

Beacon Hill Seminars – Spring 2018

## Climate Vulnerability:

Responding to the Physical, Economic & Social  
Challenges of Earth's Changing Climate

### Session 8

Where Can We Turn To Learn About Climate  
Vulnerability in Boston? How Can We  
Become Involved in Shaping  
Our Future?

25 April 2018

Tim Weiskel

Cambridge Climate Research Associates

Spring Semester 2018



First, we should ask ourselves:  
Was this BHS Class really necessary?

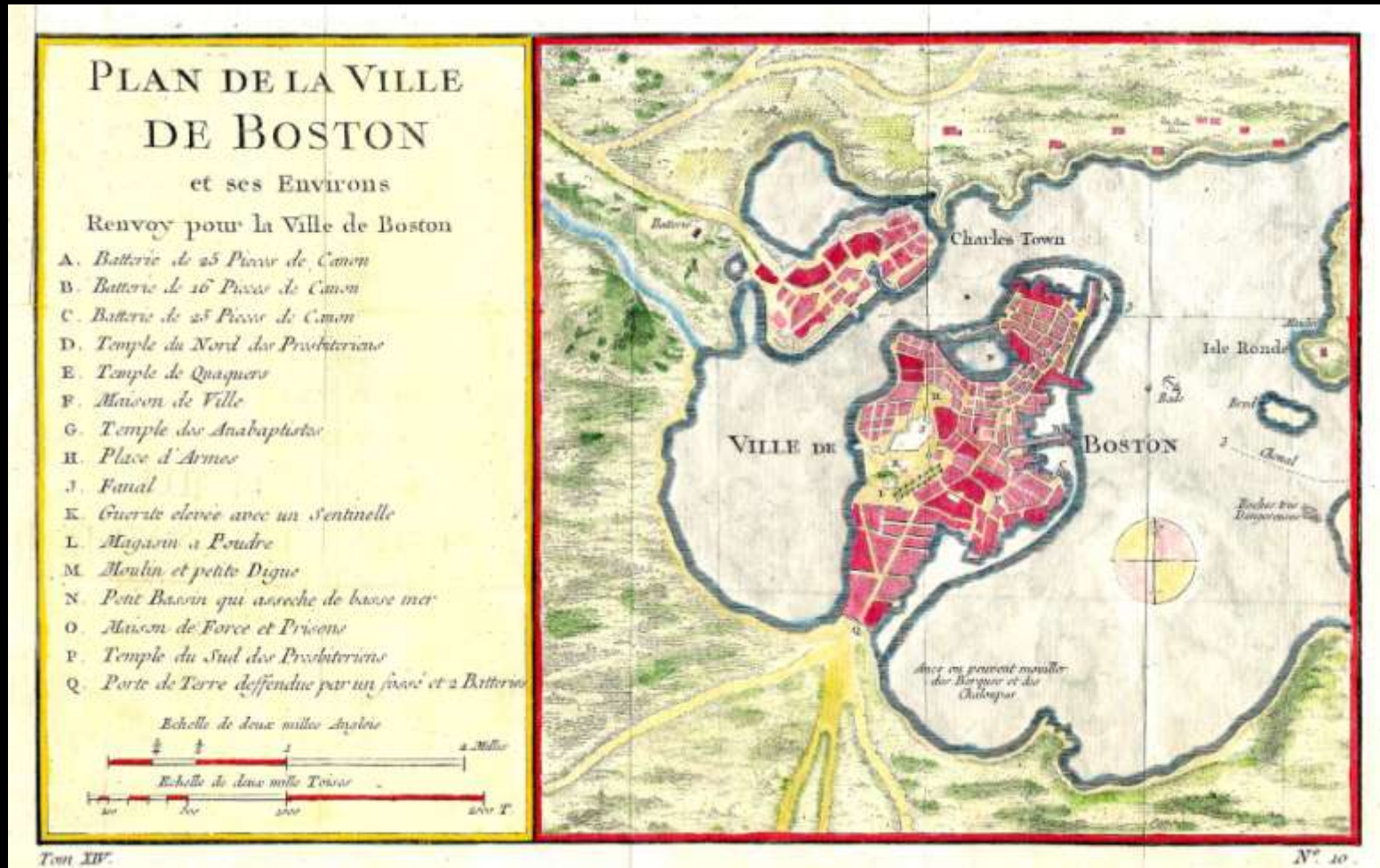
# First, we should ask ourselves: Was this BHS Class really necessary?



