, and values less than 1 indicate that the axial diameter is greater than the profile diameter. This difference was used to make a general assessment as to whether or not the vessel had been a jar (values greater than 1) or a bowl (values less than 1). This calculation was inspired from the discussion in Hagstrum and Hildebrand’s article, the discussion of vessel forms in *Pottery and Archaeology* (1993) by Clive Orton, Paul Tyers, and A.G. Vince (1993:156-158) and *Pottery Analysis* (1987) by Prudence Rice (1987: 215-217), and depictions of vessel shapes by Mintcy D. Maxham (Maxham 2000: 343).

**Results**

The following presents how the data from the ceramics from TU 28 were analyzed and an exploration into the possibilities for how gender relations and social practice may be interpreted at the site. As previously discussed (Chapter 2), a potential way of discussing gender based on the ceramics is to make the connections between women’s work and shellfishing, which has been ethnographically and historically documented as a process closely linked to women (Claassen 1991: 276-277). Although it is problematic to essentialize associations between women and ceramics, it may be possible to discuss connections between women’s work and pottery by utilizing the fact that women played an important role in “adopt[ing] and adapt[ing] pottery” types and
technology in North America (Claassen 1997: 83). Therefore, connections between women’s work, pottery, and shellfishing are assumed in this analysis.

*Ceramic Types and Counts*

**Table 1: Test Unit 28 Ceramic Surface Treatments by Stratum**

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<th>Stratum</th>
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<th>Simple Stamped</th>
<th>Plain</th>
<th>Net Impressed</th>
<th>Undetermined</th>
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**Table 2: Test Unit 28 Ceramic Types by Stratum**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stratum</th>
<th>Mockley</th>
<th>Townsend</th>
<th>Rappahannock</th>
<th>Plain</th>
<th>Fabric</th>
<th>Roanoke</th>
<th>Popes Creek</th>
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<td>77</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>678</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ceramics’ distribution throughout Test Unit 28 was assessed in terms of quantity, physical characteristics, and ceramic type. Tables 1 and 2 show the counts for each stratum based on surface treatment and ceramic type derived from the characteristics
of the sherds. The bar graph in figure 3\(^1\) demonstrates the distribution of the ceramic types by stratum. It is evident that the majority of the ceramics are from Stratum 6-9 with a peak in Stratum 8, which encompasses most of the shell midden feature. This graph and the quantity of shell also evident in Stratum 5-10 indicates that there was a significant amount of activity occurring at the site during this period involving the use of large amounts of ceramics and shellfish. Ceramics appear in every stratum of the unit, which also signifies continuity and that the site and area was occupied, or at least utilized periodically, throughout a long span of time.

\(^1\) Graphs and statistical tests generated with PASW Statistics 18.0 (IBM SPSS Statistics Standard Edition) and from Martin Gallivan class notes 2010, Robert Drennan 2009, and Marija Norusis 2010.
Figures 4 and 5 illustrate the distribution of the ceramic types throughout the unit in graphical form. Figure 4 shows the entire span of the test unit, and figure 5 focuses on the strata associated with the shell midden feature. The graphs depict that the ceramic types for the test unit change over time in a sequential manner fitting to the chronological record of ceramic types in the region (Egloff and Potter 1982). It seems that the test unit can be relatively dated based on the ceramics present in each stratum since they seem to depict chronological deposits. The graphs show that there are three prominent transitions in ceramic type. Between stratum 9 and stratum 10 there is significant change from Accokeek Creek ceramics in stratum 10 to Mockley ceramics in Stratum 9. Mockley
ceramics dominate stratum 8 and 9 but filter to lesser amounts in stratum 7 (forming the second transition) where Townsend ceramics become the prominent type. The third transition is between stratum 7 and 6 where in stratum 6 the dominant ceramic type becomes Roanoke Simple Stamped. These transitions may represent interactions and exchange that led to innovations in ceramic technology and development of new traditions. As discussed in Chapter 3, it is possible that the changes in ceramic type may be due to migrations and new cultural groups moving into the region. Michael Stewart writes that “there is the possibility that migrations and population replacement may have affected portions of eastern Virginia and the Middle Atlantic region,” and he references linguistic analysis by Stuart J. Fiedel who argues that there are “two waves of proto-Algonquian migrations through the region sometime between 600/200 B.C. and A.D. 300/700” (Stewart 1992: 21-22; Fiedel 1990). Ceramic types may have changed through interaction and intermarriage between different groups. This relates to gender relations because if intermarriages were occurring between different groups then this may have led to changes in women’s pottery production (Deetz 1965). The implementation of shell tempering and the arguments made by Rita Wright in terms of pottery innovations made by women also relates to this change in ceramic types over time (Wright 1991).
Another way of examining the data based on counts of ceramics is to use calculations of diversity. Calculations of diversity in terms of evenness based on the ceramic types in the test unit were conducted. If the undetermined ceramic types are eliminated from the equation, there are 7 categories in total (therefore, $k = 7$ and $H_{\text{max}} = 0.85$) (Accokeek Creek, Popes Creek, Mockley, Townsend, Roanoke, Rappahannock, and Plain). The calculations are as follows:

