

Barnard College History Department
Senior Thesis Seminar, 2024-2025
(HIST 3391- HIST 3392)



Instructional Staff for Traditional Track, 2024-2025

Instructor	Room	
Thai Jones	LEFRAK	101A
Dale Booth	MILBANK	324
Matthew Delvaux	MILBANK	327
Lisa Tiersten	BARNARD	409
Carl Wennerlind	MILSTEIN	806
Andrew Lipman	MILSTEIN	802

History Librarian:		
Rachel Finn	MILSTEIN	313

Course Description

The Senior Research Seminar is the capstone experience for all History majors. The objective is for students to produce a senior thesis on a topic of their choice that is based on original research in primary sources.

Each advisor may alter this syllabus/deadlines/policies to suit their section. This syllabus is a broad overview of the course schedule and your individual advisor will reach out with their modifications.

On Grading

Your advisor will give you grades on each assignment, and the official transcript grade for all passing students in the Fall will be a Y (which is how the registrar grades full year courses). Your final transcript grade for the course will be the average of your Fall and Spring grades, and a separate grade of Distinction, Pass, or Fail will be assigned to your final thesis, which will be decided upon by your advisor and second reader.

Fall Grading Breakdown

Participation	10%
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Thesis Proposal and Biblio	30%
Thesis Outline	15%
Chapter 1 Rough Draft	15%
Chapter 1 Full Draft	30%

Spring Grading Breakdown

Participation	10%
Chapter 2 Full Draft	30%
Chapter 3 Full Draft	30%
Final Draft	30%

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES FALL 2024

(All meetings are on Wed. 4:10-6 p.m. Once you have been assigned an advisor, they will go over their preferred format for group meetings and individual meetings before and during your Week 2 meeting.)

Week 1 (Sept. 4): GROUP MEETING in Milbank 323.

Students will fill out a form indicating their areas of interest and possible thesis topic(s). The faculty will divide the students into seminar groups. We will introduce a couple key themes of the thesis seminar: how to choose and narrow your topic, how to manage your time, and how to take notes and cite sources. **Your goal this week is to identify a likely thesis topic: if you are struggling with this, we recommend that you meet one-on-one with your advisor (at their office hours or by making an appointment) by the end of week 2.**

Week 2 (Sept. 11): GROUP MEETING with advisor group in designated room for each faculty member.

Your advisor will be in touch and let you know what specifically they would like you to read ahead of meeting. Digital copies of most of the completed theses of the past several years are available at <https://history.barnard.edu/senior-theses>.

Advisors meet with their thesis groups to introduce themselves and the thesis process. Groups will discuss how to choose a good topic and the essential elements of a thesis. **Your goal this week is to decide on a feasible topic and think about how to narrow it in a way that matches available sources.**

Week 3 (Sept. 18): GROUP MEETING IN DIANA 504 LIBRARY RESEARCH TOOLS

All students meet as a group with the history librarian from the Barnard Library, Rachel Finn. She will discuss the bibliographies and reference works available to students and give a brief demonstration of the use of digital media in research, and she will be available for questions and personal consultations after this meeting. **Your goal this week is to search the library catalog, the physical stacks, online databases, and the catalogs of accessible archives or special collections for potential sources.**

Week 4 (Sept. 25): INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

Students meet individually with their advisors to discuss their topics. Please bring to this meeting the first draft of your Thesis Proposal, which should consist of a short statement of their topic, along with a preliminary bibliography. **Your goal this week is to continue searching for and compiling your sources, prioritizing sources for your first chapter.**

Week 5 (Oct. 2): GROUP MEETING

****THESIS PROPOSAL AND PRELIMINARY BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE AT START OF CLASS****

Students present to their group a one-to-two page statement of their thesis topic and a working annotated bibliography of primary and secondary sources. The bibliography should be divided into two sections: primary sources and secondary sources (i.e., scholarly articles and books.) The working bibliography is a crucial aspect of the thesis process, so please pay particular attention to this part of the assignment. **Your goal this week is to submit a polished and detailed proposal.**

