The 2018 annual meeting of SCCR will be held at The D Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada. The meetings will begin on Wednesday, February 21, 2018 and end on Saturday, February 24, 2018. In addition, the conference website will soon be available, where you can find information about keynote speakers, the program, registration fees, accommodation, and other details.

For other information about SCCR, registering for the conference, finding accommodations, or about Las Vegas in general, visit the SCCR website at www.mysccr.org.
Editor’s Note

Dear SCCR Colleagues,

I hope that you are all enjoying your summer breaks, or that you are working hard in the field collecting data!

First, let me state that I am excited to take over as the SCCR Newsletter. I attended my first SCCR conference in 2010 and was immediately won over by the society’s interdisciplinary and cross-cultural scope, its collegial environment, and the overall scholarly excellence of its members. So, thank you all for participating and helping to make the SCCR the fantastic organization it is.

This June 2017 edition of the newsletter includes a message from our president, information about next year’s conference, and an announcement of a remarkable new book on children and play. We also get to learn more about the research conducted by our recent award winners—Theodore Bartholomew, Casey Roulette, and Celeste Giordano. Finally, we are excited to share a brief report of an intercultural communication competency study conducted by the Federation of the Experiment in International Living and Dr. Alvino Fantini and colleagues at the School of International Training Graduate Institute.

Lastly, I urge you to submit something for our December 2017 edition of the SCCR Newsletter. Please consider contributing articles, book reviews, announcements for conferences, vacancy postings, calls for proposals and anything else that you think might be of interest to our members. Address contributions and any questions to: croulette@sdsu.edu.

I’m looking forward to seeing many of you in Las Vegas in February!

Sincerely,

Casey J. Roulette
President’s Message

Greetings, SCCR Colleagues

As the President of SCCR, I want to welcome everyone to the Society, founding members, and the newest members.

I was delighted to see so many of you at the SCCR Conference in New Orleans this past March. It was the first time the meeting was held a week later and I want to thank everyone for being flexible. I wasn’t sure we would have survived the heart of Mardi Gras. Don’t get me wrong, many among us are reasoned travelers and ethnographers but Bourbon Street during Mardi Gras would be a challenge, even for the strongest among us.

I want to personally thank Maria Rosario T. de Guzman and Theodore Bartholomew, Program Co-Chairs, and the Program Committee members for organizing the program and reviewing the numerous submissions. Also, I would like to thank my colleague Enrique Varela and his Loyola students for the many hours of preparation and help during the conference. As always, the annual SCCR conference helps me re-invest in my own research by learning about the research that other brilliant scholars are doing. The conference always has allowed me to ask questions and get to know other researchers who are committed to understand the role culture plays in the human experience.

The keynote speeches were outstanding; I am still thinking about how many caregivers an Efe child encounters in the first day of life or how middle childhood is the unique adaptation in the human species that allows for cultural learning.

Conference papers and posters were interesting and informative, and conversations with colleagues were engaging. I met so many bright, engaged students. Please join, please come back. You will be a better scholar for it.

Alyssa Crittenden (President-elect) and colleagues at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas are planning an exciting conference in Las Vegas, February 21-24th. Come participate in the program, explore Vegas and take back the knowledge that SCCR promises. Let’s change the motto to “what happens in Vegas, doesn’t stay in Vegas!”

In 2018, we will be launching an updated website. My hope is that it will help highlight the work of our current members, attract new membership, and allow more ease in paying dues and joining the society. Stay tuned.

Several new officers have been elected to the SCCR Executive Committee:
Please join me in extending a warm welcome to them.

The SCCR Executive Committee will be working to expand our connections with other organizations, increase our membership, and strengthen our impact in the world of scholarship. If you have suggestions for the upcoming conference or for the organization, please contact me (jillbrown@creighton.edu) or your area representative.

Clifford Gertz said once that “everybody keeps asking how anthropology is different from sociology and everyone gets nervous”. At SCCR, we don’t get nervous, we get excited. See you in Vegas for more excitement….