**Table 3: Evenness Calculations by Stratum**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stratum</th>
<th>Number (n)</th>
<th>Evenness (J)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is displayed graphically in figure 6. The results of the evenness calculation show that the most uneven strata are stratum 8-9, which reflects the large numbers of Mockley
ceramics in these strata. It also shows that stratum 7 is the most even stratum in the unit and reflects the most diverse array of ceramic types. This balanced number of sherds per category in stratum 7 may be significant since it is possible that stratum 7 represents a transitional point at the site, signifying through the diversity of ceramic types interaction and exchange with various cultural groups. This may also reflect the discussion of migrations from Chapter 3 and Custer’s observation of potential migrations occurring around the time of the Middle to Late Woodland transition (Custer 1990).

Vessel Types and Size

The ceramic data were also analyzed in terms of vessel size and type in this analysis. Figure 7 demonstrates a graph of vessel size for each stratum of the test unit when sherds that had diameter volumes greater than 60 cm were filtered out (it was assumed that accurate diameters could not be calculated for the sherds that exhibited diameters greater than 60 cm) as well as portions of the vessels that were bases. In

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2 Outliers were filtered out based on an initial boxplot. When the labels of very small to very large are applied to all of the data, the graphical representation is demonstrated in figure 8.
addition to volume, axial diameters of the vessels were analyzed to assess the size of the vessels. Figure 9 shows this distribution for the rim fragments when sherds with diameters greater than 60 cm are filtered out, and figure 10 shows this distribution when wall sherds are included with the rim sherds.

Based on figure 7, it seems that a change is occurring in terms of vessel size in between stratum 7 and stratum 8. It may be that stratum 7 marks the period of time when agriculture and maize became a more prominent subsistence type in the Late Woodland period (Stewart 1992: 13). The smaller axial diameter represented for stratum 8 as opposed to stratum 7 in figure 9 may also be indicative of different uses for the vessels so that the vessels of stratum 7 may have been more open and easier to access than the vessels of stratum 8. This could also be reflective of a change in subsistence practices and the increase in storage due to agricultural practices as suggested by Custer (1994: 40). There also seems to be broader breadth of volume for vessels in stratum 8, which may suggest that vessels were being used for different purposes (for example bowls versus jars, which will be discussed further). The Middle Woodland period in the Middle Atlantic has been considered to be a time of feasting and group gatherings related to fish
runs and shellfishing (Stewart 1998: 174-177), and this may be reflected in the variation in volume for vessels in stratum 8 and stratum 9, which represent the Middle Woodland component of the test unit. Figure 8 also demonstrates a change in volume size between stratum 9 and stratum 10, and although there is a small sample size for stratum 10, this difference marks one of the transitional points evident in ceramic type as discussed earlier. It may represent a greater quantity of bowls in stratum 8 than in stratum 7. This change also emphasizes the possibility that ceremonial activity was occurring at the site during the Middle Woodland period, which suggests that there may have been interactions and intermarriages occurring between different groups.