Week 6 (Oct. 9): INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

Students meet with their advisors, who will give feedback on their thesis proposals and bibliographies. **Your goal this week is to begin reading your available sources and taking notes so you can soon start writing your first chapter.**

Week 7 (Oct. 16): GROUP MEETING – PRESENTATION OF OUTLINES

****THESIS OUTLINE DUE AT START OF CLASS****

Students present to the group their tentative maps of the organization of their theses: rough number of chapters; sequence of topics, breakdown of work needed to finish, etc. We will also discuss time management and strategies for overcoming the terror of the blank page and getting started. **Your goal this week is to outline your first chapter and start writing.**

Week 8 (Oct. 23): NO MEETING – FOCUS ON WRITING CHAPTER 1 DRAFT

We encourage you to meet with fellow students in your section (or with friends from other sections) to start writing together. **Your goal this week is to continue writing your first chapter.**

Week 9 (Oct. 30): GROUP MEETING – SHARING CHAPTER 1 ROUGH DRAFTS

****CHAPTER 1 ROUGH DRAFT DUE AT START OF CLASS****

Students will bring a rough draft of their first chapter, consisting of *at least* five complete pages, to share with their fellow thesis writers for comments and feedback. **Your goal this week is to incorporate feedback from your peers and advisor and continue writing your first chapter.**

Week 10 (Nov. 6) NO MEETING – FOCUS ON WRITING CHAPTER 1 DRAFT

Your goal this week is to continue work on a full draft (between 15-20 pp long) of your first chapter.

Week 11 (Nov. 13): INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS – DISCUSSION OF CHAPTER 1 PROGRESS

Students meet with their advisors to get feedback on their rough draft, to share their progress on their writing thus far. **Your goal this week is to continue work on a full draft (between 15-20 pp long) of your first chapter.**

Week 12 (Nov. 20): GROUP MEETING – SHARING FULL DRAFTS

*****CHAPTER 1 FULL DRAFT DUE AT START OF CLASS****

Students will bring a full draft of their first chapter and present on their research thus far to the rest of their section. Sections may also discuss research and writing strategies and go over successes and failures in the research/writing process, lessons learned for success on future chapters. **Your goal this week is to complete a full draft (between 15-20 pp long) of your first chapter.**

Week 13 (Nov. 27): NO MEETING (day before Thanksgiving)

Your goal this week is to eat.

Week 14 (Dec. 4) INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS – DISCUSSION OF CHAPTER 1 DRAFT AND NEXT STEPS

Advisor returns the first chapter draft with feedback. Students will meet with advisors individually to discuss their drafts. **Your goal this week is to revise your first chapter by incorporating your advisor's feedback and have a roadmap for beginning your second chapter.**

****** WINTER BREAK ******

Winter Break Takeaway: Please keep in mind that the second chapter is due *three weeks into the second semester*, and the completed first draft of the thesis is due the second week in March. Also, if you haven't fully revised Chapter 1 yet, it'd be wise to do so during break.

SPRING 2025

Week 1 (Jan. 22): INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

Students meet with their advisors to discuss their outlines and mini-drafts and their plans for writing the next chapter(s). **Your goal this week is to resume writing your second chapter.**

Week 2 (Jan. 29): GROUP MEETING – SHARING CHAPTER 2 ROUGH DRAFTS

Students will bring a rough draft of their chapter, consisting of *at least* five complete pages, to share with their fellow thesis writers for comments and feedback. **Your goal this week is to incorporate feedback from your peers and advisor and continue writing your chapter.**

Week 3 (Feb. 5): NO MEETING – FOCUS ON WRITING SECOND CHAPTER

We encourage you to meet with fellow students in your section (or with friends from other sections) to start writing together. **Your goal this week is to continue writing your second chapter.**

Week 4 (Feb. 12): GROUP MEETING

****SUBMISSION OF SECOND CHAPTER FULL DRAFT AT START OF CLASS****

Students submit a complete draft of their chapter and share with their fellow thesis writers for comments and feedback. **Your goal this week is to finish a complete draft (between 10-20 pp long) of your second chapter.**

