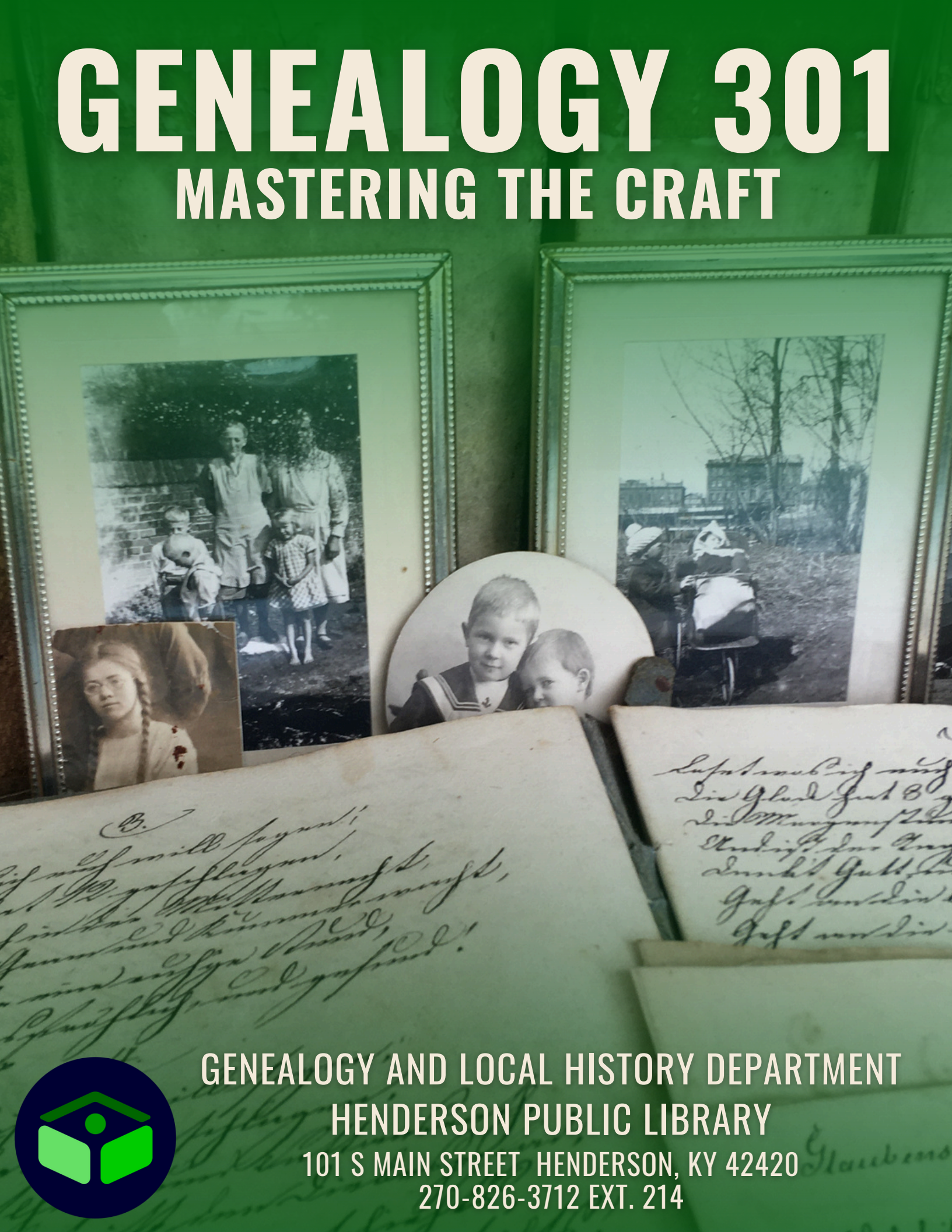


GENEALOGY 301

MASTERING THE CRAFT



GENEALOGY AND LOCAL HISTORY DEPARTMENT
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FAN CLUB RESEARCH

FAN, which stands for Friends, Associates, and Neighbors, is a powerful genealogical tool that involves studying not only direct ancestors but also the people around them. The FAN Club research method helps break through brick walls by providing additional context and leads through indirect evidence.

How to Conduct FAN Research?

Choose an ancestor to learn more about - usually someone with missing records, unknown origins, or uncertain relationships.

Gather the information that is known

- Gather all existing documentation:
 - Census records
 - Land deeds
 - Wills and probate records
 - Church registers
 - Immigration/naturalization papers
 - Military service
 - Newspapers
- Create a timeline of the ancestor's life to help identify when and where to focus.