The screenshot shows the BHS Beacon Hill Seminars website. At the top left is the logo "BHS beacon hill seminars". At the top right is the address "121 Mount Vernon Street, Boston, MA 02108, 617 523 0970". Below the logo is a navigation menu with links: "home", "calendar of courses", "information", "news", "registration", and "member feedback". The main content area has a red header with the text "Climate Vulnerability: Responding to Earth's Changing Climate". Below this is a yellow section with the text: "Tim Weiskel", "Wednesdays, March 7 - April 25 3:30 - 5:30 8 sessions", and "The Engineering Center, One Walnut Street". At the bottom of the page is the text "Climate-Boston.info".

Isn't all this information about  
Boston's vulnerability just common  
knowledge + common sense?

After all, Boston's vulnerability has not been a secret ever since the French published their maps in the 1750s



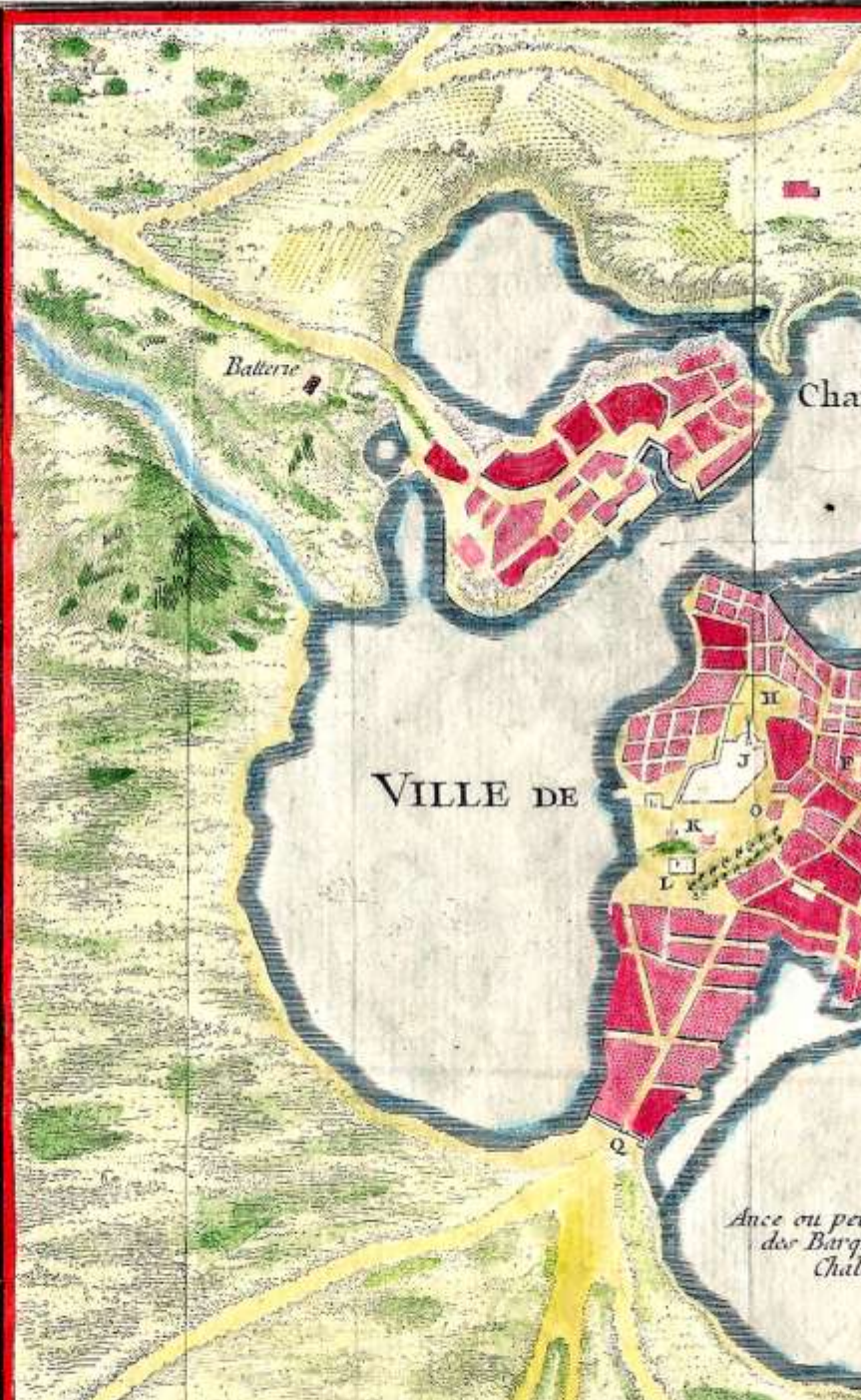
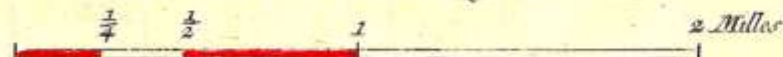
# PLAN DE LA VILLE DE BOSTON