Week 5 (Feb. 19): INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS – DISCUSSION OF DRAFT

Advisor returns the second chapter draft with feedback. Students will meet with advisors individually to discuss their drafts. **Your goal this week is to revise your second chapter by incorporating your advisor's feedback.**

Week 6 (Feb. 26): NO MEETING – FOCUS ON WRITING THIRD CHAPTER

We encourage you to meet with fellow students in your section (or with friends from other sections) to write together. **Your goal this week is to start writing your third chapter.**

Week 7 (Mar. 5): NO MEETING – INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS AT ADVISER'S DISCRETION

We encourage you to meet with fellow students in your section (or with friends from other sections) to write together. **Your goal this week is to continue writing your third chapter.**

Week 8 (Mar. 12): GROUP MEETING

****SUBMISSION OF CHAPTER THREE FULL DRAFT *and* OTHER FULL CHAPTERS AT START OF CLASS****

Students submit a full draft of the thesis body (all three chapters, no introduction or conclusion), and share their body drafts with their fellow thesis writers for comments and feedback (of however much they can read in class time). **Your goal this week is to finish your third chapter along with any necessary revisions to your other two chapters.**

Week 9 (Mar. 19): *****SPRING BREAK*****

Your goal this week is to relax and recharge.

Week 10 (Mar. 26): INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS – DISCUSSION OF CHAPTER 3 AND BODY DRAFT

Advisors return the full thesis body draft with feedback and meets with students individually to discuss their work. Advisors work with students on plans for writing the Introduction and Conclusion of the thesis. **Your goal this week is to revise your body draft by incorporating your advisor's feedback, then start writing your Introduction.**

Week 11 (Apr. 2): GROUP MEETING – SUBMITTING INTRO ROUGH DRAFTS.

Students will bring a rough draft of their Introductions, consisting of *at least* five complete pages, to share with their fellow thesis writers for comments and feedback. **Your goal this week is to continue writing your Introduction and then start your Conclusion.**

Week 12 (Apr. 9): GROUP MEETING – PRESENTATIONS

Students will each make 10 minute presentations to the group summarizing their thesis. We'll also discuss the final submission strategy and logistics, including how to pick a title, how to make your Introduction gripping and your Conclusion satisfying, how to format your bibliography, etc. **Your goal this week is to finish your Introduction and Conclusion, then tend to the final details: proofreading, bibliography, title, etc.**

Week 13 (Apr. 16): NO MEETING – **SENIOR THESIS DUE**

Students submit one electronic copy of their thesis to their advisor. **Your goal this week is to finish your thesis.**

Week 14 (Apr. 23): NO MEETING – REST AND RELAXATION

Your goal this week is to return your books to the library.

Week 15 (Apr. 30): SENIOR THESIS PARTY – LOCATION TBA

All advisors and students will come together for food, drink, and congratulations. **Your goal this week is to celebrate your accomplishment.**

APPENDIX A: Grading Rubric for Senior Theses. The following factors will all be considered in evaluating your thesis.

1. Topic: A good topic should pose an interesting question that can be answered by available evidence. How well does the thesis do this?
2. Title: A good title is difficult to create. It should excite the reader's interest, while reducing the thesis's core idea to a few words.
3. Statement of Argument / Introduction: The introduction should draw the reader into the topic and make clear where the writer is going. The writer should pose an answerable question and articulate the argument she will construct to answer that question. Does the author accomplish these goals?
4. Discussion of the relevant scholarly literature / historiography: A good essay is part of a larger conversation among scholars. How well does the author define the scholarly discussion to which she wishes to contribute? Does she make clear what others have said on the subject, what her own position is, and what she is adding to the debate?
5. Primary Sources: Perhaps the main requirement of the senior thesis is that it convey a coherent argument that is centered on and driven by original research in primary sources. How well does the thesis satisfy this requirement?
6. Broader Context: To be successful an essay must provide sufficient context to make clear how the particular issues being explored relate to larger social, cultural, economic, political, or intellectual themes. Authors generally rely on secondary sources to establish this context. How rich is the secondary literature that the author has explored? Has the author provided adequate context? Has she struck the right balance between analysis and context?
7. Analysis of Evidence: On what kinds of evidence does the author rely? Is the evidence used sufficient to satisfy the author's goals? Has the author constructed a convincing argument based on that evidence?
8. Organization: The longer a piece of writing, the more critical the organization. How well organized is this thesis? Do the chapter divisions make sense in terms of the overall argument? Are their smooth transitions between sections?
9. Details: Is the note form (either footnotes or endnotes may be used) proper and consistent? Does the author effectively use notes to convey useful information tangential to the main argument? Are quotations over 35 words indented?