Theodore T. Bartholomew
2017 Leigh Minturn Award for Early Career Cross-Cultural Research

I am honored to have received a Leigh Minturn Award for Early Career Cross-Cultural Research from SCCR. As a counseling psychologist, I often find myself wondering about the efficacy of psychotherapy across cultures in addition to the diverse ways in which people heal psychological distress across contexts. I have pursued this work as a graduate student (University of Nebraska) and now as an early career psychologist (Assistant Professor, Purdue University). Along my short path thus far, SCCR has provided an outstanding academic home for me. Belonging to such a rich, interdisciplinary society has truly helped me extend my understanding of mental health across cultures and contexts.

My research focuses on psychotherapy processes and mental illness from international, multicultural, and positive psychological lenses as well as methodology in psychological research. I set out to answer questions about what makes psychotherapy work, how culture and social justice play roles in mental health, and how researchers ask questions from diverse methodological stances in community and international contexts. Drawing from the contextual model (Frank & Frank, 1991), much of this work emphasizes cultural agreeability of psychological healing. I rely upon a scientist-practitioner approach to integrating empiricism with clinical work while also being introduced to new cultures in the United States and in Namibia. In accomplishing this work, I employ a variety of methodologies included mixed methods and qualitative designs. Currently, I am endeavoring to understand the role of patient-healer
relationships across settings, the integration of cultural beliefs into therapy for resettled refugees, and transgender clients’ experiences in and before psychotherapy.

I have felt incredibly privileged to have the chance to pursue my interests. As a psychologist, I have been afforded the privilege to reflect on my experiences and those of others in ways that many people may not have the time to do. This is a privilege and opportunity that I do not take lightly, particularly as a cultural outsider in places like Namibia and refugee communities in the United States. I am immensely grateful to earn this award but also feel deeply that this is a reflection of the opportunities that have been afforded to me and the involvement of people who have helped me in the process.

Accomplishing my work has also been possible because of several individuals in my life that have supported me along the way. As a graduate mentor, Dr. Michael Scheel (University of Nebraska) helped me to grow as a clinician, and he encouraged me to develop my own empirical agency, explore questions that interested me, and expand my methodological tool kit. I would also not be where I am, or a member of SCCR for that matter, without the ongoing mentorship and friendship of Dr. Jill Brown (Creighton University). I am thankful to her for exposing me to Namibia and encouraging me to think critically about culture and psychology.

Other collaborators (Dr. Allison Lockard and Dr. Andres Perez-Rojas) have also helped me to continue to consider cross-cultural, cultural, and multicultural aspects of psychotherapy in ways that have substantially contributed to my development as a counseling psychologist. I cannot express gratitude without also thanking my partner, Dr. Brittany Gundel (Purdue University). As a friend, partner, and colleague, she has consistently helped me to grow. With her consistent support, I have been equipped to accomplish the things I have hoped to thus far in my career. I am immensely grateful for her compassion, patience, and understanding.

Lastly, I would like to thank the SCCR awards committee for believing my work is worthy of the Leigh Minturn Award. SCCR means a great deal to me, and I am happy to serve as its Secretary and to have earned this award.

Casey J. Roulette
2017 Leigh Minturn Award for Early Career Cross-Cultural Research

I am very appreciative of this award and am excited to share with you a little about my research. First, about me—I am an Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology at San Diego State University (SDSU) and Director of the Anthropology Department’s Human Biology Laboratory. I joined SDSU in 2016 after graduating in 2015 from Washington State University. I have worked in Sub-Saharan Africa since 2008, principally among Aka foragers of the Central African Republic and, more recently, Maasai agro-pastoralists of northern Tanzania.
Broadly, I am interested in cross-cultural and evolutionary perspectives of human behavior and health. More specifically this involves investigating substance use within the larger context of the ecology of plant defensive toxins. A major focus of this research examines the connection between plant drugs and human pathogens and parasites. My research with the Aka, for instance, found evidence that, among men, tobacco and cannabis use prevents helminth infections, and that treatment with a commercial anthelmintic reduces tobacco smoking relative to a control group. The findings of this research support the hypothesis that the widespread and cross-cultural use of recreational substances is explained, in part, as an anti-parasite self-medication strategy. For this research I was awarded the 2015 Margo Wilson Award for best paper published in *Evolution and Human Behavior* in 2014.