In terms of vessel shape or type, figures 11 (which excludes features 139 and 140) and 12 (which only looks at rim sherds) demonstrate the relationship between jars and bowls for each stratum in the shell midden feature of the unit. It is clear from both graphs that there is an increase in jars from stratum 9 to stratum 5 and a decrease in bowls from stratum 9 to 5. Stratum 10 shows that there are only jars present, and this may be related to its small sample size. However, it may be representative of a change in social
practice between stratum 9 and stratum 10. A nonparametric rank order statistics test was run to test the relationship between jars and bowls. The null hypothesis assumes that there is not an association between the stratum levels and the vessel type. The test showed that Spearman’s rho = 0.657 and p = 0.008. The results therefore showed that it is extremely unlikely that stratum levels and vessel types are not associated (Drennan 2009: 159). A chi square test for independence was also used to assess the relationship between the strata and the vessel types. Stratum 5 and 6 were grouped in a category referred to as “Roanoke,” stratum 7 was designated as “Townsend,” and stratum 8 and 9 were defined as “Mockley.” The test results showed that Pearson’s Chi-Square = 5.309, df = 2, and p = 0.07. This value for p according to Drennan means that it is not very likely that the null hypothesis, which is that there is no association between the stratum and the vessel types, is true (Drennan 2009: 159). However, Crammer’s V is 0.132, which does not show a strong relationship between stratum and vessel type. Overall, these tests suggest that there is a relationship and that the pattern represented in the bar graphs is significant.

Another method of examining the ceramic data is to look at the presence and absence of decoration on the sherds. Figure 13 shows the distribution of decorated sherds in the test unit, and figure 14 shows the presence of decorated sherds based upon vessel type. The large number of decorated sherds in stratum 7 may reflect the fact that Rappahannock Impressed ceramics have decorations and are a type of Townsend ceramics, which is the predominant type of ceramic in stratum 7. However, the presence of decorative bowls in stratum 8 may be significant for interpreting the presence of ceremonial occasions and may reflect the arguments made by Stewart regarding Abbot
Zoned Incised (AZI) pottery, a decorative ceramic type found at certain sites in the Middle Woodland period, and feasting practices (Stewart 1998: 174-177; Stewart 1992: 11-12). AZI is not present in TU 28 but may relate to decorative ceramics in TU 28 in terms of having symbolic purposes (Stewart 1998: 174-177; Stewart 1992: 11-12). This also relates to gender relations since during ceremonial occasions women were often preparing the food, and the potential occurrence of ceremonial occasions at Kiskiak therefore reflective of the labor and practice of women at the site and during the Middle Woodland period (Joyce 2010: 229). Also, Katherine Spielmann refers to vessels used during ceremonial occasions as “agents for human action” since “visibility changes the social context of the pot use” (Spielmann 2004: 227). These decorated vessels may have had to be produced for ceremonial occasions (Spielmann 2004: 227) and may be reflective of women’s ideas and creativity.
Kiskiak and Maycock’s Point Ceramic Comparison

Curvature measurements were taken from the 25 AZI ceramics from the Maycock’s Point site (these sherds were studied in Laura Steadman’s 2008 undergraduate thesis) as well as from a sample of Mockley ware (cord-marked and shell tempered wall fragments) from the shell midden at the site (12 from catalog 44PG1/32K2 and 13 from context 44PG1/32G4 [several of the AZI sherds shared these same context numbers]). These curvature measurements enabled the diameter and volume calculations to be made and the classifications of jar versus bowl and general size categories to be labeled for these sherds. The relationship between jars versus bowls based on AZI and Mockley categories is demonstrated in figure 15. The relationship between axial diameters based on AZI and Mockley categories is demonstrated in figure 16.

There is a slight difference in the relationship between the categories of bowl versus jar. Thirty-two percent of the sherds represent bowls in the AZI group while 12% of the sherds represent bowls in the Mockley group. This may reflect the idea that AZI was used in ceremonies or feasting events since there is a higher proportion of potential bowls when compared to the Mockley group. Also, when outliers are filtered, figure 17
The figure demonstrates the relationship between AZI and Mockley volumes, which indicates that overall Mockley vessels were larger than AZI vessels (although a number of cases had to be filtered for the AZI category). This also reflects the argument that AZI sherds at Maycock’s point may have been from small, bowl shaped vessels (Joshua Duncan in Steadman 2008: 62).