APPENDIX B: ANNOTATION

WHEN TO USE NOTES:

Direct quotations from both primary and secondary sources must be identified and credited in a note. (Direct quotations from *secondary* sources should be used very sparingly. Rather than quote directly from secondary texts, it works better in almost every case to frame the point you are taking from a secondary author in your own (concise) words and then to note the source(s) of your

paraphrase, giving the author, work, and page you are drawing from in the note, just as you would with a direct quotation.)

You must provide notes for ideas and interpretations that you have discovered in reading your sources, as well as for direct quotations and quantitative data. You should not, however, provide sources for facts that are widely known. If you wish to quote a primary source that you have found in a secondary work, you should give credit to the author of the secondary work. [Example: Charles H. Cooley, "Reflections upon the Sociology of Herbert Spencer," *American Journal of Sociology* 26 (1920): 129, as quoted in Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought* [1944] (New York: Beacon Press, 1955), 33.]

WHERE TO PLACE THE NUMBER OF A NOTE:

Place note numbers *at the end of the sentence* in which cited material appears. The number should appear slightly above the line in the text and should not be enclosed in parentheses. If your note contains more than one source, list them in the order in which they are cited in the text.

WHETHER TO PLACE NOTES AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE OR AT THE END OF THE THESIS:

You should print your notes in single-spaced form at the bottom of each page.

PROPER FORMAT FOR NOTE REFERENCES:

The first time you use any source, cite it in full. You need to use a full citation only the first time you cite any work. Every time thereafter, you should use the abbreviated short title form (see the section under this heading below).

FULL BIBLIOGRAPHIC BOOK CITATION

Author's full name (first name, initial, last name)

Complete title of the book (either underlined or in italics—whichever you choose, be consistent)

Editor, compiler, or translator, if any

Name of series in which book appears, if any, and volume or number in the series Edition, if other than the first

Number of volumes

Facts of publication -- city where published, publisher, date of publication Page number(s) of the particular citation'

EXAMPLES OF FULL CITATIONS FOR BOOKS:

Author: The first time an author's name appears it should be written in full. For footnotes, place the first name first and the last name last. (Only in the Bibliography should you place the last name first.)

If a work has more than three authors, use the first author's name and follow it with "et al.":

1. Judith A. Baer, *Equality Under the Constitutions: Reclaiming the Fourteenth Amendment* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), 105-130.

All book titles must *either* italicized or underlined (choose one or the other and then be consistent throughout).

NB: There must be a comma after the author's name, a comma between the place and date of publication, a comma after the parenthesis containing the publication place and date (but no comma before this or any other parenthesis), and a period at the conclusion of every note.

Editors and Translators: The names of editors and translators appear after the title, unless that person had primary responsibility for preparing the book for publication:

2. Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society*, trans. L. A. Manyon (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 69.
3. Thomas W. Copeland, ed., *The Papers of James Madison*, 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 49.
4. Deborah L. Rhode, ed., *Theoretical Perspectives on Sexual Difference* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 257-260.

Edition: References should generally be to a hardbound edition. If an edition other than the first is used, the number should be given:

5. John W. Hazard, *The Soviet System of Government*, 4th ed. rev. (Chicago, University of Chicago, 1968), 25.

Reprint: If you are using a book that has been reprinted, include the original date of publication, as well as the date of reprinting:

6. Gunnar Myrdal, *Population: A Problem for Democracy* [1940] (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1956), 15.