et ses Environs

Renvoy pour la Ville de Boston

- A. Batterie de 25 Pieces de Canon
- B. Batterie de 16 Pieces de Canon
- C. Batterie de 25 Pieces de Canon
- D. Temple du Nord des Presbiteriens
- E. Temple de Quaquers
- F. Maison de Ville
- G. Temple des Anabaptistes
- H. Place d'Armes
- J. Fanal
- K. Guerite elevee avec un Sentinelle
- L. Magasin a Poudre
- M. Moulin et petite Digue
- N. Petit Bassin qui asseche de basse mer
- O. Maison de Force et Prisons
- P. Temple du Sud des Presbiteriens
- Q. Porte de Terre deffendue par un fossé et 2 Batteries

Echelle de deux milles Anglois



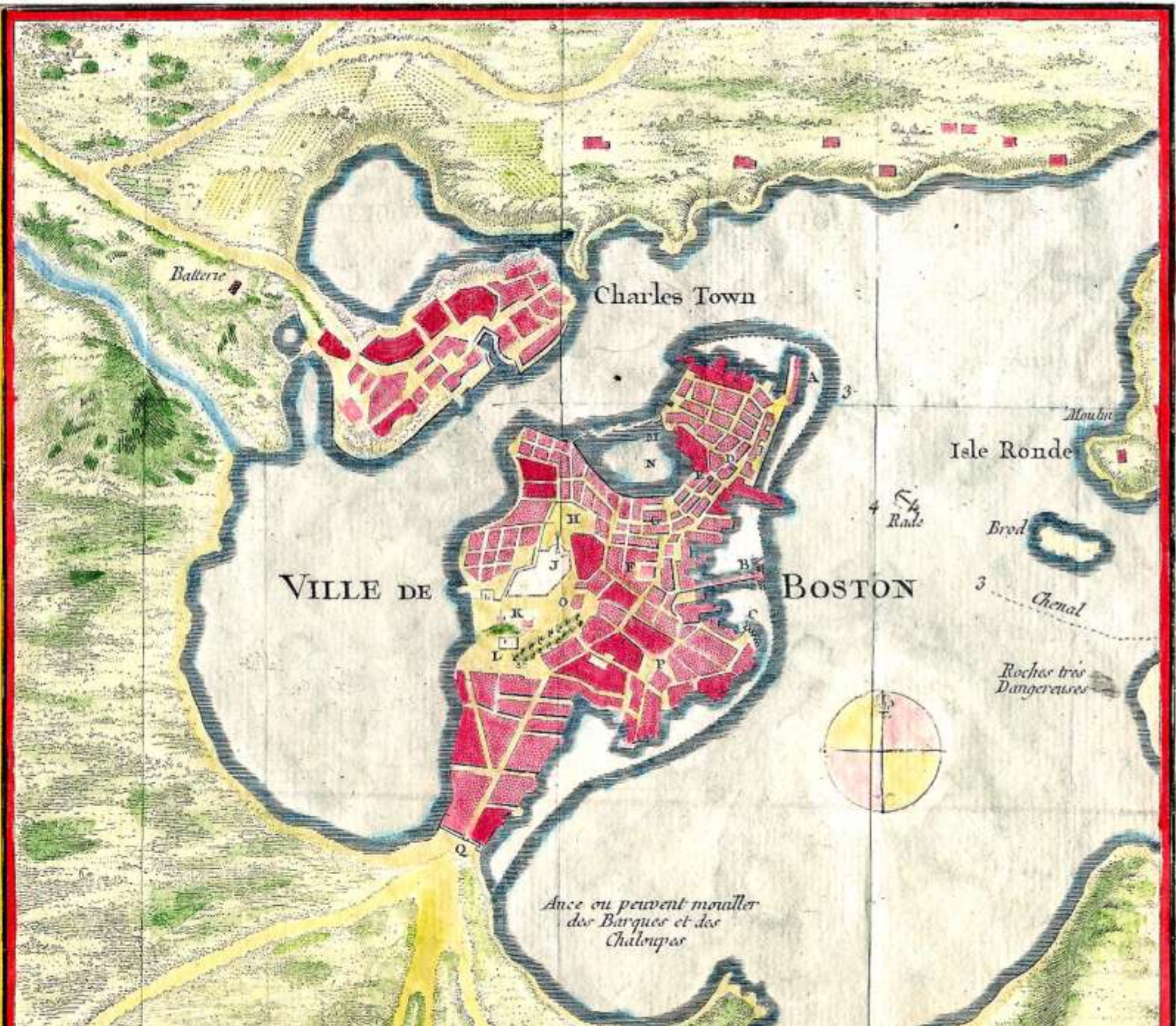
LE

on

r

et 2 Batteries

2 Millas



Batterie

Charles Town

VILLE DE

BOSTON

Isle Ronde

Moulin

4 St. Rude

Brod

3 Chenal

Roches tres Dangereuses

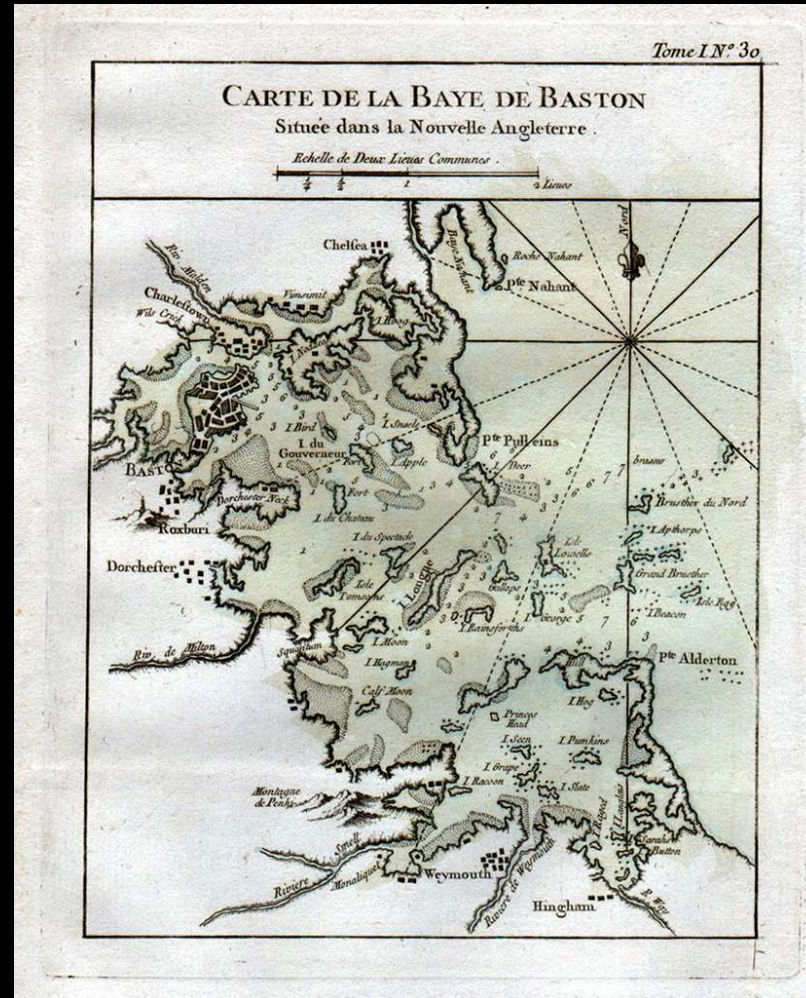
Ance ou peuvent mouiller  
des Barques et des  
Chaloupes



In fact, by 1764 – well before any assistance from my wife or *Narm* (Norm) – the French had mastered the *Boston* accent...!