However, it appears that there is not a significant difference in the axial diameters (which is a potential reflection of vessel size) between the AZI and Mockley ware ceramics. An independent samples t test showed that according to Levene’s test, the population variances are equal since the significance level was 0.473 (therefore greater than the $\alpha = 0.05$) and that the data is therefore suitable for a t test. The first line of the table generated by SPSS can be used for determining the results of the t test, and it was found that $t = -0.560$, $df = 42$, $p = 0.579$, $n1 = 22$, and $n2 = 22$. Therefore, the hypothesis that $\mu_1 = \mu_2$ is accepted, which means that it is very likely that the AZI and Mockley ware ceramics are from the same population of ceramics (Drennan 2009: 159).

These results reflect Laura Steadman’s conclusions that AZI was being produced locally at Maycock’s Point (Steadman 2008: 58), and Martin Gallivan’s statement that instead of looking at “focused exchange,” the ceramics from Maycock’s Point “apparently highlight the regional movement of ceremonial practices and, possibly, of Middle Woodland populations” (Gallivan 2010: 11). Although the surface treatments of AZI and Mockley are different, it is likely that they were being produced by the same
individuals for different purposes (potentially symbolic or ceremonial in the case of the AZI) (Steadman 2008: 58). This population movement and introduction of new traditions is important to consider at Kiskiak as well since the differences in vessel shapes may be related to practice and traditions rather than from the result of direct exchange of different vessel forms. This also reflects Dennis Blanton and Stevan Pullins conclusions that on the James-York Peninsula various groups representing different cultural traditions lived concurrently in the Middle Woodland period and that Varina ceramic producers (or Accokeek Creek producers) may have been replaced by Mockley users over time (Blanton and Pullins 2004: 88-91; Gallivan 2010: 13-14).

**Summary**

The analysis of the ceramic sherds from test unit 28 revealed coherent patterns related to ceramic characteristics such as temper, surface treatment, and vessel portion, which enabled ceramic typological classifications to be made, as well as numerical measurements to determine calculations of vessel diameter and volume, which enabled the classification of vessel shape, or type, and vessel size. It appears from the data that Test Unit 28 represents continued occupation of the site from the early Middle Woodland through the Late Woodland/early colonial era. This is significant to the concepts of social practice since it signifies the continuity of place. Pauketat explains that there is a connection between the process of tradition making and history and that history is related to the “doing and being” or “practice” of every day life (Pauketat 2001: 4-5). This relationship between practice, history, and tradition may be reflected in the ceramic patterning and time depth of the test unit. The diachronic change in ceramic types throughout the stratified layers also presents the opportunity to relatively date the test unit
based on ceramic type. The ceramic types throughout the unit suggest three potential transitional points: between stratum 9 and stratum 10 where there is a large increase in ceramics in stratum 9 as well as a change from Accokeek to Mockley ware being the predominant ceramic type (also where the shell midden feature begins), between stratum 7 and 8 in which Townsend becomes the predominant ceramic type, and between stratum 6 and 7 in which Roanoke Simple Stamped becomes the predominant ceramic type. These transitions may be representative of change in cultural practice and traditions (Pauketat 2001: 4-5).

To summarize, the results from this analysis demonstrate two significant components: change over time (e.g. seriation, vessel morphology and size) as well as a significant Middle Woodland component. These results can draw connections between gender and the history of the Chesapeake region through the lenses of migrations and intermarriage (ceremonial activity, transitions in ceramic type), labor division and change over time (bowls versus jars, shellfishing to agricultural practice), and social roles within the community (preparation of food and vessels for ceremonial occasions, determination of mobility). In terms of migration and intermarriage, the three transitional points previously described may relate to Custer (1990) and Fiedel’s (1990) discussions of Algonquian migrations into the area, which may have led to intermarriage between different groups. It is likely that bowl shaped vessels were used for serving food (Maxham 2000: 241; Joshua Duncan in Steadman 2008: 62), and the large number of bowls and the presence of decorated bowls in what has been identified as the late Middle Woodland era of the shell midden (due to the large quantities of Mockley ceramics) may indicate feasting activities (Stewart 1998: 174-177; Stewart 1992: 11) or social practice
that differed from later periods of the site’s occupation. The significantly large quantity of ceramics in general in the Mockley/late Middle Woodland strata also demonstrates high levels of activity occurring at the site at this time. In terms of labor division and change over time, the decrease over time of sherds that may have been from bowls and the increase over time of sherds that may have been from jars in the test unit may represent changes in practice as well as in subsistence practices since the decrease in bowls and increase in jars correspond to the changing subsistence strategies of shellfishing to the addition of agriculture (Stewart 1992: 13; Turner 1992: 106). This change in subsistence strategies consequently reflects potential change in roles of women over time within their social group. Finally, in terms of social roles within the community, the data indicating feasting suggest that women may have been preparing food and decorative vessels for these occasions, and these ceremonies would have been reflections of their labor (Joyce 2010). The changes in ceramic type, such as shell tempering to prevent thermal shock, may also demonstrate the innovations of women (Wright 1991; Stewart 1992). Additionally, since shellfishing is an important component to the site and to subsistence practices, group mobility and women’s authority might be inferred from the continuity of use of the site due to women’s work (shellfishing) (Williams and Bendremer 1997: 145).
Chapter 5: Conclusions

