

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910787522103321
Autore	Opal J. M
Titolo	Beyond the farm [[electronic resource]] : national ambitions in rural New England / / J.M. Opal
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Philadelphia, : University of Pennsylvania Press, c2008
ISBN	0-8122-0345-3
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (280 p.)
Collana	Early American studies
Disciplina	974.03
Soggetti	Rural population - New England - 18th century Ambition - Social aspects - New England - History - 18th century
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- Contents -- Prologue: In Search of Ambition -- Introduction: Ambition and the American Founding -- 1. Finding Independence -- 2. Creating Commerce -- 3. Opening Households -- 4. Exciting Emulation -- 5. Seeking Livelihoods -- 6. Pursuing Distinction -- Epilogue: Worlds Gained and Lost -- List of Abbreviations -- Notes -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	During the first half-century of American independence, a fundamental change in the meaning and morality of ambition emerged in American culture. Long stigmatized as a dangerous passion that led people to pursue fame at the expense of duty, ambition also raised concerns among American Revolutionaries who espoused self-sacrifice. After the ratification of the U.S. Constitution and the creation of the federal republic in 1789, however, a new ethos of nation-making took hold in which ambition, properly cultivated, could rescue talent and virtue from the parochial needs of the family farm. Rather than an apology for an emerging market culture of material desire and commercial dealing, ambition became a civic project-a concerted reply to the localism of provincial life. By thus attaching itself to the national self-image during the early years of the Republic, before the wrenching upheavals of the Industrial Revolution, ambitious striving achieved a cultural dominance that future generations took for granted. Beyond the Farm not only describes this transformation as a national effort but also explores it as a personal journey. Centered on the lives of six aspiring men from the

New England countryside, the book follows them from youthful days full of hope and unrest to eventual careers marked by surprising success and crushing failure. Along the way, J. M. Opal recovers such intimate dramas as a young man's abandonment by his self-made parents, a village printer's dreams of small-town fame, and a headstrong boy's efforts to both surpass and honor his family. By relating the vast abstractions of nation and ambition to the everyday milieus of home, work, and school, *Beyond the Farm* reconsiders the roots of American individualism in vivid detail and moral complexity.