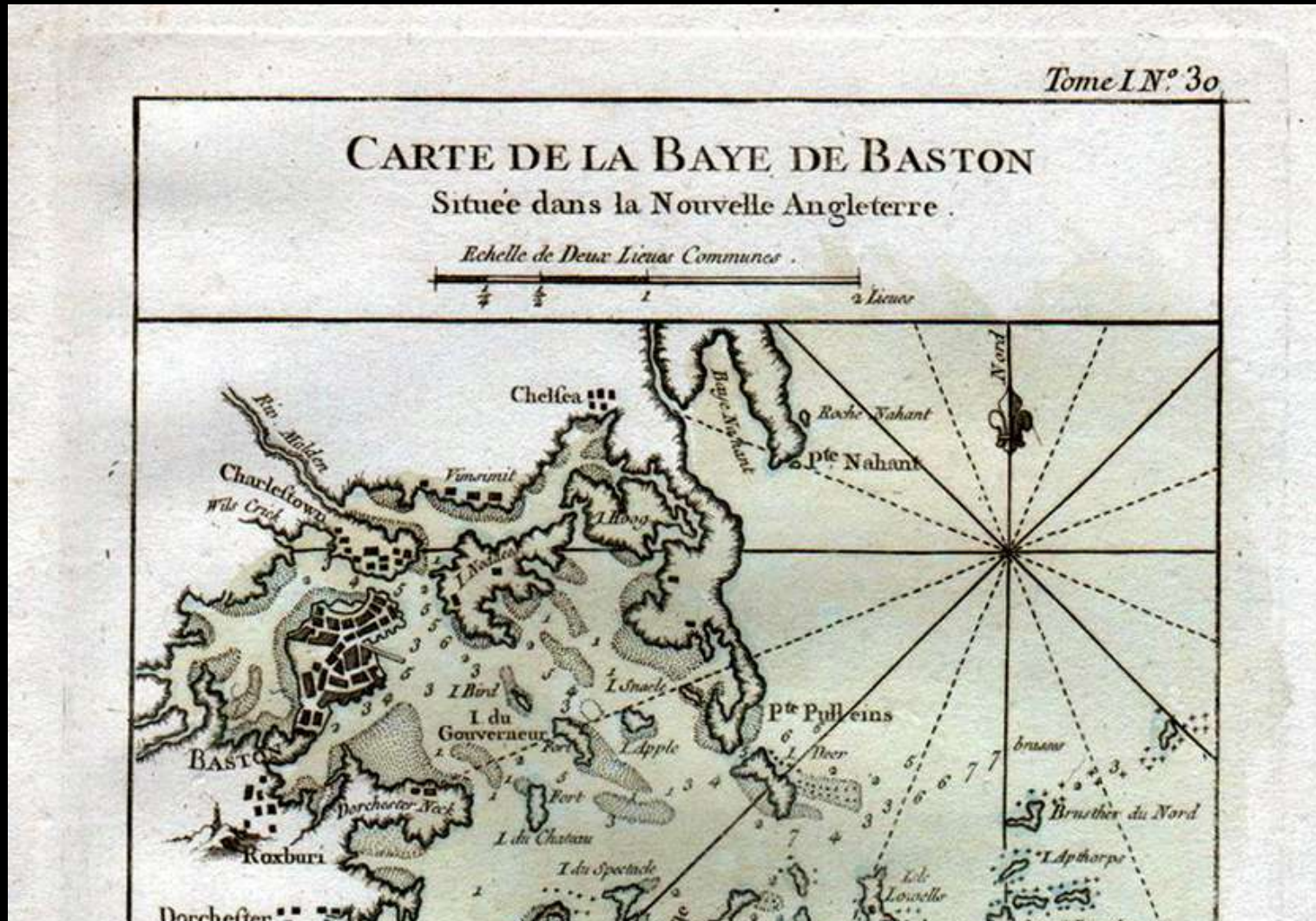


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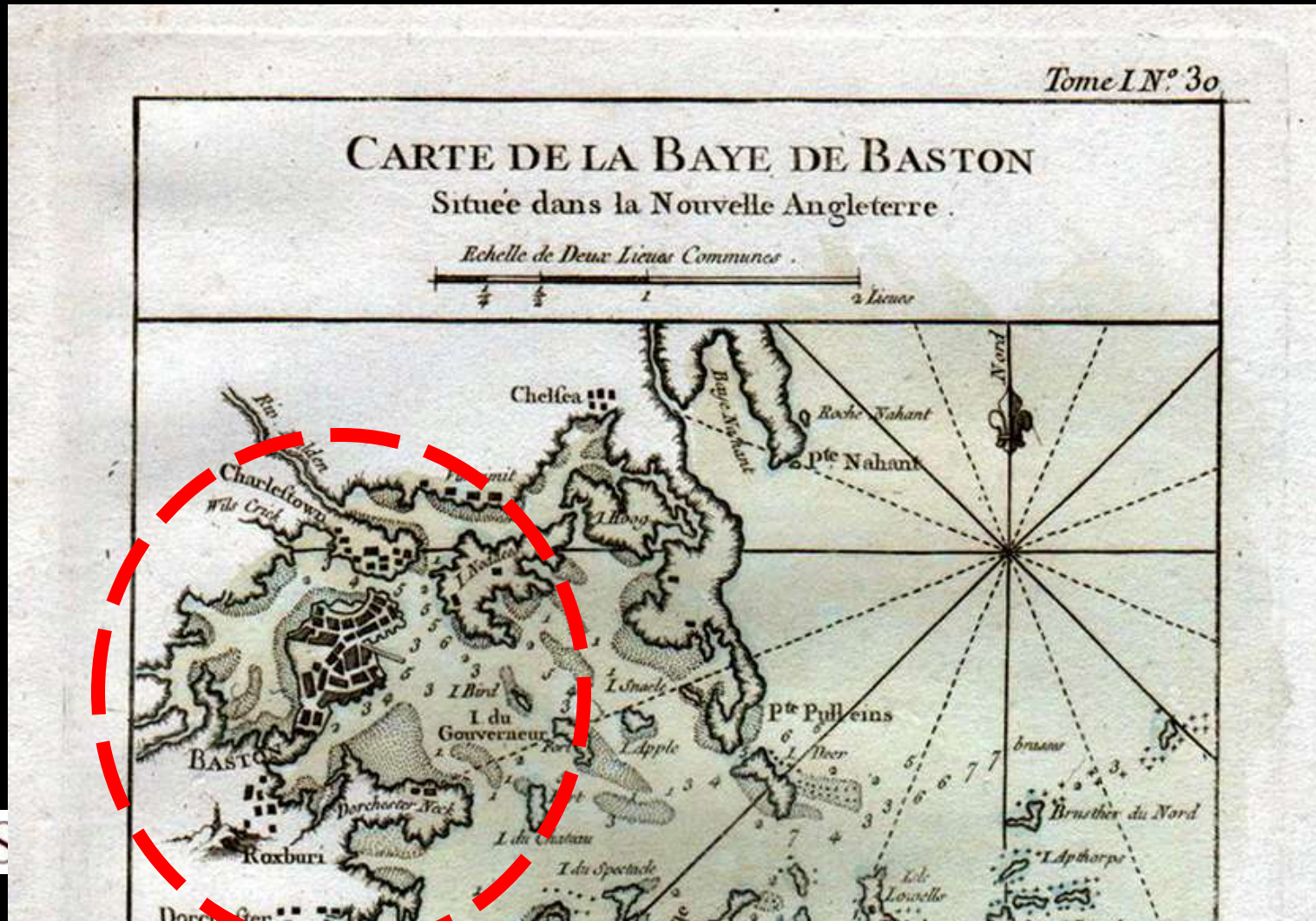




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# Paul Kirshen's maps (forthcoming)...



# Water Resources and the Urban Environment, Lower Charles River Watershed, Massachusetts, 1630–2005



Peter  
Weiskel's  
USGS  
Publication

....

Tim Weiskel - 13

So, back to our beginning question...  
Was this BHS Seminar needed at all?

