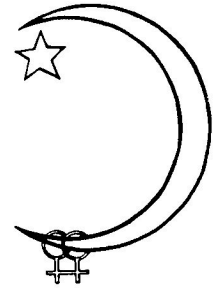


WOMONSPACE

our voice in the lesbian community



NEWS

Nov. 84
Vol. 2
No. 11



THANKS

Mary

Agathe

Terri

for a year of wonderful work !

Sheila

Linda

Liz

Norma

WELCOME

to members of our new Board !

Jude

VICE-PRESIDENT

Kathy

ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR

Marilyn

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

Laura
SECRETARY

Linda
TREASURER

Liz

PR DIRECTOR

Agathe

PRESIDENT



Editorial ~



During the last few days, pairs of elderly men and women have appeared on street corners to sell red plastic poppies, and posters with the slogan "Lest We Forget" appear in store windows. Most of us vaguely remember from history class that November 11 marked the end of one of the wars, so we "remember all the brave men and women who died for our country"; but does that have anything to do with us now?

Peace is an issue around which all people seem to be able to unite. I heard someone say recently, "Peace is the only important issue there is; if we lose our struggle for peace then none of us will be left to struggle for anything else."

Womyn have a special empathy in the struggle for peace because we have historically had our peace violated; the statement "womyn are obviously the inferior sex" was coined by the same society which glorified and justified war, and the concomitant rape of female prisoners. Gay people have also been victimized and we wear the pink triangle in memory of the half-million homosexuals exterminated by the Nazi regime. Lest we forget: war does not exist in isolation; it exists at one end of a continuum of violence which pervades our society. Violence begins with sexism and the control of children and runs through emotional violence, pornography, battering, sexual terrorism, murder, and ends with war: institutionalized genocide.

The fact that "war has been around for centuries" doesn't make it any more acceptable. War is the product of a society which punishes crimes against property more severely than crimes against people; war is condoned by a society which spends more on weapons than on feeding the poor and healing the sick. "Imagine if they

gave the defense budget to womyn and told the army to have a bake sale..."

If we do not begin now to make peace, then we will suffer as individuals, as a community and as a society. We need to start by being at peace with our SELVES, whether that means being kinder to our bodies or to our souls. (This, for example, by rejecting once and for all society's guilt trip about being gay.) Secondly we need to find peace in our community - a tall order in such a vibrant and diverse group. Are, for example, our activities accessible, financially, in terms of location, or to the differently abled? Are we privy to power struggles? Are our relationships peaceful or do we unconsciously oppress those with different moral, political or sexual opinions or practices? Do we do our best to reach out to the "others" who populate our community, especially gay men and other womyn? It seems that there is so much to be done. This is not to suggest that we need to be solidly "at peace" before or in lieu of doing concrete work for peace (protest, direct action); rather, that being "at peace" is a lifelong challenge to which we must commit ourselves.

What I do NOT mean here is that we should "keep the peace". That expression implies somehow that peace is a dirty word, that peace means giving in. That's a traditional view which I reject. PEACE is really just another word for EQUALITY. We must challenge ourselves to stop using the language and mindset of power and to begin to use ideas of balance, responsibility and equality. Our rights as womyn and as gay people are inherent in the word equality. If a society understands equality then it will understand the value of human life, and if a society values life then it will value peace.

We must discover, and show to the world, our strengths as nurturers and lovers. We must teach the ways of peace.

"We cannot afford passivity. We must take on responsibility for our lives and our world and we must be prepared to make our government listen to and hear us. Our aim must be no less than human and caring justice, and peace...for all people."

MARGARET LAURENCE, March 1983

L.J.B.

AGGRESSION IS THE ILLNESS

(The following article is reprinted from the Letters page of the EDMONTON JOURNAL, Sept. 7, 1984.)

I am so sick and tired of hearing and reading statements like "homosexuality is an illness of the mind" and "is worthy of intensive treatment in a psychiatric ward," (letter from Christopher Kowalewski, Your Opinion, Sept. 1).

I am a lesbian and proud to be one. To me, lesbianism is about loving a woman, something this patriarchal society knows very little about.