Identify the FAN club (Friends, Associates, Neighbors)

- This includes:
 - People appearing in census records nearby
 - Witnesses on deeds or wills
 - Sponsors at baptisms
 - Military comrades
 - Church members
 - Migration companions
- These people often traveled, lived, or married into the same communities as the researcher's ancestor.

Research the Cluster Members

- Investigate these individuals **almost** as thoroughly as the direct ancestor:
 - Track their migration paths
 - Examine their vital records (birth, marriage, death)
 - Look at property records
 - Check family trees and DNA connections
- This can lead to clues about the ancestor's origins, maiden names, or familial relationships.

Analyze Relationships and Patterns

- Are there shared migration patterns?
- Is there intermarriage between families?
- Are there common naming patterns?
- Is there a proximity in records over time? If so, ask:
 - Why were they close?
 - Were they related?
 - From the same town or country?

Document Your Findings

- Use tools like:
 - Timeline charts
 - Family group sheets
 - Mapping software like [Google Earth](#), [Google Maps](#), or Google My Maps
 - FAN Club research spreadsheets (with columns for names, relationships, locations, documents, dates)
- Document sources and conclusions just like a research would for direct ancestors.

Reevaluate Brick Walls

- Re-examine previous genealogical brick walls with new evidence or theories based on the FAN Club data.
- Examples of probable new findings are:
 - A maiden name on a witness' record
 - An immigration companion that leads to a home town
 - A DNA match that leads to a neighbor's family

FAN Club research is an indispensable tool when there are:

- Vital records that are missing or destroyed (examples - 1890 Census or courthouse records destroyed)
- Common names
- Immigrant ancestors
- Slavery-era African American ancestors

DNA

Using DNA for genealogy research has become a valuable tool for discovering family history by:

- Confirming relationships
- Breaking through brick walls in traditional genealogy

There are three main types of DNA tests used in genealogy:

- Autosomal DNA (atDNA)
 - Inherited from both parents
 - Identifies relatives up to 5–7 generations back
 - Test companies - [AncestryDNA](#), [23andMe](#), [MyHeritage](#), and [FamilyTreeDNA](#)
 - Best for ethnicity estimates and cousin matching
- Y-DNA (Y-chromosome DNA)
 - Passed from father to son (paternal line)
 - Only males can take this test
 - Useful for tracing direct paternal lineage and surnames
 - [FamilyTreeDNA](#) offers the most comprehensive Y-DNA results
- mtDNA (Mitochondrial DNA)
 - Passed from mother to all children (maternal line)
 - Useful for deep maternal ancestry
 - [FamilyTreeDNA](#) offers the most comprehensive mtDNA results

Choose a DNA testing company based on the goal to be achieved

Company	Best for	Notes
AncestryDNA	Large database, autosomal	Great for cousin matching and ethnicity
23andMe	Health + ancestry	Includes health traits and genetic reports
MyHeritage	European ancestry, tools	Good international matches
FamilyTreeDNA	Y-DNA and mtDNA	Best for advanced lineage tracing
Living DNA	UK ancestry	Detailed British Isles breakdown

First steps

- Order the kit
- Follow instructions (usually saliva or cheek swab)
- Send kit back
- Results usually take 2–8 weeks

Analyze the ethnicity estimate

- An ethnicity estimate shares the geographical origins of an individual's DNA
- Remember:
 - Ethnicity reports may not always be precise
 - Ethnicity reports provide a broad regional overview, not absolute proof of heritage

Discover family members through DNA matches

- Most companies show a list of genetic matches (people who share DNA with the researcher)
- Look at shared segments, centimorgans (cM), and predicted relationships
The higher cM's shared, the closer the relationship
- Contact matches to collaborate on shared ancestors

Build and compare family trees

- Upload or build a family tree on the testing site
- Use DNA matches family trees to identify common ancestors

Use third-party tools for deeper analysis

- GEDmatch (some features are free; \$)
- DNA Painter (some features are free; \$)
- DNAGedcom (\$)

Break brick walls and confirm paper trails

- Use DNA to confirm relationships
- DNA can help identify unknown parents or ancestors (adoption or non-parental event)
- Combine traditional records (census, birth/death records) with DNA evidence

Respect privacy and ethics

- Always ask for permission before sharing someone else's DNA data
- Be mindful of sensitive discoveries (unexpected parentage)

PRESERVING FAMILY ORAL HISTORIES

Planning oral histories

- What is the goal?
 - Is the focus on genealogy, cultural traditions, major events, or everyday life?
 - Who is the intended audience (future generations, researchers, family members)?
- Identify participants
 - Start with older family members, but include a range of voices
 - Consider diversity in experiences—gender, migration, professions, etc.