I am also interested in how gender, age, and reproductive status interact with ethnomedical and ethnobotanical beliefs to influence plant use. My research with Aka foragers found that Aka have their own indigenous knowledge regarding the negative health effects of tobacco (and traditional psychoactive plant) use, including its teratogenic effects, and that these beliefs help prevent tobacco use among reproductive aged women. These insights were then used to develop the “neurotoxin regulation” model of recreational drug use to explain the near universal cross-cultural gender and age differences in drug use. In a similar vein, I am investigating gender differences in the consumption of food-medicines and psychoactive substances among Maasai of Tanzania. We found that Maasai women avoid the drug-foods and herbal additives considered most toxic, but that some herbal additives are preferred for their (perceived) reproductive benefits (i.e. positively influence pregnancy and birth and/or promote breast milk production).

Finally, I am interested in cultural transmission and health interventions. I am currently exploring the diffusion of health knowledge and innovations to limit the emergence and spread of antimicrobial resistance among the Maasai. This developed out of an ongoing collaborative project exploring the development of antimicrobial resistance in the greater Serengeti region. I also recently co-authored a paper on teaching and cultural transmission among the Aka, which contributes to the debate about the nature of teaching and its incidence among hunting-gathering populations.

Again, I am sincerely grateful to the awards committee for recognizing my research. I also look forward to contributing to the wonderful organization that is the SCCR!

Celeste Giordano
2016 Judith L. Gibbons Award for Research on Culture and Gender

I recently earned my PhD in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Nevada Las Vegas. When I finished my anthropology studies as an undergraduate in Philadelphia at Temple University, I was very interested in how an anthropological perspective could contribute to
questions about human chronic disease and health issues. In particular, I was unsatisfied with genetic and/or lifestyle explanations for population trends in certain “lifestyle” diseases.

Despite the fact that anthropologists have for a long time recognized that racial categories are socially constructed, chronic diseases like diabetes, obesity, and the metabolic syndrome seem to disproportionately affect certain groups, often along racial lines. Following the work of Dr. Daniel Benyshek, I began graduate studies at UNLV interested in understanding the relatively low rates of diabetes among Alaska Natives compared to other American Indian groups. We wanted to investigate the possibility that the traditional Alaska Native diet may have a protective effect that acts during pregnancy, which lowers offspring risk of developing diabetes in adulthood – independent of offspring adulthood diet. Thus, something that “looks” genetic (like it is inherited) might actually be more dependent on events that take place in-utero and, therefore, on events that are not inevitable. This had already been demonstrated in experimental rat models by Dr. Benyshek and his former student Julie Kachinski, but had not yet been investigated in human populations. I developed a method for retroactively assessing the diets of Yup’ik Alaska Native mothers during a past pregnancy. Our project shed light on the importance of ethnographic work for determining the appropriateness and potential accuracy of retrospective dietary studies in local subsistence-based communities.

During my MA research on traditional foods consumed by Yup’ik Alaska Natives, I developed an interest in what seemed at first to be rather unique food processing and storage activities in the arctic. In particular, the common practice of consuming aged, fermented, and “stinky” foods. I began working with my co-advisor Dr. Liam Frink, and we conducted an extensive research project documenting and investigating the seal poke storage system. This is a “soft” technology technique, the likes of which can be found among groups throughout the circumpolar north (skin, stomach, bladder, intestine bags). In short, the skin of an entire seal is removed intact and used as a food processing, preservation, and storage apparatus.

The interesting thing to me, however, was the fact that at no point is heat used – not to prepare the food to be stored in the bag, not to render the seal oil that is the primary preservative agent, and not to prepare the food for consumption upon taking it out of the bag. Indeed, food processed and stored in such a way is “ready-to-eat.” I discovered that seal oil not only acts as a preservative (being naturally high in alphatocopherol) but also prevents food from freezing during storage. Furthermore, sea mammal oil (seal, whale, walrus) - the primary source of fuel for heat in arctic environments – is problematic for regular cooking practices for various reasons. Together with nutritional data, this evidence led me to consider aged, fermented, and “stinky” foods not simply as interesting cultural idiosyncrasies (that can be found on shows like “Bizarre Foods,” for example), but as food storage and processing activities that are highly adaptive in arctic ecological contexts and superior to other commonly-known (in modern industrial contexts) food processing strategies.