With a pornography industry that exceeds \$40 million, child sexual abuse and wife battering on a constant uprise, not to mention the idiotic sexist advertising which is so obviously connected to the amount of violence against women and children in this society, I think, Christopher, you should stop making foolish comments about gays and lesbians and focus your attention on the illness in the minds of men. If you stop for a moment and think about the violence I have just mentioned, it's beyond me how you can feel any pride to be male or heterosexual. The embarrass-

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ment I feel for you is overwhelming.

How you can make a derogatory statement about my gentle, tender, sensual and natural loving of another woman while men continue to assault women every single day, whether it be physically, mentally, or emotionally, and aren't even bright enough to understand that "No means no!" is beyond my comprehension. But then perhaps it's my "illness of mind" that keeps me from understanding.

My lover and I pray for people like you in hopes that someday they'll waken and understand what love and respect is.

Please Christopher, keep your "understanding" to yourself because understanding is the last thing you have.

Shelly MacDonald

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To whom it may concern:

Do lesbians love women?

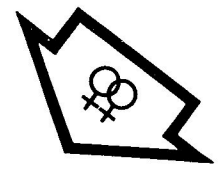
I wish to thank Shelley M. for her recent letter to the Edmonton Journal. It seems, however, that our own community as well has much to learn about loving women.

We are, of course, all unique and diverse individuals. Sometimes our lesbianism is all we may have in common. Yet, is it not through our common bond as women, as lesbians, that a community of love, respect and friendship can be created?

As lesbians, we do have choices. We are free from heterosexual rules, roles expectations, etc., in developing our community, our friendships, our relationships and ourselves.

Those of us who emulate aggressive masculine behaviour and mentality, e.g. seeking power at the expense of others, abusing others in relationships and the community, do so by choice, and in doing so, alienate women. Heterosexual men have claimed to love women since the beginning of

EXPANDING THE SCOPE
OF WOMONSPACE NEWS



WOMONSPACE NEWS has lots of room for contributions from everyone in our community. We will be featuring a different theme each month and are inviting submissions on the following topics for the upcoming year; Lesbians at Work, Lesbian Parenting, Lesbian Culture, Lesbian Music, Favourite Travel Spots, Artificial Insemination, and Religion.

The theme for December is Lesbians and Holidays. Jot down some of your thoughts about being with your lover at Christmas, about family obligations, or about the good and bad feelings you associate with the holiday season.

We are looking for short pieces; 300 words or less. (That's about one column in the newsletter.) If you don't have confidence in your writing skills, no problem! Just get down your main idea and we will help you with the rest.

Contributions should be received by November 15 to appear in December's issue. Mail them to 'WOMONSPACE NEWS c/o E.W.P., 9926-112 Street, Edmonton, T5K 1L7. Be sure to include a contact phone number and indicate how you wish your article to be signed.

Start thinking now about your article for January's issue on how being a lesbian affects you at work. If you have questions about any aspect of the newsletter, call Lindy at 469-2143.

Lindy Pratch

WANTED : PHOTOGRAPHS

WOMONSPACE NEWS would rather use photos and graphics produced by women in our community than lift materials from published works. Please send us photos and drawings that express your lesbian-vision. Black & white reproduces better but colour is acceptable. If people are recognizable, get their written permission for us so we can use the photograph.

NOTES FROM OUR NEW
ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR

Activities are necessary for the vitality of our community. However, no one individual can plan the variety and number of activities that will appeal to everyone in our community. For this reason, we want to form an activities committee to generate ideas and to get things done.

Any time or talent you have will certainly be appreciated, and you may find that you get more energy than you give from being part of a vital and growing community.

Please get in touch with me as soon as possible if you're interested. Call me at 432-9531 or 420-3663(wk).

Kathy de Bree



MAIL ORDER SHOPPING

Looking for a T-shirt proclaiming yourself "Lesbian & Proud"? How about a labyris pendant for your lover? Know someone you'd like to give a "Dykes Ignite" lighter to? You can get these items delivered to your door!

Womonspace has a number of mail order catalogues on file in the office. Women are welcome to browse through the wide array of products offered; bumper stickers, leather goods, jewelry, clothing, note cards, rubber stamps, books and more.