Prepare for interviews

- Do background research
 - Review family trees, photos, and documents
- Learn about the historical context of the family's location and time period

Create a question list

- Organize by topic:
 - Childhood and upbringing
 - School and education
 - Work and careers
 - Marriage and family life
 - Cultural traditions
 - Major life events (wars, migration, crises)
- Ask open-ended questions, like:
 - "What was a typical day like when you were a child?"
 - "Can you describe your first job?"

Conduct the interview

- Environment
 - Choose a quiet, comfortable location
 - Schedule enough time

Use good equipment

- Recording tools: Use a digital audio recorder or a smartphone with a good mic. Video adds context but may make people self-conscious.
- Backup: Always record a backup if possible.

Helpful tips throughout the interview process:

- Ask permission to record and share.
- Start with easy questions.
- Be patient—allow pauses and follow emotional cues.
- Avoid interrupting; listen actively.
- Gently guide the conversation back on track if needed.

After the interview

- Transcribe or summarize
 - Transcriptions make the stories searchable and accessible.
 - Include emotion, laughter, and pauses when relevant.
- Label and organize files
 - Use clear filenames: Name_Date_Topic.mp3 or Transcript_Name.pdf
 - Note the date, location, and participants.
- Get consent
 - Have participants sign a release form if planning to publish or share their stories publicly.

Preserve and share

- Digital preservation
 - Store files in multiple formats (.mp3, .wav, .txt, .pdf).
 - Back up to external hard drives and cloud storage.
 - Use metadata: names, dates, keywords for searchability.
- Physical preservation
 - Print transcripts and store them with other family documents.
 - Include photos, copies of letters, or family trees for context.

Sharing options

- Family website or blog
- Printed memory books
- Archives or local historical societies
- [StoryCorps](#), [10 Million Names](#), or other oral history projects

Other helpful tips:

- Include visuals: Pair stories with photographs, documents, and memorabilia.
- Involve younger generations: They can help with tech and become stewards of the history.
- Regular updates: Oral histories can be living documents. Revisit and record updates as lives change.

TAX RECORDS

Researching tax records can uncover information about ancestors when other records (like census or vital records) are scarce or missing.

Recognize the value of tax records

- Tax records are documents created by local, county, state, or national governments to record property and income for taxation. They often include:
 - Name of the taxpayer
 - Date of taxation
 - Type and amount of property owned (land, livestock, slaves, etc.)
 - Amount of tax assessed and paid
 - Location of property
 - Neighbors' names

Why do tax records matter in genealogy? Tax records:

- Fill gaps between census years (especially before 1850)
- Prove residency and migration patterns
- Indicate wealth or economic status
- Help differentiate between individuals with the same name
- Provide clues to death dates (last year taxed)

Types of tax records to research:

- Poll/head taxes: Often assessed per adult male
- Land/property taxes: Based on acreage or property value
- Personal property taxes: Tax on livestock, tools, slaves, etc.
- Tithables (colonial era): List of taxable persons and property
- Inheritance/estate taxes: Tax on transfer of property after death

Where are tax records located?

- Identify where the ancestor lived and what time period

Records available through Henderson County Clerk (\$):

- Tax Records

Records available through the Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives (\$):

- Henderson County, Kentucky Tax Assessment Books – 1799-1804, 1808-1831, 1833-1837, 1839-1875, 1879-1880, 1882-1892, 1923-1958

Microfilm records available through the Henderson County Public Library:

- Henderson County, Kentucky Inventory, Appraisement, and Sales Books – 1840-1977
- Henderson County, Kentucky Tax Books – 1799-1959

Websites where census records are accessible include:

- Free websites:
 - [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org)
 - Ancestry.com Henderson County Public Library (In House)
 - Heritage Quest (access from home through your HCPL library card)
- Subscription-based websites (\$):
 - [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com)
 - [MyHeritage](https://www.myheritage.com)

Analyze the Records Carefully

- Track an individual or surname across multiple years
- Compare with land and probate records to verify relationships
- Changes in valuation can indicate economic shifts or family changes

Correlate with Other Records

- Census Records: Use tax rolls to locate people before 1850 or between censuses
- Land Records: Tax mentions of acres can lead to land deeds
- Probate Records: Disappearance from tax rolls can indicate death
- Court Records: Sometimes tax delinquents are sued or penalized

Remember to update the research log

- Keep a record of:
 - Repositories searched
 - Years and types of tax records reviewed
 - Names and details found
 - Analysis and connections made

MILITARY RECORDS

Military records uncover detailed information about ancestors, including their service, personal details, and family connections.