My future work is a now broader interest in drawing attention to the ubiquity of food aging and fermentation practices not only throughout the circumpolar north, but all over the world. These kinds of alternative food processing techniques can be found in local subsistence-based communities (particularly those with limited access to modern industrial conveniences) in every continent of the world. They remain understudied and are completely absent in discussions of the evolution of the human diet, with the exception of studies of alcoholism in humans. Involving primarily “soft” technology,
time, and expertise, their absence in the archaeological record is not surprising. However, their absence elsewhere in scholarly research is perplexing. These processes can be seen in modern-day communities cross-culturally and insights can be gained from ethnographic fieldwork that focuses on the social groups who use these processes (primarily, women) for drawing inferences about how they might have been used in the past.

New Book Announcement!

International Perspectives on Children’s Play
Edited by Jaipaul L. Roopnarine, Michael M. Patte, James E. Johnson & David Kuschner

This remarkable book, which provides a very comprehensive overview and analysis of the research and theory on children’s play across cultures, is long overdue in the academic world. The book sets out to present the global realities and descriptions of play from a diverse range of cultures. It is broken into five sections, with four of the sections each devoted to a different region of the world—the Americas and Caribbean, Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Europe and Turkey. In total, the book includes at least sixteen different populations, representing a diverse range of cultures with varying degrees of economic and technological development. The Americas and Caribbean are particularly well covered. Each chapter does an excellent job of linking the structure and content of children’s play to the cultural beliefs and practices as well as economic and technological conditions of a particular cultural community. This is an excellent resource for teaching a course on children’s play in particular, while also having broad appeal to academics, students, and policy-makers interested in early childhood development more generally.
Brief Report

Exploring Intercultural Communicative Competence: A Multinational Perspective

A Combined Report of A Two-Phased Research Project Involving Eight Countries:
Phase II. Assessing Intercultural Sojourns: Outcomes & Impact

Report Prepared by Alvino E. Fantini, Project Director; with assistance from Ilene Todd, Project Assistant; and Joana Almeida and Cláudia Figuereido, Psychometricians, Brattleboro, Vermont 05302, USA

Conducted by the Federation of The Experiment in International Living with funding from the Center for Social Development (CSD), Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri; and the Center for Educational Resources in Culture, Language, & Literacy (CERCLL), University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona.

October 2015

Executive Summary

The Initial Project

The Federation of The Experiment in International Living’s first international research project, a one and a half year study, was designed to explore and assess the impact of intercultural experiences provided through service projects. This Initial Project involved two sending and one receiving Member Organizations (MOs): Great Britain, Switzerland, and Ecuador, respectively. This study was made possible with a grant obtained from the Center for Social Development of the Global Service Institute at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, USA.

Designed and directed by Dr. Alvino E. Fantini, Educational Consultant to the Federation EIL, the Project took place in several stages between July 2005 and December 2006: The first stage began with an extensive survey of the intercultural literature as the basis for developing a comprehensive construct of “intercultural communicative competence” and for developing an instrument for its assessment. After translating this instrument into German and Spanish, and adapting it to British English, the tool was then used with several groups – alumni, volunteers, and host mentors. The study was conducted through use of this survey questionnaire followed by personal interviews conducted with the assistance of Research Assistants in each of the three cooperating countries. The result was the production of an amazing amount of data that were then analyzed to learn more about the impact of intercultural experiences on the lives and work of both sojourners and hosts.

Assertions and Findings

Although most people engaged in intercultural exchanges can anticipate certain results, this systematic study yielded rich quantitative data (expressed in figures, graphs, and statistics) and qualitative data (anecdotes, comments, and quotes) that were important and insightful. Data analysis focused on ten assertions, all of which were strongly supported by the evidence:

- that intercultural communicative competence involves a complex of abilities
that learning the host language affects intercultural development in positive ways
- that intercultural experiences are life-altering
- that participant choices made during their sojourn produce certain intercultural consequences
- that all parties in intercultural contact are affected
- that service programs offer unique opportunities for sojourners and hosts, beyond traditional exchanges
- that people are changed in positive ways as a result of this experience
- that returnees lean toward specific life choices, life partners, life styles, values, and jobs, as a result of their experience
- that returnees often engage in activities that further impact on others in positive ways, and
- that their activities support and further the organizational mission.