The office is often locked--best time to look at the catalogues would be on Thursday nights during the lesbian drop-in. Otherwise, leave a message on 488-2918 and we'll make arrangements. If you would like to add to our collection, please do!

"WOMYN IN HISTORY"

ELSA GIDLOW

Elsa Gidlow (b. 1898, Yorkshire, England) is a poet-philosopher who lives in Northern California amid the giant Redwoods. She grew up in a French Canadian village on Montreal Island and is mainly self-educated. Her poetry, widely recognized since her early twenties, reflects the lesbian and feminist principles by which she has always lived. An early highlight was the publication in 1923 of On a Gray Thread, the first North American book of poetry to celebrate love between women. In 1924 she made California her home, arriving via the Panama Canal. She thereafter led the lean, precarious career of a freelance journalist, often supporting family and others. In later years, travels to Japan and China rewarded her lifelong interest in Far East thought and culture. She was co-founder, with her friends Jano and Alan Watts, of the Society for Comparative Philosophy. The current women's movement has engendered a wide new readership and enthusiasm for her work and life. A recently expanded anthology of her poetry in sequence, accompanied by pictures; Sapphic Songs: Eighteen to Eighty.^{*} An eagerly awaited autobiography, whose preview chapters have won considerable acclaim, is also well in progress. The isolated, beautiful mountain retreat Elsa has created for herself and friends outside San Francisco is seen by many as a living Zen poem. There, she gardens organically and pursues all the aspects of her quiet revolution.

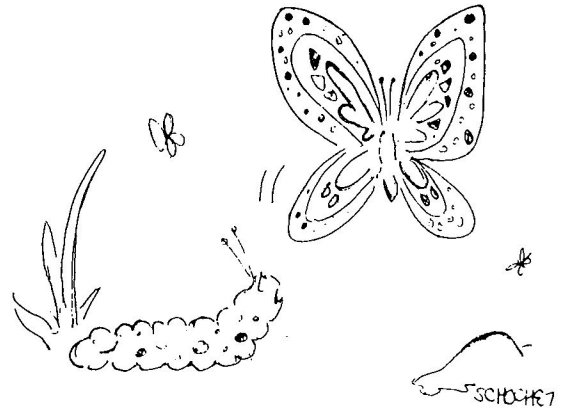
^{*}Distributed by Naiad Press, Inc.

Photos courtesy of Ms. Gidlow and Laura Willensky (photographer). 1965 & 1981. Text; Helaine Victoria Press, Inc., Martinsville, IN, 1982.



You say I am mysterious.
Let me explain myself:
In a land of oranges
I am faithful to apples.

Elsa Gidlow

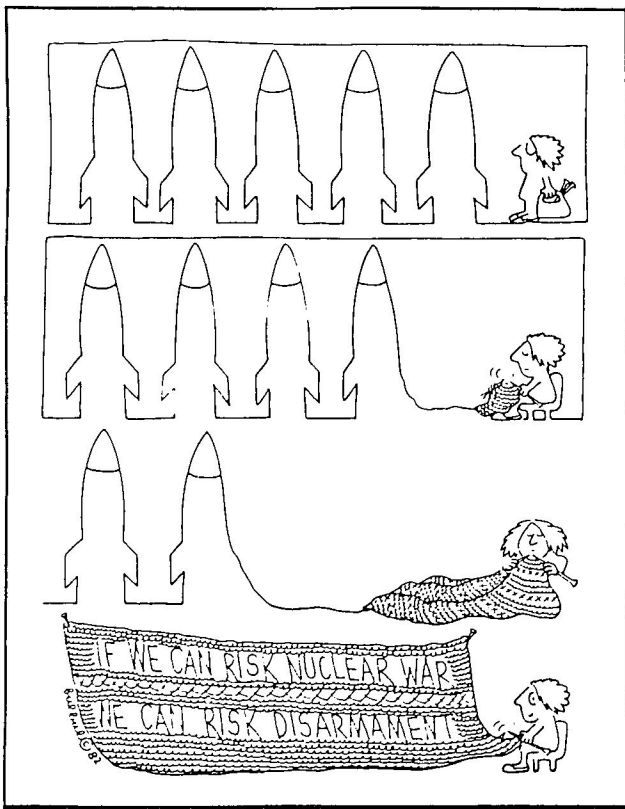


"Was it tough going through your change of life?"