Archaeologist Kenneth Sassaman criticizes scholars whose work implies that “anything primitive, anything prehistoric, must have consisted of human experiences that were somehow less complex and less sophisticated than those of history” (Sassaman 2010: 1). Although Sassaman’s focus is on the Archaic period of the Eastern Woodland (Sassaman 2010: 3), his theoretical perspective and arguments pertain to the study of all of what has been considered to be “prehistory,” including that of the Middle Woodland period. Sassaman studies the Archaic period through the lens of history as a process and utilizes “practice, agency, memory, and tradition” to draw his conclusions (Sassaman 2010: 5). He refers to Richard Dent’s (1995) analysis of the prehistoric Chesapeake, which focused on culture history studies as well as on evolutionary studies, arguing that as patterns of diversity were revealed archaeologists “tended to accept the notion that the diversity was part of an evolutionary process of gradualism and regionalization” (Sassaman 2010: 9). Sassaman writes that material culture studies have been instrumental in the development of culture history’s “building blocks” (“artifact types, cultural phases, and technological traditions”) but that the theoretical framework of culture history is “limit[ing] when contemplating historical process” (Sassaman 2010: 20). The study of the Kiskiak site’s TU 28 ceramic assemblage presented here aimed to work twofold: 1) making contributions to the culture historic understandings of the Chesapeake and 2) addressing social questions such as gender relations, the passing on of traditions, and social practice.

The Kiskiak ceramic assemblage from TU 28 demonstrated a change in ceramic typology over time that resonates with previous studies of ceramics in the region (Egloff
and Potter 1982) and is especially useful since the ceramics are from one test unit representing a deep chronologically stratified deposit (Gallivan, personal communication, 2010). Analysis of the ceramics through the constructions of vessel morphology was also illuminative in conceptualizing social processes. The change over time in the decrease in bowls and increase in jars from the Middle Woodland period through the early Colonial era is suggestive of change in social practice and in women’s labor. The abundance of ceramics and of vessels that were possibly bowls during the Middle Woodland period indicates potential ceremonial or feasting occasions since these bowls may have been used for serving food (Stewart 1992; Maxham 2000: 341). The production of AZI sherds at nearby sites such as Maycock’s Point during the Middle Woodland is also suggestive of a regional social practice, a pattern similar to what Sassaman calls “diaspora and coalescence” (Sassaman 2010: 48-50). Blanton and Pullins discuss migrations of people into the region accounting for the emergence of Mockley ware in the Middle Woodland (Blanton and Pullins 2004: 89). In addition, Sassaman describes a process of “ethnogenesis” reflected in the Stallings Island Culture, demonstrating how the development of ethnic distinctions in the Savannah region of Georgia and South Carolina was due to “identity and social rules organized along lines of gender” (Sassaman 2010: 48, 135-136). I argue that the three notable transitions in ceramic types in Test Unit 28 (from Accokeek Creek to Mockley, from Mockley to Townsend, and from Townsend to Roanoke) may also reflect this connection between gender and ethnogenesis.