Although most everyone engaged in intercultural activities believes these assertions intuitively and perhaps experientially, the statistics and comments obtained provide substantial evidence in strong support of all of these assertions. For example, specific attributes were cited as extremely important to the success of an intercultural sojourn. Participants gained dramatic insights about the significance of being able to communicate in the host tongue, both to remove barriers as well as to enable participation. As one alumna wrote, “Language was the key to everything, to communicating and understanding the local culture, and to my overall success.” And another echoed: “Language was vital and very important to my success.”

Alumni also made numerous comments about how their lives were changed as a result of their sojourn, as well as the new directions their lives had taken upon return. However, what is really interesting is that host mentors were also significantly affected through their contact with foreigners, reinforcing the notion that both sojourners and hosts benefit from their interaction. As participants return home and engage in socially oriented activities, it becomes clear that they in turn also have significant impact upon others (the multiplier effect). And, finally, documentation of all of these findings provides important evidence that The Experiment indeed furthers its vision and mission through its participant members.

The Follow-on Project

After a hiatus of nine years, a Follow-on Project got underway with funding support from CERCLL (the Center for Educational Resources on Culture, Language, and Literacy), located at the University of Arizona in Tucson, Arizona, in the U.S. A proposal submitted by Dr. Alvino E. Fantini, also a member of the CERCLL Board, was approved to enable a second research effort. The Follow-on Project began January 2015 involving three additional MOs with funds to support Research Assistants in each – Brazil, Germany, and Japan. In addition, an invitation extended to other Federation countries with interest and the ability to support their own Research Assistant to work under the direction of the project’s director, attracted two additional MOs. Happily, Ireland and the USA joined for a total of five countries (in addition to the three countries involved in the Initial Project).

Whereas the Initial Project provided the design and process for conducting this expanded research effort, the Follow-on Project generated additional information from still other language-culture groups and in countries about which little literature exists. Now we were able to learn from the experiences of eight countries on four continents utilizing five languages plus three varieties of English, generating responses from over 2,300 alumni, mentors, and host family members. Moreover, few cross-cultural studies exist that identify aspects particular to specific
cultural or nationality groups while also extrapolating those which might be universal to all.

The Follow-on Project again assessed program outcomes and their impact on both alumni and hosts, some five, ten, and twenty years later (we limited our study to a 20-year time span although most participating MOs have alumni records that date back 60 and more years). What differed now, however, was our interest in identifying specific program components that most contributed to the desired outcomes (e.g., orientation, homestay, the role of the group leader, the role of the target language, intercultural interventions, etc.) That is, this project carefully investigated: what program aspects can and should be measured, how best to measure them, which had the most impact on participants, and how, in the end, they further Federation EIL’s mission. Whereas all components assume varying degrees of importance, what is quite clear is that a sojourn with a host family is indeed at the very core of the experience, allowing participants to develop a sense of belonging, to enter the culture as a member, to provide a sense of security, and to develop relationships that often last beyond the program itself, indeed a lifetime. The second component that stands out for most is the need and benefits of developing host language proficiency which helps not only to enhance communication but provides greater access to the local culture and allows participants to see the world through a new lens, an expanded worldview.

Our expectation is that our research findings will help refine program goals, improve program design, enrich orientation processes, focus interventions, and maximize desired results. The study also identified criteria for predicting intercultural success, participation selection, marketing, and improved assessment, all areas that can result in administrative and educational benefits. Finally, the project was designed to also contribute insights to the fields of language education, intercultural communication, and related disciplines, and serve kindred programs pursuing intercultural endeavors around the world – in student exchange, study abroad, service, business, and government.

These assumptions were all explored and discussed extensively in this expanded Follow-on Project. Our hope is that this effort will add to the diversity of languages and cultures under discussion in the literature, be geographically widespread, and cover a timeframe that spans many years. The results of this Project once again publicly shared and widely disseminated through websites, publications, conferences, and workshops in a manner similar to the dissemination plan carried out after the Initial Project.