OFF OUR BACKS: A WOMAN'S NEWS JOURNAL has been published out of Washington DC for fourteen years. It's not only the longest running and most informative of the feminist newspapers, it's also the best. By that I mean it contains news of women in every country in the world (including Canada); it has lots of lesbian info--legal, social, cultural, political; it carries lesbian/feminist theory, music and book reviews and more. Recent issues, for example, carried articles on lesbian co-parenting, dyke aesthetics, and rape crisis centers

Common Woman Books carries issues but you can subscribe for US\$11.00 per year from 1841 Columbia Rd. N.W. Room 212, Washington DC 20009, USA.

J.M.P.



off our backs/july 1984/page 19



B O O K S

For those with a taste for research the following are offered. And a biography to lighten the list.

1) The Homosexualities by Alan P. Bell, Martin S. Weinburg, (from the Kinsey Institute)

Very clinical and heavy with the results of scientific research but if you plow through it, it yields interesting information.

2) The Wolfenden Report. Published in Britain in 1955 it is the basis for the liberalization of laws regarding homosexuality which took effect there in 1967. In fact, it is the report which initiated the "consenting adults in private" law passed in Canada in about 1970. Hard to obtain a copy; hard to read, but worth the effort if you are interested in government reports.

3) Sexual Preference: It's Development in Men and Women by A. Bell, Martin S. Weinberg, and Sue K. Hammersmith. It's published by Indiana University Press and is as academic as it sounds. You need to be dedicated to the task to bother.

4) The David Kopay Story by David Kopay. Interesting if you love and fully understand football, which I do not. Boring for me.

J.B.

It is intended that this article will be the beginning of a regular feature in WOMONSPACE NEWS. Anyone who has read a book or article they wish to recommend reading, or avoiding, is invited to submit its name, source, and a review.

time. I need not elaborate on how this "love" has adversely affected women. We can follow this well worn path of heterosexual males by adopting their attitudes and behaviour towards women, or we can strive to create new inroads, loving and respecting women -- ourselves.

Sincerely,

Sharon Sherman



MUSIC WORKSHOP
METAMORPHOSIS 1984

Saturday morning: 10 am. Up the stairs at Saskatoon's WMCA - Women's workshops scheduled - we want to arrive early as some of us haven't registered ahead of time.

Some women from Edmonton ahead of us. We say hello. The woman behind the desk takes \$30.00. More hellos from Edmonton folks. A group of women sit smoking. Don't look at us.

I feel rather awkward. Wander in, look into doorways, see women putting up photo display, laying out clay masks, books; wander out of that room; notice some people have coffee, find pot; read workshop info board; can't figure out what is happening, where, when.

Music workshop starting - I'm not sure I'm interested in guitar music at 10 am. Huge, cold, barren room; yellow cement block walls. About 20 women on mats face 4 others; three have guitars. Then Nancy Poole (now in Regina) started to talk. She was strong, clear, informative and exciting. She talked of her role as sound technician and the vision she had of women's music being essential in building and expressing our community. Her presentation combined substantial information with encouragement and reassurance. She didn't downplay the difficulty of doing good sound,



but she emphasized her pleasure in it and her willingness to teach others.

Moon Joyce, 3 years in Yellowknife, now in Winnipeg, spoke next. She says Nancy is a "sound artist" not "sound technician" - then talks, again strong, warm, articulate. She explains what she does to make a song work, then give solid info on the music industry and how musicians can protect themselves. She sings for us too, her new song "Death's Autumn Dance" with the lovely line "Autumn is a lover who's always saying goodbye." We clap and clap. She is very good and we're not surprised to hear that she's hoping to get a record out soon - is looking for investors in case anyone has a few thou' lying around.

Holly Wright from Edmonton was next. Holly writes her own tunes as well and demonstrated for us the various emotions expressed by particular riffs (if that's the right word). For Holly, music and emotion are powerfully linked: "The first time I kissed a woman, I ran right up to my room and wrote a song."