Multivolume Works: Works of more than one volume should be identified in notes by the number of volumes in the work and the number of the volume from which a quote has been taken. Some multivolume works have a general title and individual titles for each volume; in that case list the general title and then the particular title to which the note refers. Notes for books that are part of a series should list the title of the book in italics, followed by the title of the series in roman letters:

7. Edward T. James et al. eds., *Notable American Women: A Biographical Dictionary*, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 1:119.
8. Fernand Braudel, *The Identity of France*, vol. 2, *People and Production*, trans. Sian Reynolds (New York: Harper Collins, 1990), 237-238.
9. James Losh, *The Diaries and Correspondence of James Losh*, ed. Edward Hughes, 2 vols., Publications of the Surtees Society, vols. 171, 172 (Durham, England: Andrews & Co. for the Society, 1962-63), 2:200-212.

FULL CITATION FORM FOR ALL ARTICLES:

(To be used only the first time a work is cited. Every time thereafter, use the Short Title citation form as outlined below.

Author's Full Name (first name, initial, last name) Title of the Article (in quotation marks)
 Name of the periodical (either underlined or in italics) Number of the volume or issue
 Date of the volume or of the issue (year in parenthesis) Page number(s) of the particular citation
 EXAMPLES OF FULL CITATIONS FOR ARTICLES

Article in a Scholarly Journal:

9. Mary Louise Roberts, "Samson and Delilah Revisited: The Politics of Women's Fashion in 1920's France," *American Historical Review*, 98 (1993): 657.

NB: First name first; comma after the author's name; comma after the title of the article (should be placed inside the quotation marks); the name of the periodical must be placed either in Italics or underlined (choose one but be consistent); comma after the name of the periodical; comma (or semicolon) after the date of the periodical in parenthesis; period at the conclusion of the footnote.

Chapter in a Book:

10. Patricia O'Brien, "Michel Foucault's History of Culture," in Lynn Hunt, ed., *The New Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 25.
 Article in a Magazine:

11. Lucy Eisenberg, "Scientists vs. Animal Lovers: The Conflict That Never Ends," *Harper's*, November 1966, 101-10.

Citing a Newspaper:

12. *New York Times*, 11 August 1965, p. B3.

Citing a Government Publication:

13. U.S. Congress, Senate, *Congressional Record*, 9 October 1987, pp. 14011-12.

Citing a Court Case:

(Complex citation. Please follow carefully the form you have found in the secondary works you have consulted.)

Citing a Book Review:

15. Ronald M. Radano, review of *The Creation of Jazz* by Burton W. Puretti, *Reviews in American History*, 21 (December 1993): 671.

Citing a Well-Known Reference Book:

16. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th ed., s.v. "Prayers for the Dead."

Citing Dissertations:

17. Anna Louise Bates, "Protective Custody: A Feminist Interpretation of Anthony Comstock's Life and Laws" (Ph.D. diss., State University of New York at Binghamton, 1991), 34.

Unpublished Papers:

18. Poshek Fu, "Struggle to Entertain: The Ideological Ambivalence of the Wartime Shanghai Film Industry, 1942-1945" (paper delivered at the 108th Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, San Francisco, California, January 8, 1994), 15.

FULL CITATION FOR UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPTS:

Title of document, if any, and date Folio number (or box number) Name of collection

Depository and city where it is located EXAMPLES:

17. Lawrence E. Skelly to Joseph L. Hetzel, 6 March 1947, American Civil Liberties Union Papers, Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University, Princeton, N.J.

18. Diary of Lewis Tappan, 23 February 1836, Tappan Papers, Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

19. Joan Hayes, "Abortion Law: A Case History," January 1970, Box 3, National Abortion Rights Action League Papers, New York Public Library, New York, NY.

20. Thurgood Marshall, interview with Ed Edwin, February-June 1977, Washington, D.C., Columbia Oral History Program, Columbia University, New York, NY.

SHORT TITLE CITATIONS:

After the first reference to a particular source of whatever kind, all subsequent references should be shortened.