Looking Back, Looking Ahead

The scope of these two research projects is quite amazing – although they involved only eight countries, they were possible thanks to the existence of the worldwide structure of the Federation EIL, a non-profit international, intercultural educational organization that has existed for over 85 years with an even greater number of member countries. This structure presents a unique opportunity to conduct research of the type in question. Secondly, the fact that various entities aligned to provide funding, support the research, and make alumni files available, is also quite a feat. The institutions and entities involved brought together a cross-section of educational institutions, government funding, private funding, and exchange organizations that included the following: the Center for Social Development (CSD) at Washington University; the Center for Educational Research in Culture, Language, and Literacy (CERCLL) at the University of Arizona; the Federation EIL and eight Member Organizations; the SIT Graduate Institute at World Learning; and Consultants and
Psychometricians at the University of Aveiro in Aveiro, Portugal.

From the onset, the plan envisioned was an ongoing study, hopefully to be followed by further research efforts pending additional funding, plus expanded research efforts that might eventually involve all Member Organizations worldwide. It is clear that many benefits can accrue to collaborating MOs quite aside from the results obtained. For example, this project had several effects on participating MOs: a) first of all, it engaged Member Organizations in a learning process that will further their efforts in several areas, b) it improves understanding of and furthers Federation EIL goals and modus operandi, c) it has the potential to improve delivery of volunteer service projects and exchange programs, and d) it may enhance development of the intercultural competencies of future participants and possibly of mentors and host families as well. In addition, the findings clearly also have marketing implications, program design and implementation implications, and ultimately educational and training benefits, if the results are carefully considered and taken into account.

Finally, the research findings also contribute important knowledge to the field of intercultural education regarding international and intercultural programs, especially as concerned with the identification, development, assessment, and impact of intercultural communicative competencies on the lives of all those involved. As an “acknowledged leader in international, intercultural exchange,” it is indeed fitting for the Experiment Federation to undertake projects of this sort – for itself and on behalf of others. For this reason, the final phase of both projects involves ongoing dissemination of the results through publications in professional journals, workshops, and presentations at relevant professional conferences in the US and abroad.

NOTE: A complete report of both studies is posted on the following websites:
http://digitalcollections.sit.edu/worldlearning_publications/3/
What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas!

Come a few days early to enjoy this oasis in the desert and catch a show or visit Hoover Dam

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Alyssa Crittenden
Department of Anthropology
University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Tel: (702) 895-3709
Email: alyssa.crittenden@unlv.edu

Las Vegas
February 21-24, 2018

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Join us next year for the 47th Annual Meeting of The Society for Cross-Cultural Research

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SCCR - A Community of Scholars and Students

SCCR is a multidisciplinary organization. Its members all share a common devotion to the conduct of cross-cultural research. SCCR members are professionals and students from the social science fields of Psychology, Anthropology, Sociology, and related fields including Education, Family Studies, Social Work, Human Development, Psychiatry, Communications, Ethnic Studies, Business, etc. A distinguishing characteristic of the Society, compared with other academic organizations is that it is fundamentally interdisciplinary and provides members the opportunity to network with scholars from a wide variety of approaches to cross-cultural and comparative research. Since its founding in 1971, SCCR has hosted conferences that offer members and participants the opportunity to know each other better, form productive and lasting relationships, and provide genuine support for their fellow colleagues and students.

To join SCCR, submit the online application form and pay your dues online (listed below), or print and fill out this form and mail it to the Treasurer along with your dues payment. Membership dues are not included in conference fees, and should be sent only to the SCCR treasurer, online or by mail.

Membership in the Society for Cross-Cultural Research begins after your payment has been received, and will continue for one or two years, depending on the selection you make (see below). After becoming an SCCR member, you will begin receiving the current issues of Cross-Cultural Research. Back issues of the journal are available online only.

There are three categories of membership in SCCR. Regular, Student, and Retired members receive Cross-Cultural Research, the Newsletter, 20% publisher discounts from Sage Publications and Information Age Publishing, reduced meeting registration rates, and voting privileges. Joint members share one copy of CCR. You may choose an alternate two-year dues payment option at a reduced rate. Current and new members: please use the following table to choose your dues amount.

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