Noelle Hall from Regina has a strong, rich voice and a strong vision as well. She said that she writes songs rather than doing vigilante action ('cause she doesn't want to go to jail), but I thought some of her music was as strong as any vigilante gesture: one of her lines - "Don't turn your back or your mind too quick."

For me this workshop crystalized what was best about the weekend; the women doing music (and mercifully, there was lots of it) had the clearest, most powerful energy - they gave us in the playing and singing and talking the embodiment of commitment and unity.

J.M.P.



BENDERS

Benders used to be Steppin' Out. It is now under new management with all new staff. They've done extensive renovations to create a brighter, cheerier atmosphere. (This includes new chairs and rugs, red curtains, a new dance floor and sound system.)

The place is managed by Wayne, who seems a very reasonable man. His attitude is, "What can we do to make this a place women want to come to?" The attitude at Steppin' Out had been, "It doesn't matter how we treat women; we know they'll come back because they have nowhere else to go."

One example of the new attitude towards the gay community is the Pat Weston benefit dance on October 27. Also, Wayne is open to having separate nights for women only, (i.e. two week nights and a weekend night). He would first need a private license which would require getting 800 signatures of future members.

I won't support a bad business just because it's gay, but good gay businesses need our support. I encourage anyone who's had bad service there before to go back and give it another try.

Mary T. Hughes



BENEFIT DANCE

Pat Weston is heading abroad for another race, this time to Japan. She needed \$1000 to cover expenses, and has been given \$500 from the Alberta government. A benefit dance is being held to raise the rest of the money. It will be a women-only dance at Benders - 10357-109 Street - (formerly Steppin' Out) on Saturday night, October 27. The suggested donation at the door is \$5.00 (which will include a hot buffet). See you there!



METAMORPHOSIS 85

What? Metamorphosis 85 already? Who's thinking about something that's a whole year away? The Metamorphosis 85 Planning Committee is. Plans are underway in Saskatoon right now.

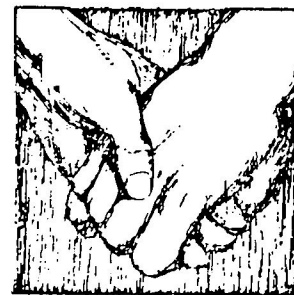
Edmonton lesbians and gays also have the opportunity to do some of the organizing. A planning meeting will be held at E.W.P. on Wednesday, November 14 at 7:30 pm. Metamorphosis 85 and a possible spring celebration to be held in Edmonton next year will be discussed. Any persons interested in contributing ideas and energy are invited to attend. Or, contact Marilyn at 436-7456 or 488-2918 (message).

G.A.T.E.

Wednesday nights are women's nights at the Gay Alliance Towards Equality office. Drop in at 10173 and 104 Street between 7 - 10 pm. G.A.T.E. has a good library and peer counselling is also available.

GATE

GAY ALLIANCE TOWARD EQUALITY



10173-104 St. EDMONTON (403)424-8361

- DROP-IN CENTRE
- PEER COUNSELLING
- SPEAKERS BUREAU
- CIVIL RIGHTS
- SOCIAL EVENTS
- LIBRARY

HERBOLOGY WORKSHOP

Hester Elliot, Edmonton herbo-
logist, will be giving a workshop
on herbology at EWP on Monday,
December 10th at 7 pm. Phone 488-
2748 for more information. This
workshop is being sponsored by
Every Woman's Place.



COMMON WOMAN BOOKS

Alberta's Only Feminist Bookstore
non-sexist children's books
records * jewelry * t-shirts
fiction * feminist theory
overcoming male & female stereotypes
a good selection of lesbian literature
Tuesday & Wednesday: 11 a.m. 5 p.m.
Thursday & Friday: 11 a.m. 9 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m. 5 p.m.

8208 - 104 Street 432-9344

1ST Annual New Year's Eve Dinner and Dance

SAXONY MOTOR INN 8 p.m.-1:30 a.m.

- DOORS OPEN — 7:30 p.m.
- CASH BAR
- SMORGASBORD — 8:30 p.m.

\$20 per person

WOMONSPACE



SPEAKER'S BUREAU

A Speaker's Bureau is being
established. Interested? Call the
phone line: 488-2918.

LESBIAN DROP-IN

Every Thursday is drop-in night
from 7 - 9 at Every Woman's Place.
(9926 - 112 Street) All women are
welcome.

LESBIAN TALK NIGHT

Last Thursday night of each month
7 - 9 p.m. (or later)

Every Woman's Place

Gather for an evening to discuss
issues of lesbianism/feminism.
Bring your suggestions for topics
(ideas, articles, books to read, etc)
At the end of each evening we choose
our topic for the next Lesbian Talk
Night and decide if we need to
distribute reading materials.

Elizabeth MASSIAH, M.S.W. - Feminist Therapist
*Individuals, Couples, Groups
*Flexible fees, and times
Edmonton: (bus.) 422-3022 (home) 481-5973

*Teryn
Graphics*

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429-4287

- logos
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- 20% DISCOUNT FOR ACTIVE
WOMONSPACE MEMBERS

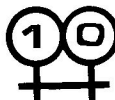
Ardelle L. Dudley

Telephone:
(403) 998-1740



**Women's Counselling
Services of Edmonton**

R.R. 1, Fort Saskatchewan,
Alberta, Canada T8L 2N7



Activities~



GENERAL MEETING

General meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month at E.W.P. at 7:30 pm. Next one is on November 13. Everyone is welcome.

NEWSLETTER MEETING

The next newsletter meeting will be held on Sunday, November 18, 6:30 pm at Jeanne's. (#1, 10739-86 Ave.)

If you would like to help with WOMONSPACE NEWS, but cannot come to the meeting, you are welcome to phone Lindy at 469-2143 and talk to her about what you'd like to do.

PR DIRECTIONS MEETING

The PR Directions Committee holds meetings on the second Monday of every month at 5:30 pm. The next one is on November 12. Phone Laura at 429-2355 for the location.

VOLUNTEERS

Womonspace always needs volunteers. There is a need right now for women who are willing to help out with the October dance. Leave your name on the phone line: 488-2918.

REFERRAL LIST

We need names of lesbian-positive professionals that we can give to women needing services (mechanics, dentists, hairdressers, etc.) Members of the PR Directions Committee will contact the person before they are put on the list. Please give your suggestions to Laura. (488-2918 message)

A JOB FOR YOU!

A fantasy come true--a job available working on behalf of the lesbian and gay community--that actually pays a salary--albeit small...

G.A.T.E. has applied for a P.E.P. grant in order to employ one or two members of the lesbian and gay community, on a full-time basis from Nov. 1, 1984 to April 30, 1985. The job pays, I believe, \$5.00 per hour, for a full time position.

This has been done on behalf of G.A.L.A., representing the many organizations in this city that try to represent our community. The work will be varied--research, community development, letter writing, publicity, etc. etc. The person(s) being sought will have some clerical skills, some typing skills, some writing skills and know something about activism and about our local community.

To qualify for the grant, you must presently be unemployed and have lived in Alberta for 3 years.

Please submit your resume to:
G.A.L.A. Position
G.A.T.E.
PO Box 1852
Edmonton T5J 2P2



Dance Guidelines

Meeting for the co-ordination of the Womonspace Dances is being held on November 15 at E.W.P., at 7:30 P.M.

PMS Workshop

A PMS workshop will be held at the end of November. Please contact the phone line for further information.

WOMONSPACE DANCE

HAZELDEAN HALL ~ 9630-66 AVENUE

NOV. 17

8pm to 1:30am

Adm. - Members \$5
Non — \$6

Back photograph taken from: Archives of Labor & Urban Affairs,
Wayne State University
Helaine Victoria Press -- 1979

PLEASE NOTE:

Articles published in Womonspace News do not necessarily reflect the policies and opinions of Womonspace.

Credits: Contributions by:
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Mary T. Hughes
Elaine K.
J.B.

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Jeanne Perreault
L.J.B.,

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Camera, Stripping & Opaquing
Teryn Graphics (L.K.R., T.L.H.)

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 **488-2918**

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