The shortened reference to a book should include only: Last name of the author
Shortened title of the book (underlined or in italics) Page number of the reference.

Example:

For the first citation of any book use the

Book, Full Title:

Judith A. Baer, *Equality Under the Constitution: Reclaiming the Fourteenth Amendment* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), 105-130.

For all succeeding citations use the

Book, Short Title:

Baer, *Equality Under the Constitution*, 105-130.

Example 2:

Book, Full Title:

Deborah L. Rhode, ed., *Theoretical Perspectives on Sexual Difference* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 257-260.

Book, Short Title:

Rhode, ed., *Theoretical Perspectives*, 257-60.

SHORT TITLE CITATIONS FOR ALL ARTICLES:

The shortened reference to an article should include only: Last name of the author,
Short title of the article,
Page numbers of the reference.

Example:

Article, Full Title Citation:

Mary Louise Roberts, "Samson and Delilah Revisited: The Politics of Women's Fashion in 1920's France," *American Historical Review*, 98 (June 1993): 657.

Article, Short Title Citation:

Roberts, "Samson and Delilah," 657.

A shortened reference to a manuscript source should include only the title and name of the collection.

APPENDIX D: BIBLIOGRAPHY FORM: At the end of your thesis you should provide a list of all the books and other references you have used. You may find it convenient to divide your bibliography into categories, such as Manuscripts, Interviews, Books, and Articles. Within each category works should be arranged alphabetically, by the author's last name.

SOME TYPICAL BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ENTRIES: The basic information given in a bibliographic entry parallels that given in a footnote, but note the differences in format. Note, for instance, that lines after the first are indented.

Books by a Single Author:

Cafe, William H. *Never Stop Running: Allard Lowenstein and the Struggle to Save American Liberalism*. New York: Basic Books, 1993.

Books by Two or More Authors (Note that each name appears in inverse order, and that semi-colon is used with three or more names):

Adler, J.H., et al. *The Pattern of U.S. Import Trade since 1923*. New York: Federal Reserve Bank of New York, 1952.

More than One Work by the Same Author:

Mead, Margaret. *Blackberry Winter: My Early Years*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1972.

_____. *Coming of Age in Samoa: A Psychological Study of Primitive Youth*. New York: Morrow, 1928.

Editor or Translator Named in Addition to Author:

Ariès, Philippe. *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*. Translated by Robert Baldick. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962.

Multivolume Work:

Hall, G. Stanley. *Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, and Education*. 2 vols. New York: Appleton, 1904.

Association/Institution as "Author":

American Historical Association. *Directory of American Historians*. Washington, D.C.: American Historical Association, 1994.

Edition other than the First:

Crews, Frederick, and Sandra Schor. *The Borzoi Handbook for Writers*. 2nd ed. New York: McGraw Hill, 1989.

When Paperback Reprint Is Used:

May, Henry. *The End of American Innocence: A Study of the First Years of Our Own Time, 1912-1917*. [1959]. Reprint, New York: Quadrangle, 1964.

Volume in a Series:

Lloyd, T.O. *Empire to Welfare State: English History, 1906-1985*. 3rd. edition. *The Short Oxford History of the Modern World*. Edited by J.M. Roberts. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

BIBLIOGRAPHY FORMAT FOR ALL ARTICLES:

Article in a Scholarly Journal:

Tonomura, Hitomi. "Black Hair and Red Trousers: Gendering the Flesh in Medieval Japan." *American Historical Review* 99 (February 1994): 129-154.

Article in a Popular Magazine:

Hamilton, Ian. "Spender's Lives." *The New Yorker*, 28 February 1994, pp. 72-84.

Manuscript Material:

William J. Brennan Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Unpublished Paper:

Ditz, Toby. "Secrecy and Candor in the Mercantile Writing of Eighteenth-Century Philadelphia." Paper read at the Eighty-Seventh Annual Meeting of the Organization of American Historians, 14-17 April 1994, in Atlanta, Georgia.

Interviews:

Appel, Cheri. Interview with Ellen Chesler, 1 February 1989, New York, NY. Sophia Smith Collection. Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts.