



Exploring Human Exploitation of Nature in Florida Through 20th Century Postcards



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Introduction

- Postcards present a unique opportunity to explore **how humans have exploited Floridian nature** in a variety of ways, including through agriculture and tourism.
- Although the effects of human exploitation have been studied in individual areas, there have not been notable efforts to **analyze commonalities spanning multiple Floridian locations through the use of postcards**, which act as a way to visually chronicle these issues.
- I utilized the **Florida State University Card Archive** to create categories of investigation based on general themes observed in the postcards.

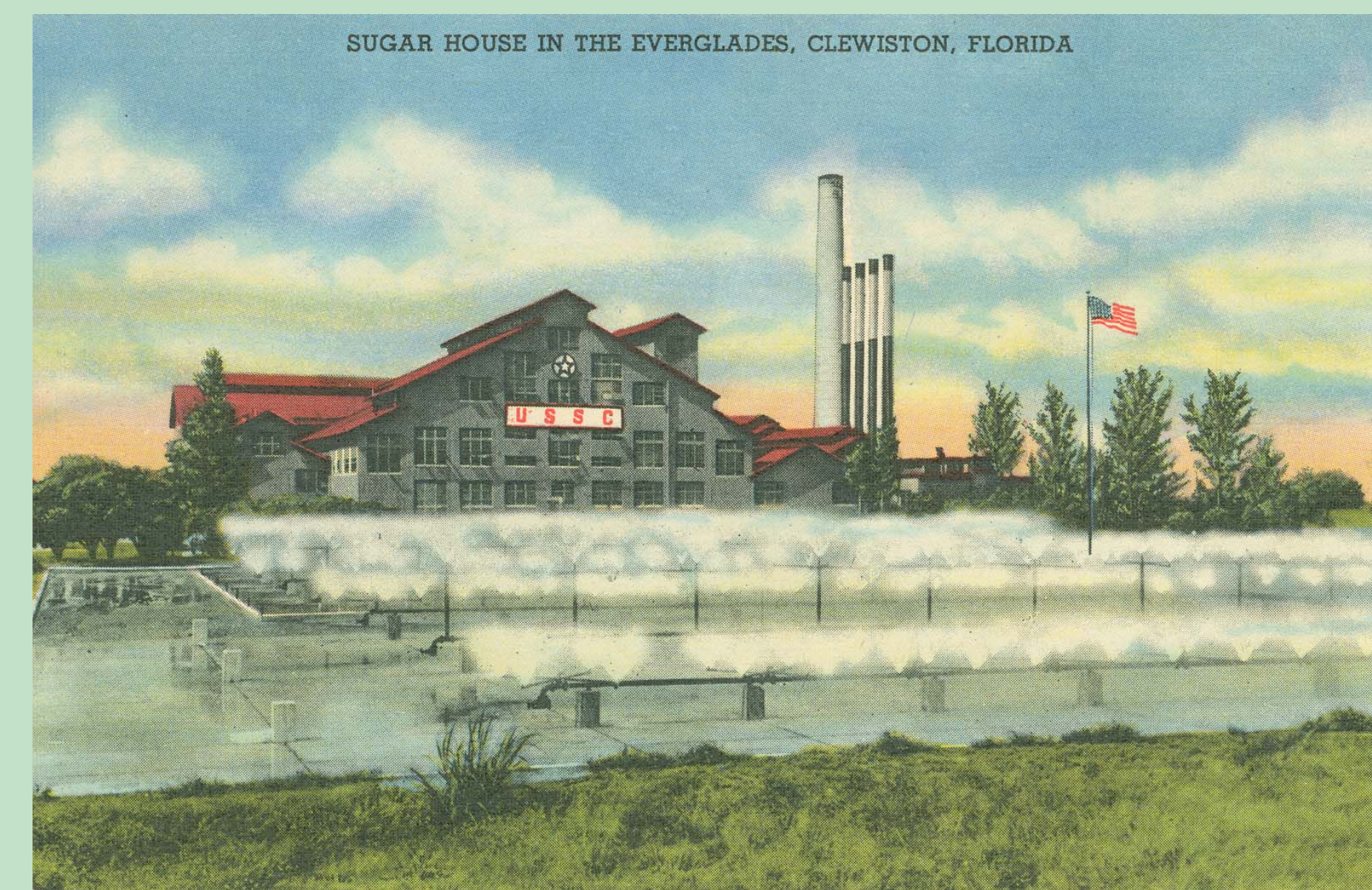
Methods

- I found a variety of cards illustrating exploitation of nature in different locations across Florida using the FSU Card Archive.
- I performed a preliminary analysis of the cards using an **inductive coding scheme**. That is, I created categories of analysis by observing trends within the cards and used those categories to focus my research.
- I supplemented my qualitative analysis with **secondary research** to provide context to the cards and the history they portray.

References

- William Patrick Hightower, *Disney and the Domestication of Nature*, Florida State University. (2004).
- Katherine Mohr, *How Sweet It Isn't: Big Sugar's Power Politics and the Fate of the Florida Everglades*, 7 Fla. A&M U. L. Rev. (2015).

Agriculture



A sugarcane processing plant in the Everglades



A harvest of sponges in Tarpon Springs, FL



Sugarcane crops in the Everglades

Tourism



The tourist attraction of Silver Springs, FL



A bird's eye view of Magic Kingdom in Disney World



Visitors swimming and boating at Wakulla Springs, FL

Results

- I found that the majority of the cards fell into at least one of two categories: **agriculture and tourism**.
- Agricultural cards, including those of the Everglades, Disney World, and Tarpon Springs, portrayed **exploitative farming, harvesting, and processing practices**.
- Tourism cards, including those of Wakulla Springs, the Everglades, Silver Springs, Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park, and Disney World, showed scenes of **tour boats, aquatic recreation, and human development**.

Conclusion

- The cards I analyzed spanned six Florida locations. In these cards, exploitation of nature was predominantly illustrated through agriculture and tourism. Secondary research revealed how **destruction of habitat, detrimental farming practices, and pollution** in these areas have taken a toll on the environment.
- An exploration of Floridian postcards depicting exploitation of nature lends noteworthy insight on how areas in Florida have been impacted by human encroachment, and thus highlight many relevant environmental issues that are yet to be resolved.
- Further research could investigate cards of other parts of Florida to find additional instances of exploitative practices, as well as analyze the relevance of those issues today.

Acknowledgements

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