Overall, the results from this analysis demonstrate two significant elements in the Kiskiak material: change over time and a distinctive Middle Woodland component. These results illuminate gender relations in the Middle Woodland period in the
Chesapeake, a topic that has not been extensively studied in the region. Principally, the ceramics suggest the movement of women through migrations and intermarriage (ceremonial activity and transitions in ceramic type), labor division and change over time (bowls versus jars, shellfishing to agricultural practice), and associated social roles within the community (preparation of food and vessels for ceremonial occasions, determination of mobility).

Migration and intermarriage are reflected in the ceramic assemblage during the three transitional points previously mentioned (1) between stratum 9 and stratum 10 where there is a large increase in ceramics in stratum 9 as well as a change from Accokeek to Mockley ware, 2) between stratum 7 and 8 in which Townsend becomes the predominant ceramic type, and 3) between stratum 6 and 7 in which Roanoke Simple Stamped becomes the predominant ceramic type) and indicate the possible migration of Algonquian-speakers into the region, and consequently potential intermarriages between groups in the area (Custer 1990 and Fiedel 1990). The large number of bowls and the presence of decorated bowls in what has been identified as the late Middle Woodland era of the shell midden (due to the large quantities of Mockley ceramics) may indicate feasting activities, a reflection of inter-group dynamics as well (Stewart 1998: 174-177; Stewart 1992: 11), or other social practices that differed from later periods of the site’s occupation. This ceremonial activity may have been a consequence of migrations and opportunities for communication between groups.

Labor division and change over time are suggested in the decrease in sherds in the test unit that may have been from bowls and the increase in sherds that may have been from jars. These changes may represent emerging subsistence strategies such as
shellfishing and increased dependence on horticulture (Stewart 1992: 13; Turner 1992: 106). This change in subsistence strategies reflects potential change in the role of women over time within their social group.

Finally, the data may reflect the social roles of women within the community. Evidence of feasting suggests that women may have been preparing food and decorative vessels for these occasions, where through which their labor would have been on display (Joyce 2010). The changes in ceramic type, such as shell tempering to prevent thermal shock, also demonstrate women’s innovations (Wright 1991; Stewart 1992).

Additionally, since shellfishing, a woman’s activity, is prominently reflected at the site over a long period of time, women’s authority might be inferred from the continuity of use of the site (Williams and Bendremer 1997: 145).

Through ethnography, documents, and archaeology and the utilization of analogy (Wylie 1985; Conkey and Gero 1991; Lightfoot 1995), it is possible to begin to view what has been defined as the “prehistoric” from a more social perspective than one that is primarily environmental and ecological. The application of these lines of evidence to the Middle Woodland period of the Middle Atlantic, especially Virginia, has demonstrated that social complexity can be examined through the lenses of gender relations, social practice, and ethnohistorical traditions.

Future Research

In the future, the incorporation of other artifact evidence, such as lithics, shell measurements, ethnobotanical analysis, and faunal analysis, will be useful in demonstrating the relationship of the ceramics to other elements of the test unit and may reveal new patterns. Radiocarbon dates will be instrumental in confirming a
chronological framework to the test unit and to the site. The inclusion of these other elements of the archaeological data will help formulate a more complete picture of the dynamics of gender and other social relations occurring at the site and in the Middle Woodland period of the Chesapeake. LA-ICP-MS analysis on the sherds may add to the understandings of pottery production at the site and to exchange within the region (Steadman 2008), and a cordage twist analysis may provide further insight on migration patterns (Hayden 2009). There are many avenues through which gender relations can be explored in the Chesapeake region (migrations and intermarriage, division of labor, and social roles have been mentioned throughout this study), and further analysis of data from Kiskiak, comparison of sites throughout the regions, and study of ethnography and ethnoarchaeology will move in the direction of a more comprehensive and detailed discussion of gender relations in the region and in the Middle Woodland period.

However, the current analysis demonstrates that the ceramics of Test Unit 28 present useful interpretations of social patterns and gender relations over hundreds of years of time at the Kiskiak site.
Appendix A: Photographs of Kiskiak Ceramics

Figure 1: Mockley - Context 82, Feature 140
Figure 2: Fabric Impressed - Context 68
Figure 3: Roanoke Simple Stamped - Context 66
Figure 4: Plain - Context 68
Figure 5: Rappahannock Incised - Context 66
Figure 6: Accokeek Creek - Context 91
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