The image shows a screenshot of a website for BHS Beacon Hill Seminars. The header includes the BHS logo and contact information: 121 Mount Vernon Street, Boston, MA 02108, 617 523 0970. A navigation menu lists: home, calendar of courses, information, news, registration, and member feedback. The main content area features a red banner with the title 'Climate Vulnerability: Responding to Earth's Changing Climate'. Below this, on a yellow background, is the name 'Tim Weiskel', the schedule 'Wednesdays, March 7 - April 25 3:30 - 5:30 8 sessions', and the location 'The Engineering Center, One Walnut Street'. At the bottom of the page is the URL 'Climate-Boston.info'.

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Was this BHS Seminar needed at all?

Answer:

**YES.** The BHS Seminar is necessary because there is a big difference **between** information **and** knowledge.

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**YES.** The BHS Seminar is necessary because there is a big difference **between** information **and** knowledge.

In order to really *know* something you need to account for your previous ignorance...



So, back to our beginning question...  
Was this BHS Seminar needed at all?

Answer:

This BHS Seminar *is* vital because through it we can begin to account for our own ignorance. We can understand why we have been so confused about these obvious facts in Boston -- and in America, in general.

# DON'T BLAME YOURSELF... There are Eight Reasons for Our Collective Myopia

- 1) Scientists have not always been the best communicators.
- 2) There has been a deliberate “smog machine” at work.
- 3) The “culture of consumption” does not want to listen.
- 4) The corporatization of media communications has muffled the message + current struggle for the internet.
- 5) Universities have become corporatized and are often of little help. (More focused complicated data + “techno-scientific salvationism” & grants than simple truths).
- 6) The apparatus of government has been “captured.”
- 7) There is an institutional core contradiction at work.
- 8) *“I’m not a climate scientist...”*

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# Reason 1

Scientists have not always been the  
best communicators....

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[ Their professions do not reward  
them for reaching out to the public]

## Reason 2

There has been a deliberate  
“smog machine” at work on  
the public consciousness.

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There has been a deliberate  
“smog machine” at work on  
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[Known as the Koch Machine it has spent  
billions of dollars to confuse the public.]

## Reason 3

The “culture of consumption”  
does not want to listen and  
will not hear or see  
what is obvious.



## Reason 3

The “culture of consumption”  
does not want to listen and  
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[We don't see it because we are  
“fish in water.”]

## Reason 4

The corporatization of media communications has muffled the message + current struggle for the internet.

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The corporatization of media communications has muffled the message + current struggle for the internet.

[What has happened to the flow of “news” in our culture?]

## Reason 5

Universities have become corporatized and are often of little help. (More focused on data manipulation + “techno-scientific salvationism” & grants than simple truths).

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[What has happened to the liberal arts?]

## Reason 6

The apparatus of government  
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special interests  
(within this country or from abroad).

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[“Citizen’s United” has changed the nature of  
“voice” in American politics]

## Reason 7

There is a fundamental contradiction  
at the core of the institutions that  
dominate our society.



## Reason 7

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at the core of the institutions that  
dominate our society.

[All corporations and virtually all other  
institutions are built upon the  
expectation of continuous  
growth and expansion]

## Reason 8

*“I’m not a climate scientist ...  
– neither are you, so...”*

*[...shut up!]*

## Reason 8

*“I’m not a climate scientist ...  
– neither are you, so...”*

*[...shut up!]*

[ The problem of citizen self-censorship.  
Who is “qualified” to speak ?]

## Reason 8

*“I’m not a climate scientist ...  
– neither are you, so...”*

*[...shut up!]*

[ The problem of citizen self-censorship.  
Who is “qualified” to speak ?

Easier to ignore the problem ]

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June 1988





**TIMOTHY WEISKEL** 18-88  
HARVARD UNIVERSITY 33-19

S. Hrg. 100-843

THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT

S. Hrg. 100-843

THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT  
OF 1988

JOINT HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HAZARDOUS WASTES AND TOXIC  
SUBSTANCES AND THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENVI-  
RONMENTAL PROTECTION

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON  
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS  
UNITED STATES SENATE

JO

SUBCOMMITTEE  
SUBSTANCES  
RONMENTAL P

ENVIRONM  
UNIT  
ONE

A BILL ENTITLED

Commit



# IPCC – INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE



The screenshot shows the IPCC website's homepage for the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5). The header features the IPCC logo and the text "INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON climate change". A navigation menu on the left includes links for Home, Organization, Procedures, Working Groups / Task Force, Activities, Calendar, Meeting Documentation, News and Outreach, Publications and Data, Presentations and Speeches, IPCC Scholarship Programme, Links, and Contact. The main content area is titled "Fifth Assessment Report (AR5)" and contains a paragraph describing the report's purpose and structure. Below this, there are buttons for "Media Portal" and "All AR5 Volumes". A section titled "Climate Change 2014: Mitigation of Climate Change" provides a summary of the Working Group II contribution, including a "Quick Link to Report and other AR5 volumes" and a "Working Group II Report website". A "Summary for Policymakers (English)" button is also present. To the right, there are sections for "Plenary Sessions" (Working Group III 12th / IPCC 25th) and "IPCC 21st" (Baku, Georgia, 14-18 Oct 2013). The footer includes a gold medal image, contact information, and copyright notice.

ipcc  
INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON climate change

Language: IPCC web pages Search

Home  
Organization  
Procedures  
Working Groups / Task Force  
Activities  
Calendar  
Meeting Documentation  
News and Outreach  
Publications and Data  
Presentations and Speeches  
IPCC Scholarship Programme  
Links  
Contact

Phone: +41 22 719 8238 (local)  
Email: IPCC@ipcc.int

Copyright 2014  
Sitemap notice

### Fifth Assessment Report (AR5)

The Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) provides a clear and most up to date view of the current state of scientific knowledge relevant to climate change. It comprises of three Working Group (WG) reports and a Synthesis Report (SYR) which integrates and synthesizes material in the WG reports for policymakers. The SYR will be finalized 31<sup>st</sup> of October 2015. Further information about the outline and content and how the AR5 has been prepared can be found in the AR5 reference document and SYR Scoping document, AR5 page and on the websites of the WGs.

Media Portal All AR5 Volumes

#### Climate Change 2014: Mitigation of Climate Change

The Working Group II contribution assesses the options for mitigating climate change and their underlying technological, economic and institutional requirements. It transparently lays out risks, uncertainty and ethical foundations of climate change mitigation policies on the global, national and sub-national level, investigates mitigation measures for all major sectors and assesses investment and finance issues.

- Quick Link to Report and other AR5 volumes
- Working Group II Report website

Summary for Policymakers (English)

#### Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability

The Working Group II contribution considers the vulnerability and exposure of human and natural systems, the observed impacts and future risks of

#### Plenary Sessions

Working Group III 12<sup>th</sup> / IPCC 25<sup>th</sup>  
Berlin, Germany, 7-12 Apr 2014

- Press Release **News**
- Advisory broadcast facilities
- Advisory B-roll
- Media Interviews
- Documents

#### IPCC 21<sup>st</sup>

Baku, Georgia, 14-18 Oct 2013

- Decisions

#### Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories (TFI)

- 2013 Wetlands Supplement
- 2013 NP Supplement

#### Recent Reports

What comes next, now that IPCC is  
no longer funded to produce  
“Assessment Reports” ?????

## Reason 2

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# Koch Machine

Posted on [January 27, 2017](#) | [Leave a comment](#) | [Edit](#)



# The Koch Brothers & Their Amazing Climate Change Denial Machine

Posted on [March 2, 2013](#) | [Leave a comment](#) | [Edit](#)







## Reason 3

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Why is there such public ignorance in America about such a massively important topic -- climate change?



Why haven't we been told the story of Earth's changing climate ever since scientists began to discover it in the 18<sup>th</sup> century?



Perhaps because we don't like the story,  
and nowadays *“...advertising is the  
dominant story-telling force of our time.”*

Sut Jhally







"Its like a fish in the water. We don't know who discovered water, but we know it wasn't a fish.





"Its like a fish in the water. We don't know who discovered water, but we know it wasn't a fish.

*A pervasive medium, a pervasive environment is always beyond perception."*

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**Reasons mentioned 25 April**

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## Reasons to come on 2 May

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