Helpful tip: Military records are accessible to the public 62 years after a service member has left the military.

Start by determining if and when your ancestor may have served:

- Timeline and age: Was the ancestor of military age during major conflicts (Civil War, WWI, WWII)?
- Country-specific military history: Know the relevant wars or mandatory service periods

What type of military records exist?

- Military records can vary widely but typically include:
 - Enlistment & service records identifies:
 - Name, birth date/place, occupation
 - Service number, rank, unit
 - Dates and locations of service
 - Physical descriptions
 - Draft registration cards (especially after World War 1) confirms:
 - Birth date
 - Address
 - Next of kin
 - Employer

Pension & veterans' benefits files include:

- Widow's applications
- Children
- Affidavits
- Marriage record
- Death certificates

Discharge Papers (DD-214) includes:

- Full military history summary:
 - Dates
 - Units
 - Awards
 - Reason(s) for separation

Military cemeteries and burial records confirms:

- Death
- Next of kin
- Burial location

Military unit histories and muster rolls

- Place the ancestor within the historical context
- May show movements, battles, promotions

RELIGIOUS RECORDS

Religious records will be incredibly valuable because these documents often pre-date civil records and provide detailed personal information.

What can be learned from religious records?

- Religious records typically include:
 - Baptism/Christening records contain:
 - Birth date
 - Baptism
 - Parents' names
 - Godparents
 - Sometimes grandparents

- Marriage records contain:
 - Bride's name
 - Groom's name
 - Parents
 - Witnesses
 - Officiant
- Burial records contain:
 - Age at death
 - Date of burial
 - Sometimes cause of death
- Membership rolls may contain:
 - Names of members
 - Dates of joining
 - Transfers
 - Removals
- Confirmation, Communion, or Bar/Bat Mitzvah records – Offer insight into youth and coming-of-age ceremonies.
- Clergy Notebooks or Pastoral Visit Records – Often note family structure and religious participation.

Identify your ancestor's religious affiliation and where they lived.

What is the denomination and location of the church? Many religions kept their own records, and access varies:

- Catholic Church:
 - Parish registers
 - Diocesan archives
- Protestant Churches:
 - Baptism records
 - Marriage records may vary by denomination
- Jewish Synagogues:
 - Brit milah (circumcision)
 - Marriage contracts (ketubah)
 - Burial society records (chevra kadisha)
- Quaker Meetings provides very detailed records including minutes and testimonies.

Where religious records be located?

- Church Archives:
 - Local parishes or churches
 - Diocesan or Associational Offices
 - National headquarters of the church denomination
- Websites where religious records may be accessible include:
 - Free websites:
 - [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org)
 - Ancestry.com Henderson County Public Library (In House)
 - Heritage Quest (access from home through your HCPL library card)
 - Subscription-based websites (\$):
 - [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com)
 - [MyHeritage](https://www.myheritage.com)

Analyze research

- Compare religious records with civil records to verify accuracy
- Use godparents, witnesses, or officiants as clues to extended family or community ties
- Track the same family through multiple sacraments or rites over time

Realize there may be challenges

- Language barriers (Latin, German, Hebrew)
- Illegible handwriting or faded documents
- Incomplete or missing records due to wars, fires, or lost archives

Respect privacy laws and cultural sensitivities, particularly with Indigenous or minority religious communities.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives Research Guides

[Kentucky Deed Records](#)

[Kentucky Land Records Inventory](#)

[Kentucky Land Records Guide \(Land Patents, Grants, Deeds, Tax Lists, and Wills\)](#)

[Kentucky Military Records](#)

[Kentucky Naturalization Records](#)

[Kentucky Slave Records](#)

Land Records

[National Archives and Records Administration \(NASA\)](#)

Military Records

Fold 3 - (access from home through your HCPL library card)

[National Archives and Records Administration \(NASA\)](#) - Navy Deck Logs

LIBRARY RESOURCES

DNA

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Neagles, James C. U.S. Military Records. Ancestry Publishing Company, 1994.

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